



November 7, 2022

Mr. Michael Chihoski  
Senior Associate Vice President  
University Facilities and Services  
University of Rochester  
271 East River Road, Box 270345  
Rochester, New York 14627-0345

Dear Mr. Chihoski,

Thank you for your letter of [November 2, 2022](#), concerning plans for a portion of the Olmsted-designed Genesee Valley Park featured in *Landslide 2022: The Olmsted Design Legacy*. This morning we [posted a Landslide update](#) about the University's revised development plans. We appreciate the statement in the accompanying email: "Please see the attached letter that I hope answers the questions that [Birnbaum] raised." While the letter "briefly describe[s] the University's relationship to Genesee Valley Park," it does not respond to nearly all of TCLF's specific questions.

The letter advises us that the "University of Rochester campus development is regulated under City of Rochester Planned Development District #10 (PD 10)." A search of [PD 10](#) for terms used in the University's [October 26 letter](#) yields no mention of "Olmsted," "stewardship," "Genesee Valley Park," or "park" (though there are twenty references to "parking"); nor any mention of "landscape" or "landscape architecture." Moreover, the only mention of "preservation" is in relationship to "antennas on buildings" [H (1)].

As noted in our [letter of October 31](#) we see the [following statements](#) from the University as inconsistent and contradictory: "we don't think that constructing a facilities operation on this portion of University property would disturb the park at all ..." and "any future proposed development of this particular parcel will be aligned with the preservation and stewardship of Genesee Valley Park." Again, this suggests, based on the University's claim that it would not "disturb the park at all," that construction of the proposed "operations center building" would or was determined to be "aligned with the preservation and stewardship of Genesee Valley Park." What planning criteria informed this conclusion? And who made that call?

Again, what are the qualifications of the individual and/or team that determines the impact of a proposed project on a historically significant landscape, qualifications sufficient to substantiate the claim that the proposed "operations building center" would not "disturb the park at all"? How has the University's "strong commitment to the preservation of Genesee Valley Park" been documented, codified, and/or otherwise memorialized and how is that commitment overseen and enforced?

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR  
President & CEO