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From: Rhodes-Conway,Satya
Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 8:35 PM
To: Briski, Kevin
Cc: Clear, Mark; Clausius, Joe; Palm, Larry
Subject: Parks Commission agenda items

Kevin -

Please share the following with the Parks Commissioners. Thank you.

Dear Parks Commissioners:

I am sorry I cannot attend your meeting; I have a conflicting Madison Arts Commission meeting. Please consider my comments on the following three items:

VI (A) - Warner paths and bridges

I will not repeat my previous email to you on this issue (which I assume you received, even though it is not attached in legistar as it should be), but simply say that I continue to support alternative 2, and I hope you will as well.

VII (B) - Rhythm and Booms

I urge your support of this resolution, as passed by the Board of Estimates. While this solution is not perfect, I believe it is a step in the right direction. Ultimately, I would like to see an event that is either fully public (like the Elver fireworks) or fully private.

VII (E) - Brittingham garden lease

I am in full support of the lease as passed by Plan Commission, and I urge you to pass this version. I do not support the additional conditions requested by Ald. Ellingson. My reasons are as follows:

I have no concern with item #3, "Abandoned plots shall be mowed down within 30 days of abandonment.", as this is current practice. Item #2 "No permanent or temporary fencing shall be allowed." does not make sense to me - if the issue is aesthetics, then it is a matter of opinion whether or not fences are aesthetically pleasing. Some people will complain if you have them, others will complain if you don't. I recommend removing the clause and allowing CAC and the gardeners to do what they feel is appropriate if concerns are raised.

My strongest objection is to item #1, "CAC shall be required to maintain an aesthetically-pleasing planted border, two feet in width, within and along the length of the perimeter of the Leased Premises. This planted border shall contain low-growing (eighteen inches or less) non-woody plant material such as strawberries or flowers and shall be kept free of weeds during the growing season. In addition, CAC shall be required to maintain a mulched pathway adjacent to and within the planted border for access to the garden plots, four feet in width, which shall also be kept free of weeds." First, it is inappropriate to task CAC with this. Although they are graciously managing the garden, it is not their garden - it belongs to the community of gardeners who will have plots there. Second, requiring a border of 6 feet around the garden substantially reduces the amount of land available to garden in, which means that

fewer households will be able to participate and fewer families will have access to fresh, healthy food.

Of course we want our neighborhoods and parks to be beautiful. But beauty, famously, is in the eye of the beholder. Who is to say that a border of flowers is more beautiful than a plot of vegetables? The real beauty we should be seeking here is the beauty of families growing their own food, the beauty of neighbors gardening together, the beauty of community.

As always, thank you for your service.

Satya Rhodes-Conway
Alder, District 12
(for 1 more week)