



Chicago Park District

Legislation Text

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REQUEST TO OFFICIALLY NAME PARK #520 IN HONOR OF BERTHA HONORÉ PALMER

To the Honorable Board of Commissioners of the Chicago Park District

I. Recommendation

It is recommended that an order be entered authorizing the General Superintendent or his designee to officially name Park #520 as Bertha Honoré Palmer Park.

II. Park Naming Information

Park: Park 520

Location: 916 N. Honore St

Community Area: West Town

Ward: #2

Proposed Name: Bertha Honoré Palmer Park

III. Park Naming Procedures

Pursuant to Chapter VII, Section E (1) of the Code of the Chicago Park District, this request to name Park #520 was forwarded to the Secretary of the Chicago Park District, who filed a copy of this request with the Committee on Programs and Recreation and initiated a notice period to solicit public input. Notices were posted in parks and sent to advisory councils located within a one-mile radius of the park site. Elected officials were also notified of the proposal, including the alderman of the ward in which the park is located.

The notice period of forty-five (45) days soliciting public input regarding the naming proposal was initiated on May 19, 2014. There has been positive support for this proposal from Commercial Club Advisory Council (which is located nearby and also helps oversee Park #520) and #2nd Ward Alderman Robert Fioretti. Staff recommends that the Board approve the request to name Park #520 as Bertha Honoré Palmer Park

IV. Explanation

The Chicago Park District is building a new playground in Park #520 made possible through Mayor Rahm Emanuel's Chicago Plays! playground redevelopment program. With the anticipation of the new playground, members of the West Town Community have proposed naming Park #520 in honor for Bertha Honoré Palmer. .

Bertha Honoré Palmer (1849 - 1918) was an important Chicago philanthropist, civic leader, and proponent of women's rights. The daughter of a successful businessman and real estate investor, Bertha Honoré was born in Louisville, Kentucky. At the age of six, she moved with her family to Chicago. After she attended finishing school in Washington D.C., she returned to Chicago and soon married self-made millionaire Potter Palmer, who started a dry goods store that became known as Marshall Field and Company. The couple opened the fashionable Palmer House Hotel, which operated only briefly before its' destruction by the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. The Palmers quickly rebuilt the hotel as well as their personal fortune.

Bertha Honoré Palmer played a leading role in women's clubs, cultural organizations, and civic groups that influenced the development of Chicago in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These include the Chicago Woman's Club, the Society of Decorative Arts, Fortnightly Club and the Chicago Civic Federation. She often used her influential role in society to advance women's causes. As President of the Board of Lady Managers for the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, she made sure that the Word's Fair highlighted a broad and diverse representation of women's achievement.

Bertha and Potter Palmer were avid art enthusiasts and collectors. They lent put some of their most priceless Impressionist paintings

to provide the public access to them in the Exposition's Fine Arts Building. The Palmers also bequeathed a substantial collection of world-class artworks to the Art Institute of Chicago.