



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 04950, **Version:** 2

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### Fiscal Note

No appropriation is required for the establishment of the Committee. Recommendations of the Committee would be subject to the normal budget development and amendment processes.

### Title

SUBSTITUTE - Establishing a James Madison Park Surplus Property Planning Committee for the following properties: 640 and 646 E. Gorham, the Collins House, and the land under Lincoln School ~~under the guidelines of the Procedures for the Disposal of the Surplus City Real Property~~, and to appoint the Committee Members.

### Body

#### Preamble:

James Madison Park did not exist in the original plat for Madison. Only the street-ends provided lake access in the area. It was recognized by 1900 that a park was needed. The first acquisitions near Franklin and Hancock Streets occurred in 1926 and 1937.

The 1938 Segoe Plan for Madison recommended that the park be expanded from Butler Street to the east end of Lincoln School. Lincoln School was transferred from the School District to the City in 1963. Removal of houses for park expansion continued, with the 1973 park master plan recommending that the landmarks Lincoln School, Collins House, Hoover Boathouse and the relocated Gates of Heaven be the only buildings preserved for public uses.

In the early 1980's, the Madison Art Center vacated the Lincoln School and the Parks Division vacated the Collins house. Lincoln School was made available for residential reuse and was sold in 1983, with a lease of underlying parkland. The Collins House was leased in 1984 to be privately operated as a bed and breakfast. The houses at 640 and 646 East Gorham were acquired in 1992. Although originally recommended for demolition, the houses were designated as landmarks and the park master plan was amended to include preservation of the houses, with full public use of the lakeshore areas. The houses have been leased since their purchase, with profits going to pay for their original acquisition cost, which was not covered by the grants used to acquire the lakeshore.

In 2004 the Park Commission recommended using the surplus property procedure to sell the houses at 640-646 East Gorham and leasing the parkland under them, similar to the arrangement for Lincoln School. In January 2006, the Park Commission rejected a proposal to sell the parkland underlying Lincoln School to the building owners. Also in 2006, the lease on the Collins house was not renewed, and the Park Commission recommended sale of the building with a lease of the land. No surplus determination has been made as to the Collins House property and the land under Lincoln School.

WHEREAS, estimates prepared by staff indicate that selling 646 E. Gorham, 640 E. Gorham, 704 E. Gorham (Collins House) and land under Lincoln School could bring in total revenues of approximately \$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000; and

WHEREAS, the mayor has committed to spending all of these funds on improvements to James Madison Park; and

WHEREAS, after a detailed master plan is developed for this area and the plan updated for the rest of the park, the following items are examples of improvements to James Madison Park:

**Overlook:** grading, garden, terrace, accessible paths, parking, lighting, public art;

**Lakeshore:** pier, staircase, and gazebo;

**General Park Improvements:** playground, shelter furnishings, irrigation, signage, bocce, horseshoe, exercise, relocate basketball away from Gates of Heaven, major shelter renovation for restaurant-concession.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the James Madison Park Surplus Property Planning Committee is established ~~under the guidelines of the Procedures for the Disposal of Surplus City Real Property~~ and shall report back to the Board of Park Commissioners on a proposal for the properties at 646, 640 and 704 East Gorham and the land under Lincoln School; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the following members are appointed to the committee by the Mayor: two Alderpersons from the area around James Madison Park, one additional Alderperson, one representative of the Mayor, two residents from the neighborhood, and one Park Commissioner.