



COMMISSION ON PARKS AND RECREATION

June 4, 2014

Councilwoman Cindy Bass
Philadelphia City Council
City Hall, Room 594
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Councilwoman Bass:

On behalf of the Philadelphia Commission on Parks & Recreation, I am writing to express our support of Bill 140450, which authorizes the Commissioners of Parks & Recreation and Public Property, on behalf of the City of Philadelphia, to enter into an agreement to lease to Temple University "the interior portion of the East Park Canoe House, located on Kelly Drive, under certain terms and conditions."

As you may recall, in early 2013, the Commission, in accordance with the City's land protection ordinance, carefully reviewed Temple University's submission to construct a new boathouse on park land along Kelly Drive. Following public input, the Commission formally withheld its final determination until Temple University, working in good faith with the Commission and staff of the Department of Parks & Recreation, determined the feasibility of renovating the existing East Park Canoe house to accommodate its needs. Shortly thereafter, Temple University withdrew its proposal to construct a new rowing facility on Kelly Drive, indicating that "further planning, consideration and discussion with stakeholders" is needed.

It is with this background that we applaud the City and Temple University for reaching a compromise that both honors the Open Lands Protection Ordinance and provides Temple students with a well-deserved rowing facility. The renovation of the East Park Canoe House demonstrates a sustainable and sensible solution to the continuation of Temple University's presence on the Schuylkill River and through a commitment to community outreach, will expose more and more underrepresented youth to the sport of rowing and the importance of a college education.

The Commission on Parks & Recreation encourages City Council to approve Bill 140450, solidifying a partnership that benefits the City, the Parks & Recreation Department, Temple University, and the citizens of Philadelphia.

Sincerely,


Nancy A. Goldenberg
Chairman