



NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION for
OLMSTED
PARKS

Field Notes

The National Association for Olmsted Parks (NAOP) advances Olmsted principles and the legacy of irreplaceable parks and landscapes that revitalize communities and enrich people's lives.

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Calvert Vaux (left) and Frederick Law Olmsted (right), the winning partnership of the 1857 Central Park design competition.

Photos courtesy of the National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site

2007: CELEBRATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CENTRAL PARK COMPETITION

When it comes to Central Park, there's a lot to celebrate. Central Park represents the birth of the urban park movement in America. In 2003, people around the world celebrated the 150th anniversary of the Park's inception when, in 1853, the New York State Legislature authorized taking an unprecedented portion of New York City's real estate out of commercial or residential development to create "a public space," an innovative concept in American history. The design for the future park was not established for five more years, when in 1858, the Board of Commissioners announced that "Greensward," the plan by Calvert Vaux and Frederick Law Olmsted, had won the design competition.

This year—2007—warrants a celebration of its own, one that commemorates the crucial events leading up to the award-winning plan, the birth of American landscape architecture and the career of Frederick Law Olmsted.

The story begins with Calvert Vaux, frequently forgotten in Central Park's history. Vaux, a young determined British architect, came to America in 1852 at the invitation of horticulturist turned tastemaker, Andrew Jackson Down-

ing of Newburgh, NY. As there were no architectural schools in America, Downing went to England to seek out a partner who could design homes and landscapes for his growing Hudson Valley clientele. Downing had promoted the idea of a large New York City park in his magazine, *The Horticulturist*, in 1848 and 1851. If not for his unfortunate drowning in a Hudson River steamboat accident, he and Vaux—not Olmsted and Vaux—most certainly would have been the designers of Manhattan's future park. When Downing's life was suddenly cut short at age 37, Downing and Vaux were already creating what would have been the first public park in America—the Mall, the grounds of the Smithsonian and the presidential park in Washington, DC at the invitation of President Millard Fillmore. After Down-

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The Master List of Design Projects of the Olmsted Firm

1857 ~ 1979

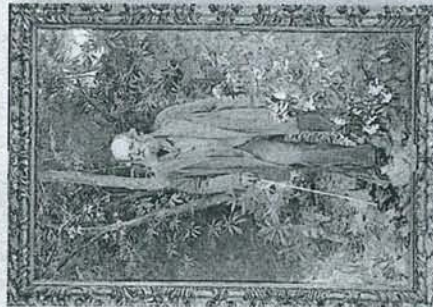
The Master List of Design Projects of the Olmsted Firm 1857-1979

Lawliss, Loughlin and Meier, editors NAOP & NPS

The *Master List of Design Projects of the Olmsted Firm 1857-1979* is the comprehensive guide to the work of the firm whose founder, Frederick Law Olmsted, was the principal creator of the profession of landscape architecture in America. The firm created memorable places, public and private, where millions of people still live, work and play. This second edition, expanded to more than 6,000 projects, includes new research, illustrations and illuminating essays. It demonstrates the importance of the Olmsted firm, and is an inspiring and invaluable tool for individuals and communities. This is the only publication to categorize all of the Olmsted firm's design projects so that the scale, type and geographic diversity of the work can be quickly and easily understood.

When the field of landscape preservation and our awareness of the Olmsted design legacy was in its promising infancy, *The Master List of Design Projects of the Olmsted Firm* was the essential reference. Twenty years later, this new edition, brought to life with contemporary photography and evocative essays, is as much a cause of celebration as the hundreds of Olmsted designs that have been preserved and interpreted by communities all across America.

— Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR
Founder + President, The Cultural Landscape Foundation



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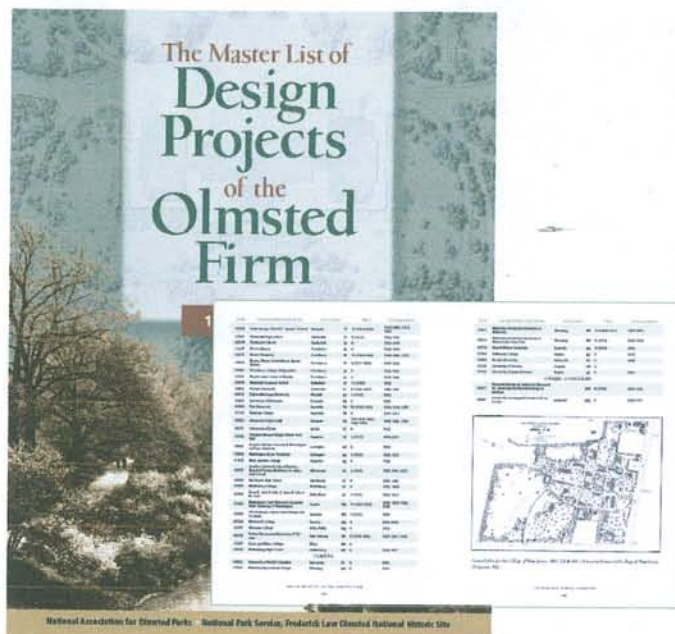
www.olmsted.org

National Association for Olmsted Parks • National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site

Coming in April 2008—The National Association for Olmsted Parks is pleased to announce the re-publication of

The Master List of Design Projects of the Olmsted Firm 1857-1979

Edited by Lucy Lawliss, Caroline Loughlin and Lauren Meier with essays by Julia Sniderman Bachrach, Charles E. Beveridge, Ethan Carr, Lee Farrow Cook, Rolf Diamant, Arleyn A. Levee and others!



National Association for Olmsted Parks • National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site
Paper, 368 pp, \$55, 2nd Edition

This richly illustrated color edition of the "Master List" includes new research conducted over the past 20 years. Searchable by project type and geographic location, it is an inspiring and invaluable tool for individuals and communities. Expanded to over 6,000 projects, the "Master List" is the only publication to categorize all of the Olmsted firm's design projects so that the scale, type and geographic diversity of the work can be quickly and easily understood.

NAOP Members: \$45 | Non-NAOP members: \$55
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Please note: Pre-orders will be shipped when the book is published in April 2008.

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— Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR,
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**NAOP Dinner Celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Greensward Plan
Monday, April 28, 2008**

NAOP will celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Greensward Plan, Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux's design for Central Park, with a festive dinner featuring renowned Lincoln scholar Harold Holzer as he explores the relationship between Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Law Olmsted and their shared vision for democracy.

The event will also feature introductory remarks by Charles E. Beveridge, editor of The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted, of which Volume VII was published in 2007.

A benefit for NAOP, the event will be held at The Century Association on April 28, the day the Greensward plan was adopted in 1858. Several generations of the Olmsted family, including Frederick Law Olmsted, were members of the Century Association, housed in the historic McKim & White Beaux Arts building at 7 West 43rd Street, New York City.

Unites States Capitol Grounds

3/6/08

NAOP continues its advocacy activity on behalf of Frederick Law Olmsted's design for the U.S. Capitol Grounds as the new Capitol Visitors Center nears completion.

In February 2007, following the retirement of the Architect of the Capitol, NAOP sent a letter to the Senate requesting that NAOP be allowed to participate in the interview process for the new Architect, who is ultimately selected by the president.

An Olmsted National Capital Committee – founded by an NAOP Board member in fall of 2007 – has made it its focus to raise awareness and work toward the restoration and long-term preservation of the Capitol Grounds.

Currently, NAOP is developing a communications package aimed at building a broad, informed coalition of Capitol Grounds supporters and informing congressional staff, the Architect of the Capitol office and potential coalition partners of the Olmsted legacy and the 80-year record of work of the Olmsted firm in the District of Columbia.

The communications package will assist NAOP in accomplishing the following goals:

- Completion of a Cultural Landscape Report
- Incorporation of an historic landscape layer into the Architect of the Capitol's Master Plan as well as making the Master Plan process a public process
- Assurance that any future landscape planning respects the Master Plan
- Olmsted presence in new Capitol Visitors Center
- Broad awareness of Olmsted legacy in the District of Columbia.

