



## Joint Civic Committee of Italian Americans

3800 Division St. Stone Park, IL 60165

Phone: (708) 450-9050

Fax: (708) 450-9065

jccia.com

jcc@jccia.com

Ron Onesti, President  
Jo Ann Serpico, Exec Director  
Lisa Ryan, 1<sup>st</sup> V.P.  
Sal Camarda, 2<sup>nd</sup> V.P.  
Lyn Scolaro, 3<sup>rd</sup> V.P.  
Stan Kuczynski, Secretary  
Christine C. Cerami, Treasurer  
Frank Di Piero, Sgt. At Arms  
Frank Sommarlo Legal Adv.  
Sergio Giangrande Past President  
Rose Mary Ranallo, Pres. W.D.  
Pasquale Gianni Avanti Group

#### Member Organizations

Amer. Assoc. Ital. Teachers  
Arcolian Dental Society  
Assoc. Regionale Sicilia (ARSA)  
Associazione Veneti nel Mondo  
Beato Giovanni Liccio Societa'  
Blush, Inc  
Calabresi in America  
Casa Italia  
CIACO  
Columbian Club  
Elk Grove Village Sister Cities  
First Nations Bank  
Flowers of Italy  
Fra Noi  
Hardcore Italians  
Harlem Avenue Little Italy Business  
Association  
IA Civic Organization of Berwyn  
IA Exec of Trans. (IAET)  
IA Human Relations Foundation  
IA Political Coalition  
IANU Italo National Union  
IA Veterans Museum  
IA Veterans Post Auxillaries 1, 2, 4  
IA Women's Organization  
Ital. Catholic Federation 392  
JCCIA Avanti Group  
JCCIA Women's Division  
JRC Investments, Inc.  
Justinian Society  
Little Italy Chicago (LICNA)  
Marchegiana Society  
Mazzini Verdi Club  
National IA Sports Hall of Fame  
Old Neighborhood IA Club  
Panoramus  
SS. Maria di Costantinopoli  
San Francesco Di Paola  
San Giovanni Bosco  
San Rocco Di Potenza  
Santa Maria Lauretana  
Society of OLMC  
Shrine Our Lady of Pompeii  
Società Santa Fara di Cinisi  
Sons and Daughters of Italy  
Unico Chicago West Suburban  
Wesley Realty

April 5, 2021

Mr. Michael P. Kelly  
General Superintendent and CEO  
Chicago Park District  
541 N. Fairbanks  
Chicago, IL 60611

RE: Christopher Columbus Statue / Arrigo Park

Dear Mr. Kelly,

I write to you today, and to the members of the Board of Commissioners of the Chicago Park District (CPD), as the duly elected President of the Joint Civic Committee of Italian Americans (JCCIA). The JCCIA, established in 1952, is the umbrella organization of over 75 Italian civic, social and athletic organizations in the City of Chicago.

The purpose of this letter is to convey our request for the CPD to honor the terms of the written agreement made with the Columbus Statute Committee (CSC) in 1973 with respect to a certain statue of Christopher Columbus and to return the statue for display in Victor Arrigo Park as soon as possible.

As you know, pursuant to legislation passed by the Illinois General Assembly in 1933, the then twenty-two (22) separate governing park districts were consolidated into the Chicago Park District. The law creating this singular body became effective on May 1, 1934 and the Supreme Court of Illinois affirmed the legislation in October of 1934.

Since then, the CPD has been an "independent municipality" with the ability to pass ordinances and to levy taxes. The independence and powers of the CPD has not again been tested or challenged. Today, the CPD is governed by seven (7) members of the Board of Commissioners, hence I make this request upon each of them as well.



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Mr. Michael P. Kelly

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Page – Two –

The history of the Columbus statue (Statue) in question is storied but can be briefly summarized by review of the attached documents. The Statue was first commissioned by Henry J. Furber, the owner of the Columbus Memorial Building, which like many buildings of the time, was constructed just prior to the commencement of the Columbian World's Fair held in Chicago in 1892-93. The Statue adorned the entrance to the building for over sixty (60) years.

In 1958, with the building about to be demolished, the owners of the building offered to donate the Statue and two (2) mosaic murals to the CPD in a letter written on June 26, 1958. A copy of the letter and the "history" of the Statue and the building are attached hereto as Exhibit "A". The CPD responded on July 24, 1958 that it "will take no initiative to acquire these works..." That response is attached hereto as Exhibit "B".

It has been said that a "Chicagoan of Italian parentage" moved the Statue to a lumber yard where it remained in repose until 1966. In 1966, the Chairman of the City of Chicago, Department of Urban Renewal, contacted Mr. Arthur L Schultz of the CPD to inform him of plans for a Near West Side project – a proposal to construct a Columbus Plaza. A copy of the letter from April 1, 1966 is attached hereto as Exhibit "C". By May of 1966, the plans for Columbus Plaza were moving forward. The City had offered to sell two parcels of land to accommodate the Plaza and acknowledged it was working in conjunction with the CSC with an anticipated completion of the Plaza and the installation of the Ezekiel Moses statue of Christopher Columbus by October of that year. A copy of the letter from May 13, 1966 is attached hereto as Exhibit "D".

