June 12, 2009

Mark N. Mauriello, Acting Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
P.O. Box 404
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Mr. Mauriello,

On behalf of the National Association for Olmsted Parks (NAOP), I am writing in support of the nomination of Anderson Park to the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places.

Designed by landscape architect John Charles Olmsted, Anderson Park is significant as part of the pioneering Essex County park system, the first designed countywide park system in the nation.

Anderson Park also is significant by association with noted landscape architect and planner John Charles Olmsted, co-founder of the Olmsted Brothers firm and founding member of the American Society of Landscape Architects. His comprehensive philosophy of design was to plan for the future, to acquire as much land as possible to enable a cohesive design, protecting scenery and yet fulfilling social, economic, and political demands of twentieth-century cities. On the basis of this philosophy, Olmsted developed park systems for municipalities in diverse locations, including Portland, Maine, and Portland Oregon, Seattle and Spokane, Dayton and Charleston, and countywide parks and parkways for Essex County, New Jersey.

We support the efforts of Friend of Anderson Park to protect Anderson Park as an integral part of the Essex County park system, and as a cultural, environmental and economic asset for the entire region.

The Olmsted firm is widely recognized for its visionary approach to city and regional planning. Their comprehensive body of built work is considered part of our national heritage. The firm’s designs addressed a full range of environmental, economic and social concerns and continue to be models for sustainable approaches to urban development. Their bold vision for the well-being of communities through the provision of integrated, open space in their residential designs foreshadowed our current understanding of how these spaces support healthy, regional ecosystems and strong neighborhoods.

Established in 1980, NAOP is a coalition of design and preservation professionals, historic property and park managers, scholars, municipal officials, citizen activists and representatives of numerous Olmsted organizations around the United States and Canada. Its primary concern is the legacy of work designed and inspired by Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. and his firm that continued to practice landscape architecture for almost a century through the involvement of his sons John Charles Olmsted and Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. NAOP advances the use of Olmstedian design principles and advocates for the protection of irreplaceable historic parks and landscapes that revitalize communities and enrich people’s lives.

Sincerely,
Iris Gestram
Executive Director