Preserving Critical Historic Landscapes: the Olmsted Survey Project

The National Association for Olmsted Parks (NAOP) is currently planning and raising funds for *Preserving Critical Historic Landscapes: the Olmsted Survey Project*, a comprehensive four-year effort to document the status and condition of Olmsted-designed community parks, support revitalization efforts and build the capacity of local organizations in their ongoing preservation work.

Background

Beginning in 1857 with the design for Central Park in New York City, the legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted and his firm includes the completion of plans for 3,500 landscape works across North America, including many of the world's most important urban parks. The park and landscape design work of Olmsted reflects a vision of American communities and American society as relevant today as it was in the second half of the 19th century — a commitment to visually compelling and accessible green space that restores and nurtures the bodies and spirits of all people, regardless of their economic circumstances.

For more than 25 years, the National Association for Olmsted Parks (NAOP) has taken a leadership role in raising awareness of the importance of this historic landscape design legacy among public officials and community leaders, and among professionals and academics throughout the world of landscape design — all of whom exert enormous authority over the fate of parks and landscapes. NAOP has encouraged scholarship and published key reference materials, developed and sustained local park restoration efforts, and provided technical and historical information to ongoing preservation efforts.

The Need

From pocket parks to national parks, from college campuses to private estates, Frederick Law Olmsted and his successors had a hand in conceiving, designing and building thousands of landscapes across the country. Many we know well: New York City's Central Park, Boston's Emerald Necklace, the Riverside Community in Illinois and Louisville's Park and Parkway System. These have all been exhaustively catalogued and purposefully protected. But many other Olmsted masterworks have been so transformed over time that we can barely recognize their Olmsted roots or — even worse — they have been lost as parkland altogether. And, at places like the U.S. Capitol or Washington Park in Chicago, massive new facilities threaten to undermine the Olmsted legacy.

Yet, for all the Olmsted landscapes we know and celebrate, lament and defend, hundreds more have never been well-documented or seriously studied. Until they are surveyed and documented, we will never truly appreciate the expanse of Olmsted's great vision, nor be able to leverage this legacy to advocate for and preserve these parks and landscapes for all of the environmental, social and economic benefits they provide to local communities.

For the first time in human history, more than half the people on earth now live in cities. This worldwide demographic shift is making urban parks the sole connection to the natural world for an increasing majority of children and adults. For millions, urban parks

are their only access to outdoor activity and spiritual renewal. Now, more than ever, there is a need to create a body of information that can be used to develop and inspire a national network of local leadership in support of historic urban park preservation. The National Association for Olmsted Parks, with your support, is poised to lead the charge.

The Olmsted Survey Project

NAOP has conducted past sample surveys in Illinois and Indiana and among the Olmsted sites on the National Register of Historic Places, but a comprehensive survey has never been done, nor made available to the public online. In the fall of 2006, NAOP conducted a sample group outreach program to 100 parks. From this group, 20 were identified for participation in a test program that included technical assistance, advocacy support and, for one participant, a matching grant award of \$10,000 for park restoration. Based on the information gleaned from our sample group, NAOP is now seeking support to expand this model on a national scale.

Goals

The goal of this project is two-fold: first, to strengthen the body of research available on historic parks and landscapes, make it accessible through web-based technology, and leverage it to protect these places; and second, to strengthen the network of communities working together to preserve these valuable places to ensure that the Olmsted ideals of high quality design, abundance of natural elements and democratic accommodations are part of the modern parks movement.

Objectives

1.) Survey and document the present status of Olmsted parks. While much is known about the plans made by the Olmsteds for public parks, little is known about the present condition of many of these treasures. Using data from NAOP's published Master List and Olmsted Research Guide Online (ORGO) and resources of both the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation and the Library of Congress, NAOP will research and document the status of Olmsted designed parks, determine the extent to which the original design plans were implemented; and document what elements of the designs and incorporated structures have been preserved. The results will be assembled into a web-based database, supplementing ORGO with detailed findings of the survey and interactive maps.