With timeliness not often achievable today, the Columbus Plaza was completed and dedicated a few months later, on October 12, 1966, complete with the Statue that has remained standing until there until on or about July 24, 2020. A copy of the dedication program is attached hereto as Exhibit "E".





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Page – Three –

In July of 1973, writing on behalf of Victor Arrigo, and responding to a letter from Edmund L. Kelly of the CPD, a request was made of the CSC to provide to the CPD the sum of approximately \$10,000.00 "for the upkeep of the Columbus statue in Vernon Park". (In 1974 the name of Vernon Park was changed to "Victor Arrigo Park.") A copy of Mr. Scoville's letter is attached hereto as Exhibit "F".

Mr. Arrigo's wish was acted upon when Oscar O. D'Angelo responded on behalf of the CSC with a proposed contract between the CSC and the CPD. (Agreement) A copy of Mr. D'Angelo's letter of August 8, 1973 is attached hereto as Exhibit "G". Mr. Edmund L. Kelly submitted a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners of the CPD to accept the agreement prepared by Mr. D'Angelo in consideration of the transfer of \$10,695.74 – a recommendation "approved as to form and legality" by the then General Attorney of the CPD, Mr. Daniel P. Coman. A copy of Mr. Kelly's letter of August 25, 1973 is attached hereto as Exhibit "H".

On October 10, 1973 the CPD Board of Commissioners convened and the Board duly approved the following order:

ORDERED, That authority be granted to execute an agreement with the Columbus Statue Committee whereby the Committee will transfer \$10,695.74 to the Park District for the purpose of maintaining *in perpetuity* the Columbus Statue and Plaza in Vernon Park. (Emphasis supplied.)

On the same day, October 10, 1973, the Agreement between the CPD and CSC was executed and signed by Edmund L. Kelly, General Superintendent of the CPD, and by the President and Secretary of the CPD and it was approved by its legal counsel and executed by Victor Arrigo and Oscar D'Angelo on behalf of the CSC. A copy of the minutes of the approval of the Board of Commissioners and a copy of the executed Agreement are attached hereto as Exhibits "I" and "J" respectively.



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Page – Four –

A review of the Agreement reveals at Paragraph 2 that the CPD has three (3) main obligations, *inter alia*, that the CPD "will in perpetuity," (a) maintain the Statue and the Plaza, (b) operate the fountain during certain times of the year and "(c) Obtain the approval, in writing, of the COMMITTEE, before making any substantial changes to the Columbus Plaza or Columbus Statue. If the Committee shall not be in existence then the approval of the Joint Civic Committee of Italian Americans (the "JCCIA") shall be obtained prior to such change."

As noted above, the Statute was removed from Victor Arrigo Park on or about July 24, 2020 by the City of Chicago. Removal of the Statue is clearly a "substantial change" and it was done without the written consent of the JCCIA.

This request for the CPD to restore the statue is justly made by the JCCIA and it is rightly directed to you and the Board of Commissioners. As an independent municipality and a signatory to a binding contract, we know of no basis for the City of Chicago to interfere with the terms of this contract. The actions of the City of Chicago are hostile to this contract and have interrupted your obligations to the JCCIA, which are due and owing "in perpetuity".

We are painfully aware of the removal of two other statues of Christopher Columbus, one from Grant Park, again under the jurisdiction of the CPD, and another on the City's south side, again by actions of the City of Chicago. Those removals are not condoned by our organization but they are not the subject of this letter.





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April 5, 2021

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We, as an organization, bring this matter to your attention with the purpose of seeking an immediate amicable resolution of this legal issue and we look forward to discussing this matter in a manner, which promotes civility and respect.

Very truly yours,

Mr. Ronald Onesti  
President

cc: Mr. Frank A. Sommaro, Legal Counsel of the JCCIA  
Mr. Timothy M. King, Legal Counsel of the CPD  
Com. Avis LaVelle – President  
Com. Tim King – Vice President  
Com. Donald J. Edward  
Com. David A. Helfand  
Com. Martin L. Koldyke  
Com. Jose M. Munoz  
Com. Ashley H. Netzky  
JCCIA Board of Directors

STATE AND WASHINGTON BLDG. CORP.

17 NORTH STATE STREET, SUITE 908

CHICAGO 2, ILLINOIS

OPERATING

COLUMBUS MEMORIAL BLDG. - STEVENS BLDGS. - VENETIAN BLDG.  
31 N. STATE STREET      17 N. STATE ST.      15 E. WASHINGTON ST.  
18 N. WABASH AVE.

*Handwritten:* 908

June 26, 1958

Mr. Geo. T. Donahue, General Sup't.  
Chicago Park District,  
425 E. 14th Blvd.  
Chicago 5, Illinois



Dear Sir:-

We are planning the demolition of the Columbus Memorial Building, and are wondering if you would be interested in accepting the Columbus statue which is located at the entrance of this building at 31 North State St. There are also two mosaic murals in the building, size approximately 15'6" long and 8'4" wide, one of them depicting the landing of Columbus - the other in the presence of royalty. We are enclosing herewith some pertinent information regarding both the statue and the murals.

