

City Park Friends and Neighbors (CPFAN) Resolution to Support City Park Landmark Designation

Draft 04/29/2014

Whereas, City Park is an historic park of great power, beauty and significance.

And Whereas, the founding pioneers of the city of Denver, envisioning the need for green, open spaces to offset urban growth, purchased 320 acres of land out in the country east of the city center for parkland that became City Park in 1882.

And Whereas, the original design for City Park was created by Henry Meryweather in 1882. Meryweather was influenced by the English Landscape School and also New York City's Central Park. Later designers included Reinhard Scheutze, George Kessler, J.B. Benedict, the Olmsted Brothers, Edward Bennett and S.R. DeBoer. All the designers contributed to the "original bucolic intent (of City Park) and creates its distinctive character," according to *Revitalizing The Legacy of City Park*, The 2001 Master Plan for City Park, submitted by Mundus Bishop Design, Inc.

And Whereas, during the administration of Mayor Robert Speer, City Park received gifts of gateways and other elements reflective of the City Beautiful movement.

And Whereas, the Olmsted Brothers landscape architectural firm of Brookline, MA, added to the design of City Park from approximately 1912-1914. On April 11, 1913, the Olmsted firm wrote Denver Park Commissioner, John S. MacBeth:

*"From the very fact that **City Park** is the largest park in the city, and probably will remain the only large park very near the mass of the population, I feel very clear that to whatever uses it may be incidentally put – it **should always be managed with a view to providing** to the utmost degree one valuable quality that is absolutely unattainable in a city except in a large park, the quality that gives **a sense of spaciousness in contrast with the crowding that is elsewhere forced by the high land values of a city.**"*

And Whereas, the National Association of Olmsted Parks has encouraged Denver Parks and Recreation to carefully consider changes to City Park in light of its Olmsted roots, noting:

*"Vibrant cities are full of cultural, educational, and recreational amenities. As their populations grow, the proportion of park space to population shrinks. **The need for refuge from the fast pace of city life is as great now as it was when the Olmsted Brothers made their contributions to the design of City Park...**" (From their February 10, 2014 letter to Lauri Dannemiller)*

City Park Friends and Neighbors (CPFAN) Resolution to Support City Park Landmark Designation

Draft 04/29/2014

And Whereas, according to the 2001 Master Plan for City Park:

“Over the years the park’s historic features and infrastructure have deteriorated. Original walks have disappeared, fountains no longer function, and gardens and statues are seriously deteriorated. Roads and parking no longer meet the needs of park users and growing visitation. Recreational trends are also changing and adding new pressures. ***City Park is on the brink of losing its character to the assault of urban progress.***”

And Whereas, the 2001 Master Plan for City Park recommends:

“that a historic District for the entire park be undertaken as a way to preserve the park’s integrity and significance, but also promote its significance as an important historic component of the City & County of Denver. The District would also recognize the contribution of master landscape architects, such as the Olmsted Bros. and S. R. DeBoer to city park planning and design.”

And Whereas, it is critical to preserving the character of City Park that the Zoo and the Museum of Nature and Science embrace the park and enhance it and not turn their backs on it with their facilities.

And Whereas, Landmark Designation accompanied by Design Guidelines would clearly identify important historical elements of the Park that should be protected or reinstated while simultaneously providing guidance for integrating new elements into the park consistent with its overall character thereby helping Parks and Recreation, neighbors, and Park users with a common frame of reference for future park improvements.

Now, therefore, it is resolved:

We members of City Park Friends and Neighbors (CPFAN) hereby proclaim our love for and defense of City Park.

The CPFAN Board unanimously supports submission of an application to the Denver Landmark Commission for Landmark District designation for City Park. And, it is further resolved that the Board and officers of CPFAN are authorized and directed to take all actions consistent with this resolution on behalf of CPFAN.