NAOP has targeted the following states and/or cities for the survey (to be completed in phases):

Northeast—Maine; Connecticut; Massachusetts; New York: New York City and Brooklyn (focusing on lesser known Olmsted parks); Buffalo; Rochester; Utica;
MidAtlantic—New Jersey; Philadelphia, York and Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania;
Washington, D.C.; Baltimore, Maryland
Southeast—Atlanta and Savannah, Georgia; Birmingham, Alabama, Charleston, South Carolina; New Orleans, Louisiana
Midwest—Louisville, Kentucky; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Chicago, Illinois; Cincinnati, Cleveland, Youngstown and Dayton, Ohio; Minneapolis, Minnesota

West—Denver, Colorado; Seattle and Spokane, Washington; San Francisco, Palos Verdes and Riverside, California

2.) Assess community capacity to support preservation. Successful community parks rely on an active public/private partnership of community engagement. As part of the survey, NAOP will use its extensive membership contacts, board relationships and partnership with the City Parks Alliance to conduct outreach and assess local community capacity, both public and private (e.g. friends groups), to initiate or support and sustain park preservation efforts and the needs of these constituencies in preserving Olmsted landscapes.

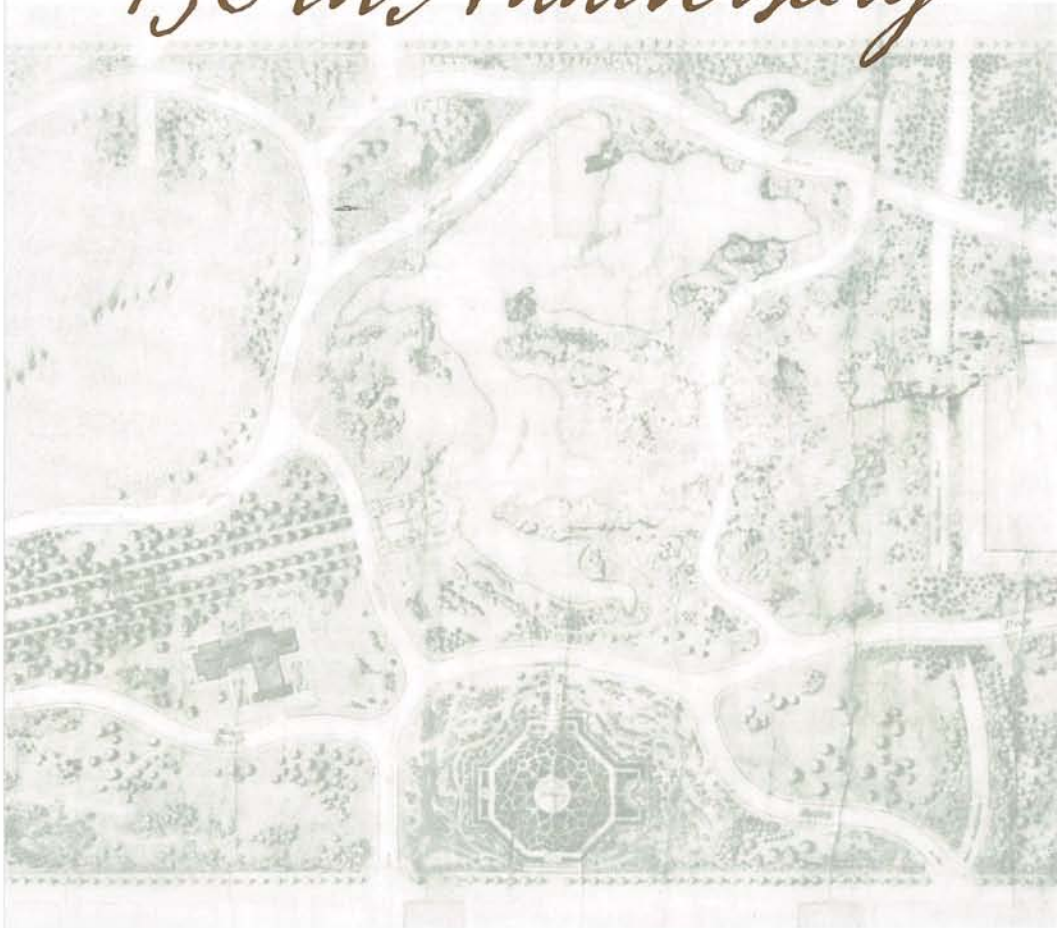
3.) Build local capacity to sustain community parks and historic preservation efforts. Following the survey and assessment, NAOP will select ten communities that demonstrate the best opportunities for success to receive specific technical assistance, including scholarships to NAOP conferences and grant support to assist with their restoration effort. General technical assistance will also be provided to all surveyed communities through NAOP's Best Practices website and a national listserv of community park advocates. Local leaders will be linked with the national network of community activists working on behalf of historic parks.

