



December 22, 2004

Mr. Brian Melendez
Reporter, Minneapolis Charter Commission
Faegre and Benson LLP
2200 Wells Fargo Center
90 South 7th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55402-3901

**Re: Proposed Charter Revision – Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Comments**

Dear Mr. Melendez:

The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (“Board”) has reviewed the sixth draft of the Proposed Revised Charter. We understand that the Charter Commission is attempting to update the Charter and remove obsolete, redundant and superfluous language. We further understand you do not intend to make any substantive changes. A special board committee lead by Commissioner Annie Young has found the proposed revised Charter is complex to digest for several reasons. First, the proposed Charter eliminates hundreds of words. Second, the proposed Charter simplifies several extensive powers. Third, the proposed Charter may inadvertently omit some important authority.

The Park Board recommends that the Charter Commission adopt the attached list of twenty-one (21) enumerated powers of the Park Board. Our legal counsel drafted these changes to reflect the current powers in the Charter. While we understand that these powers may be redundant, the Board is very reluctant to see any of its historical powers eroded. We believe that by listing these powers, the chance of having unintended consequences would be greatly reduced.

For example, we have concerns about the Board’s authority with respect to real estate. The redrafted Charter would combine parts of Chapter 16, sections 1 and 2 and greatly shorten the language. [Compare section 8.2(d) of redrafted Charter to current charter provisions.] In doing so, the word “designated” is omitted and replaced by the word “dedicated.” Further, the current Charter appears to grant the Park Board the power to assess property benefited from land purchased by the Park Board. While the Board has not exercised such power for years, we would be very reluctant to abandon that power to specially assess property to pay for the extension of the Grand Rounds or other important park projects.

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Vice President
John Erwin

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Bob Fine
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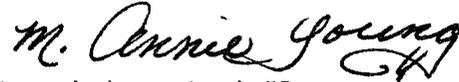
We also believe the Charter Commission should include the following language in Chapter 8 of the new Charter:

"In addition to the powers, rights, roles and duties granted to the Park Board under this Charter, the Park Board shall exercise all the powers, rights, roles and duties granted to it under the Special Laws of Minnesota 1889, Chapters 30 and 103."

We believe this would preserve our existing authority.

We look forward to seeing a Revised Seventh Draft of the Charter and commenting at the public hearing in January.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. Annie Young". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Commissioner Annie Young
Chair, Charter Subcommittee
On behalf of the Park Board

Attachments

cc: Charter Commission Members
Park Board Commissioners