

The following resolution was unanimously passed at a meeting of the Board of Directors of Lake Park Friends on November 12, 2019, with non-substantive wording modifications approved by the Board on November 26, 2019.

WHEREAS, Lake Park (the “Park”) was designed by the famed landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), and is located within the City of Milwaukee’s Northpoint North Historic District.

WHEREAS, Lake Park Friends’ (LPF’) mission is to promote, preserve, restore and enhance Lake Park in the spirit of Frederick Law Olmsted (Olmsted).

WHEREAS, LPF supports and encourages the use of Lake Park by all variety of park users including pedestrians and bicyclists that are consistent with the historic nature of the Park and Olmsted’s original design and intent.

WHEREAS, LPF has consulted with three historic preservation experts regarding the historic significance of Ravine Road in Lake Park (the “Consultants”): Paul Daniel Marriott, PhD (Landscape architect and global historic road expert), John Vogel, PhD (Cultural Resource management consultant), and Carlan Hatala (City of Milwaukee, Senior Planner for Historic Preservation), whose conclusions and professional opinions support this resolution.

WHEREAS, Ravine Road is a main design feature of the Park’s circulation system and is the last remaining “drive” in Park. The other two drives were closed prior to Lake Park’s inclusion on the National Register or within the Northpoint North Historic District.¹

WHEREAS Ravine Road represents a significant and legible pattern in the landscape that is fundamental to the integrity of the original Park design. Ravine Road serves both critical design and function elements of the Park because its vertical and horizontal alignment is characteristically Olmsted; because it was designed to evoke an unconscious affect or experience while driving it²; and because it functions as a key transit corridor and access point from, through, and to the Park, connecting the lakefront, Lake Park, Newberry Boulevard, and Riverside Park.

WHEREAS Ravine Road was designed as a drive and has been used by automobiles since its inception in 1905. Olmsted designed park drives for “pleasure driving” and Ravine Road is consistent with the following Olmsted’s design principles: *“Areas having different uses and character were to be separated from each other, and separate byways were to be developed for different kinds of traffic”* and *“The roads of [a] park have been designed less with a purpose of bringing visitors to points of view at which they will enjoy set scenes or landscapes, than to*

¹ July 1891, study for circulation system of Lake Park, from *Frederick Law Olmsted Plans and Views of Public Parks, 2015*.

² Boston, Department of Parks, [Frederick Law Olmsted], *“Notes on the Plan of Franklin Park and Related Matters”* (Boston, 1886) p. 107.

*provide for a constant mild enjoyment of simply pleasing rural scenery while in easy movement, and thus by curves and grades avoiding unnecessary violence to nature.*³

WHEREAS LPF embraces Olmsted's belief that parks must be equally accessible to all citizens⁴ and Ravine Road advances that fundamental design belief.

Be it resolved that LPF:

- a. concurs with the Consultants that Ravine Road's current horizontal and vertical alignment is a pattern in the landscape, therefore, that alignment must be maintained to avoid an "adverse effect" (under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act) to the park's historic character and integrity;
- b. supports reopening Ravine Road to vehicular traffic because doing so preserves the historic design and original intent of Lake Park;
- c. opposes closing Ravine Road permanently to vehicular traffic and converting it solely to a pedestrian / bike trail because doing so would forever deny all future users of experiencing the "pleasure driving" through Lake Park as Olmsted intended and because doing so would limit accessibility via this connector road to and from the lakefront, the Park, Newberry Boulevard, and Riverside Park, especially for those with physical disabilities, in contravention of the foundational Olmsted principle that parks should be equally accessible to all citizens;
- d. encourages the use of speed reduction methods on Ravine Road such as textured pavement rather than other methods such as speed bumps that would interrupt the pleasure of the driving experience; and
- e. also supports a scenario in which Ravine Road could be used at different times by different user groups, provided such use does not make inalterable changes to the road or change the original road pattern that would be inconsistent in any way with the road's primary use for driving. The curb-to-curb alignment and horizontal and vertical alignment must be maintained such that the road could be still used for its original intent as a 'drive', even if also used by different user groups for at least some period of time. For example, Ravine Road could be closed to vehicular traffic on certain days of the week or certain hours of the day (or at some other regular intervals) to allow for pedestrian and bicycle use (similar to how other Olmsted parks have managed transverse roads through their parks).

³ From Charles W. Eliot II, "The Influence of the Automobile on the Design of Park Roads," *Landscape Architecture* 13:28.

⁴ Kalfus, Melvin. *Frederick Law Olmsted: The Passion of a Public Artist*. 1990