4.) Strengthen the national network of community activists in support of park preservation. Parks don't just happen and in times of municipal and federal budget austerity, it is critical that there are strong local voices for community parks. NAOP continues to actively build a vibrant national network of activists, connected online and through regional and national conference opportunities. As a national organization connected to preservation efforts nationwide, NAOP is in a unique position to share best practices and information, provide training opportunities, broker strategic local partnerships and help local organizations make the case of the environmental, social and economic benefits that parks provide to local communities.

5.) Raise public awareness of the value of Olmsted parks. NAOP will use the information coming out of the research and community assessment process to shape a comprehensive media strategy around Preserving Critical Historic Landscapes and leverage broader public attention to the community value of and threats to these historic landmarks.

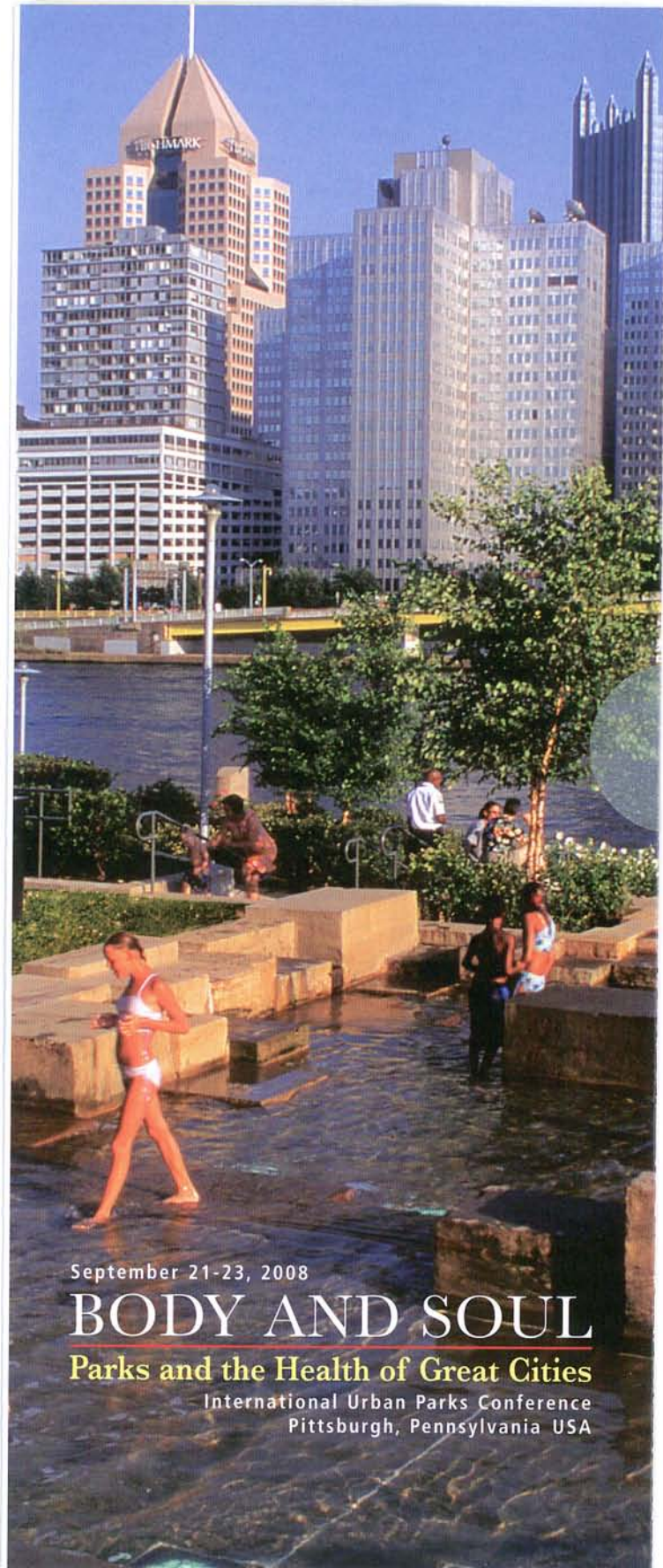
SAVE THE DATE

150th Anniversary



A section of the Greensward Plan
adopted April 28, 1858

OF OLMSTED AND VAUX'S
GREENSWARD PLAN FOR
CENTRAL PARK



September 21-23, 2008

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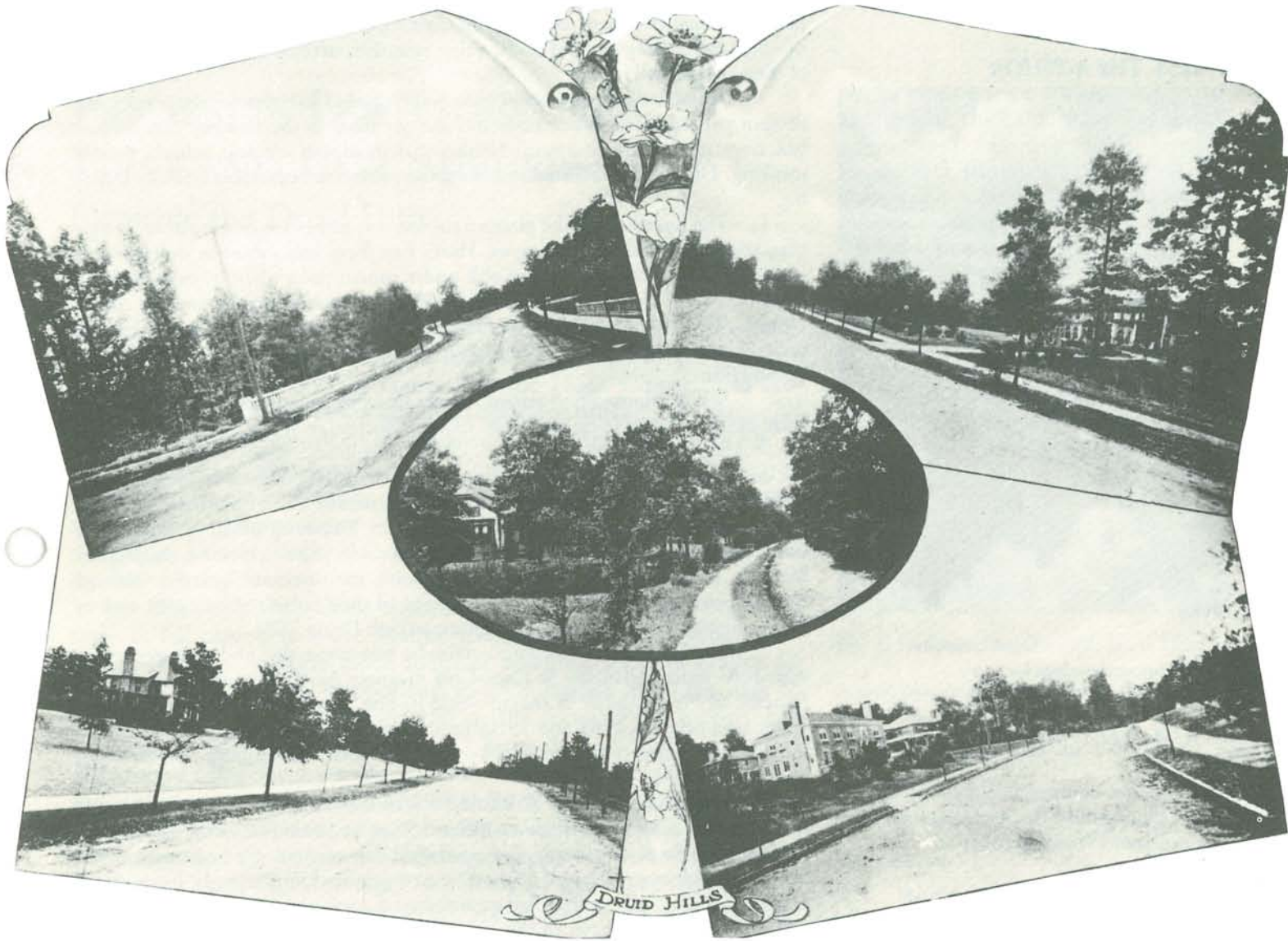
Revere Beach, Revere, Massachusetts, ca. 1897

