

M E M O

May 1, 1979

TO: PET

FROM: RICH

RE: OLMSTED NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Today the Parks Subcommittee (2:00) will consider S. 490, the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site bill.

Olmsted, "The Father of Landscape Architecture", was one of the first architects to recognize the need for open space within urban areas. He is best known for Central Park, his work on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol, the White House and the Lincoln Memorial, and for his design of the National Zoo and Rock Creek Park. He also was responsible for Boston's "Emerald Necklace".

The bill would designate his home and office in Brookline, Massachusetts as a national historic site. The home was built in 1810. Other additions, including the offices, were made in subsequent years. It was designated a national historic landmark in 1963.

The Olmsted Collection contains approximately 150,000 drawings and 63,000 prints and photographs.

The sticking point is the value of the archival collection. Two appraisals have been conducted and range from approximately \$200,000 to \$2,750,000. A third appraisal is expected to be completed soon.

The Richardson family's estimate is much closer to the higher of the two figures.

The Richardson family is to be commended for its dedication and sacrifices to preserve the site and keep the collection together at great cost to the family. Ann Richardson Howland, who you met in January, will testify as the family representative.

I would say that the guiding principle is that the family should receive a fair value for the collection and should certainly not suffer as a result of the historic site designation.

Attached is a copy of the bill and the letter which you inserted in the Record of the House Committee hearings.

The House Interior Committee favorably reported the bill.