

To: Eleanor Gorski, Department of Planning and Development, City of Chicago  
John Sadler, Department of Transportation, City of Chicago  
Abby Nelson, Department of Planning and Development, City of Chicago

From: Midway Plaisance Advisory Council (MPAC)

Re: Comments on Section 106 Review Requested via Email ("Section 106 Next Steps") on December 13, 2017 (sent by Abby Nelson)

The Midway Plaisance ("The Midway") is an historic park designed in 1871 by the renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is an integral part of Olmsted's South Park plan and a vital connection between the south side's Jackson Park and Washington Park. The Midway is used extensively by residents of the Hyde Park, Woodlawn, South Shore, and Washington Park communities, and belongs to all the citizens of Chicago. The Midway Plaisance Advisory Council (MPAC) is comprised of community members committed to the vitality and protection of the Midway for public use for years to come. The MPAC offers the following comments regarding the list of historic features and the Area of Potential Effect (APE) presented on December 1, 2017.

- The Section 106 Review needs to include the entire length of the Midway Plaisance as an APE. Currently the maps and draft renderings (see pp. 7, 9, 21, 24, 33) only depict the eastern portion of the park, yet there are broader environmental, traffic, and safety implications for the Midway Plaisance overall. Additionally, the entirety of the Midway Plaisance should be designated for archeological and architecture/landscape review.
- On page 20 of the Dec. 1 PowerPoint presentation, "visual effects" is listed as among the factors to be used to determine the APE. The tower included in the proposed OPC design, if positioned as indicated in the renderings (that is, on the edge of the eastbound segment of the Midway Plaisance roadway), would be seen the entire length of the Midway. As such, it would have a visual effect on the Midway Plaisance.
- We ask that the 2000 Midway Plaisance Framework Plan (and subsequent drawings created by a working committee to establish a Children's Garden) be included in the review. (Note that the Chicago Park District also hosted working group meetings regarding the design and placement of the Children's Garden for the eastern section of the Midway). Developed by community members, the University of Chicago, and the Chicago Park District, under a transparent process that allowed for full input by all community members and stakeholders, this framework plan has guided improvements to the Midway since 1999. The plan does not call for a parking facility on the eastern end of the Midway bordered by 59<sup>th</sup> street to the North, Stony Island to the East, 60<sup>th</sup> street to the South, and the train tracks to the West, nor does the plan call for any parking facility on any part of the Midway Plaisance. (The plan proposed reopening the space underneath the tracks to better reunite the Midway as well as the entire

Southpark system-- the only extant Olmsted park system outside of the state of New York. A garage would forever foreclose the reunion of the parts of the Midway and further forever disrupt the Park system as a whole.) We have attached the Framework Plan for inclusion.

- The Olmsted Plan, as referenced in the 2000 Midway Plaisance Framework, is its own significant “historic feature” and should be formally included on the list of historic artifacts under review.

In closing, the MPAC issued a resolution on October 18, 2017 stating its strong opposition to a parking facility on the Midway, noting, among other factors, that a parking facility constitutes taking of public parkland for private use. We ask that any future reference to the proposed parking facility under this Section 106 process indicate clearly that the garage is proposed and is not a given nor planned feature of the Midway Plaisance. This notation should be included in all renderings, discussions and posted updates.