Charles Eliot
1859–1897

HELD IN TRUST:
Charles Eliot's Vision for the
New England Landscape

by Keith N. Morgan

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DESIGN NOTES



FREDERICK LAW
OLMSTED'S FIRST
AND LAST SUBURBS:

Riverside and Druid Hills

by Darlene R. Roth



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PARKS WATCH

A Legislative Update for Members of
National Association for Olmsted Parks and City Parks Alliance
Vol. 4 Number 1, Winter 2007

In this issue:

- 110th Congress Off and Running
- Leveling the Playing Field for Lobbying Congress
- New Congress Returns to Budget Neutrality & Transparency
- Congresswoman Velazquez Introduces H.R. 43
- Healthy Lifestyle Initiatives Introduced in the House
- EPA Says No to Industry Request to Use Chromate-based Wood Preservative

110th Congress Off and Running

Congress is off and running with pledges of bipartisanship and balanced budgets. Both House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) have pledged to work longer hours and full weeks.

The House leadership produced a 100 legislative hour agenda that featured:

- Introducing legislation intended to curb the power of lobbyists.
- Committing to no new deficit spending.
- Fully enacting the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission.
- Raising the minimum wage from \$5.15/hour to \$7.25/hour. Pelosi pledged that there would be no congressional pay raises until the minimum wage is upped.
- Enacting legislation allowing the government to negotiate with drug companies over prescription drug costs for Medicare.
- Promoting and increasing funding for stem cell research.
- Cutting interest rates on college loans by 50%.
- Beginning to roll back subsidies to oil companies.
- Fighting any attempt to privatize Social Security.

The Senate has gotten off to a slower start, complicated from the beginning by the unexpected hospitalization of Sen. Tim Johnson (D-SD). There is promising news regarding Sen. Johnson's recovery, and he is expected to return to the Senate in the months ahead.

The new committee chairs in the House and Senate are busy organizing agendas and schedules with many promises to investigate programs that have not been given attention under the past 12-years of Republican leadership. Committee staffs are very interested in hearing about programs that need oversight. A complete listing of the new

WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN

Please join the National Association for Olmsted Parks (NAOP) and support our work of advocacy, research, education and information exchange. Help us prevent encroachment and protect, preserve and rehabilitate the nation's legacy of historic parks and landscapes that revitalize communities and enrich people's lives. Help advance the Olmsted principles of democracy, intelligent urban planning and sound landscape design. Help us involve NAOP in more local issues surrounding historic parks where the national perspective can enhance the importance of the local position.

As we recognize the 150th anniversary of the concept for Central Park, it is important to remember that Frederick Law Olmsted said, "Everyone deserves . . . the right to relief from urban intensity." This was an important statement of democratic equality that continues to attract people to preserve and rehabilitate their parks. The majority of America's historic urban parks were either designed by the Olmsted firm or based on Olmstedian principles. Today, because of their locations, many are neglected or inadequately maintained, preventing surrounding communities from utilizing them fully. NAOP is dedicated to environmental equality that permits all citizens to enjoy and appreciate the legacy that our landscape architect forebears designed so capably for current and future generations. Perhaps, this legacy's greatest element is its design appropriateness and flexibility, making these spaces as important for our children and grandchildren as they are for us and were for preceding generations.



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"LANDSCAPES MOVE US IN
A MANNER MORE NEARLY
ANALOGOUS TO THE
ACTION OF MUSIC THAN
TO ANYTHING ELSE...
GRADUALLY AND SILENTLY
THE CHARM COMES OVER
US, THE BEAUTY HAS
ENTERED OUR SOULS;
WE KNOW NOT EXACTLY
WHEN OR HOW."

-Frederick Law Olmsted

