



December 20, 2017

The Honorable Jenny A. Durkan, Mayor, City of Seattle
City Council Members, City of Seattle
PO Box 94749
Seattle, WA 98124-4749

Dear Mayor Durkan and members of the Seattle City Council:

Volunteer Park has great value as a green space, as an Olmsted designed park and as the home of the Seattle Asian Art Museum (SAAM). Those of us on the Volunteer Park Trust (VPT) Steering Committee want to voice our support of SAAM and the importance of the Museum's mission, values, and presence in the park.

The Volunteer Part Trust was founded to preserve and enhance the park. We have worked for over five years to replant and restore neglected beds and to address issues such as sustainability that are common to all of the institutions of the park. The members of the VPT Steering Committee have worked closely with park users, Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks (FSOP), The Volunteer Park Conservatory, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and the Seattle Asian Art Museum regarding the planned expansion of the Seattle Asian Art Museum.

Many issues on the design of the proposed museum addition and landscape have been raised and alternatives presented. The SAAM staff and design team have listened to these concerns and have made several changes: a much simpler landscape treatment, changes to the freight elevator area, and modifications to the stairway from the third floor. Landscape connections with the rest of the park to restore the original Olmsted path on the east side of the Museum have been advocated for and are now part of the plan. SAAM has articulated well the need to expand the museum in order for it to function in today's world and to serve a changing and growing community of users.

We believe that SAAM, after hearing from engaged stakeholders, has found a solution that protects the park's historic landscape and meets the Museum's needs. We urge the City Council to approve the final elements of the plan so that the project can begin construction.

Sincerely,

Brian Giddens, Chair
Volunteer Park Trust Steering Committee

cc: Jesús Aguirre, Superintendent, Seattle Parks and Recreation
Kimerly Rorschach, Seattle Art Museum
Andy Mitton, Friends of Seattle Olmsted Parks
Thatcher Bailey, Seattle Parks Foundation