

March 31, 2021

Ms. Mary Page Michel Roland Park Community Foundation P.O. Box 16214 Baltimore, Maryland 21210

Dear Ms. Michel:

On behalf of the Friends of Maryland's Olmsted Parks & Landscapes (FMOPL), I am writing in support of the Roland Park Community Foundation's plan to purchase land from the Baltimore Country Club to create a community park. Established in 1986, FMOPL is committed to advancing the Olmsted legacy and its relevance in Maryland. Baltimore's Olmsted legacy dates to the 1875 design by of Mt. Vernon Place by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., and later the most significant impact on Baltimore was by Olmsted Sr.'s successor firm, the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architects (OBLA). Between parks and residential communities, the Olmsted imprint in Baltimore is among the greatest in any American city. The Olmsted firm's long association with the Roland Park Company began in 1897 with the development of Roland Park and other neighborhoods. Although OBLA is well known for its residential neighborhoods, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. was involved with other major projects such as the 1904 and 1926 reports on the needs and opportunities for a comprehensive park system for the Baltimore region and promoting the establishment of a department of city planning. The proposed Hillside Park reflects the long-range vision of the Olmsteds and offers a design and use that are compatible with the Roland Park neighborhood that it occupies and that the firm helped to create.

The Roland Park Community Foundation's plans for Hillside Park are consistent with Olmsted principles that have inspired landscape architects, planners, and environmentalists for more than 150 years. These principles, outlined by Olmsted scholar Charles Beveridge, include: creating designs that are in keeping with the natural scenery and topography of the site; giving an enhanced sense of space, with indefinite boundaries, constantly opening up new views; providing for adequate drainage and other engineering considerations, not simply arranging surface features; promoting both the physical and mental health of users; subordinating all elements to the overall design, art concealing art.

The Roland Park Community Foundation has been working for a number of years on envisioning an open space that would best benefit the community and the region. FMOPL applauds their detailed research and networking with government and nonprofit parks organizations on the local, state, and national levels. We are confident that the Roland Park Community Foundation will be responsible stewards of the land, welcoming residents from throughout Baltimore to the park, maintaining the grounds according to environmentally friendly standards, and preserving open space that is much needed in an urban setting.

Sincerely.

Jannifer andt Robinson

President, Friends of Maryland's Olmsted Parks & Landscapes