

CCNA

COALITION OF CITY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

677 N Washington Blvd Ste 52 · Sarasota, FL 34236

December 4, 2021

SENT VIA EMAIL ONLY TO CITY EMAIL ADDRESSES

City Commissioners
City of Sarasota

CC: City Manager, Deputy City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk, Parks & Recreation Director, CCNA Presidents, Delegates & Alternates, William Merrill, Esq.

RE: Paul Thorpe Park

Dear Commissioners:

Regarding this week's City Commission agenda item to consider using a significant portion of Paul Thorpe Park in the settlement of a legal lawsuit. We strongly discourage the use of this wonderful downtown asset in this manner.

Parks belong to the city residents and taxpayers. They should not be used as bargaining chips with developers whether they are local or foreign companies. The proposed suggestion removes almost 50% of the park from public use AND eliminates 80% of the greenspace.

We are further concerned to hear that an established local law firm is actually proposing this as a settlement to prevent the appeal of a legal decision they have lost. This just doesn't seem right.

We do not believe the proposed legal settlement provides benefit to city residents or taxpayers. It merely transforms a public park to a commercial use. There is limited public space in the downtown core and this space should not be negotiated away.

Given the work and progress the commissioners, the city and the neighborhoods of CCNA have made to preserve and enhance green space through activities such as the tree program and the pending Rosemary District pocket park we urge you to seek a solution that protects Paul Thorpe Park (and all parks) from indiscriminate use as anything other than public green space.

We do not believe the proposed legal settlement provides benefit to city residents or taxpayers. It merely transforms a public park to an unacceptable, non-public commercial use.

Sincerely,

/Signed,

CCNA Executive Committee

*Lou Costa, Chairperson Sue Stewart, Vice-Chair Eileen Normile, Vice-Chair
Tony Smith, Secretary Charlie Nagelschmidt, Treasurer Carl Shoffstall, Past-Chair
Dan DelLeo, District Delegate Norm Dumaine, Delegate Richard Harris, District Delegate*