These may be of interest to you.

Yours very truly,

STATE AND WASHINGTON BLDG. CORP.

BY Israel Sweet  
Secretary-Treasurer

IS s

Ex. A

INFORMATION REGARDING COLUMBUS STATUE - also Mosaic work forming pictures  
in various locations of the COLUMBUS MEMORIAL BUILDING  
31 North State Street, Chicago, Illinois

\* \* \* \* \*

The statue of Columbus is made of bronze and is nine feet high. It is intended to show the discoverer in the act of taking possession of the new world. On either side of the entrance to the building, above which stands the statue, are two memorial tablets in bronze. One reminds the reader that Christopher Columbus was born in Genoa in 1435; discovered America the 12th of October, 1492, and died at Valladolid, Spain, the 20th day of May, 1506. The other explains that the building was erected in honor of Columbus in the year 1892, being the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America. On the building are cornices decorated with Spanish medallions and coats of arms.

Inside the building, too, are many interesting features. The mosaic interior trim was brought over from Italy by special workmen to assemble it, one of whom remained in this country to keep it in repair until his death a few years ago. The marble used in the interior also was brought over from Italy and some fine old bronze and mahogany may be found there.

Regarding Mosaic work forming picture on the East wall of DeMets Candy Shop, 29 No. State Street in the Columbus Memorial Building, Chicago, Illinois -

The mosaic work as referred to in the above was installed during the year 1892 while the Columbus Memorial Building was in the final stages of construction preparatory to its completion for the official opening of the building in time for the opening date of the Columbian Exposition held in Chicago, Illinois, during the year 1893.

The picture in question represents the Landing of Columbus on one of the Bahama group, which he named San Salvador, on October 12, 1492, of which



our history of America gives an account.

The material of which the picture is formed is made up of a product known as glass mosaic, the Italian name of which is Smalti. This product is made in Venice, Italy, and also in Vatican City, Rome, Italy. The material for the picture in question was also made in Venice where the original patterns were cast and assembled in the forming of the picture which was made up in sections and pasted to paper forms preparatory for shipment to America. On its arrival here, these sections were set in place, imbedded in cement in their present location.

As has been mentioned in the foregoing, the material was manufactured in Venice and this material which is known as glass mosaic is formed and colored to meet requirements. In the process of manufacture, the mosaic is formed in bars and cut to size. All of this work is done by Italian labor which is exceptionally proficient in this art. In the assembling of the picture in its present location the workmen engaged on this work were imported from Venice and it may be added at this time that one of them, namely, Sarafino Scussel, was among those and under whose supervision this work was installed. On the completion of this work, Mr. Scussel was retained by the building management in the maintenance of the marble which adorns the walls of the corridors, floors and ceiling of the building. He passed away in January 1932 at 80 years of age.

The picture measures 15'6" long and 8'4" wide and made up of pieces of glass mosaic of varying sizes ranging from 3/8" to 1/2" in size. The color of each piece of mosaic is original and arranged according to color to make up the attire of the characters of the picture.

It might be added at this time that from information received from



authentic sources that considerable use is being made of glass mosaic or Smalti in Europe in copying the master pieces of famous painters. The reason for this is that this glass mosaic will not deteriorate or fade and in this manner the work of these masters can be retained for posterity's sake for an indefinite period.

We quote from an item in the Chicago Tribune of October 12, 1949:  
"Today's celebrations could easily center at Washington and State Sts., either at the Columbus Memorial Building, 31 No. State St., or at the Roosevelt Theatre, diagonally northwest across the street. At the latter, Frederic March, the boy from Milwaukee, plays the cinema role of Christopher Columbus, the boy from Genoa, Italy, who also is claimed by the Spanish, Portuguese, French, Germans and Irish, The Russians Haven't gotten around to inventing him yet. The March opus in Technicolor is produced by J. Arthur Rank, an Englishman who also has discovered America and its capital city, Fort Knox, Ky. Mr. Rank, having done all right by Hamlet in America, has come right back with Columbus, and, in our personal opinion, done all right by Chris, too.

After viewing Mr. March's Columbus, you might step across the street to the facade of the Columbus Memorial Building and meet Henry J. Furber's Columbus. The edifice was erected in 1892 by Furber and his co-owner and architect, W. W. Boyington, in conjunction with the opening of the World's Columbian Exposition. Furber had a mania for Columbusana and collected every relic and memento of the great captain he could find in 20 years of European travel. The building was, in essence, built around the statue of Columbus which surmounts the entrance, a fine bronze which was the pride of Furber's collection around the entrance and just below the statue is a tablet series in bronze depicting the most memorable moments in the life of Columbus. The building trim on the sidewalk facings is studded with cornice medallions and masks reputed to have

originally been a part of a castle in Granada, Spain. The inner lobby trim is of glass mosaic called Smalti, set by Italian artists imported at the time from Venice, where the Smalti process has been handed down from father to son since ancient times.

"The collection of Columbus memorabilia that Mr. Furber loved to display in his suite of offices has long been dispersed, along with two bronze memorial tablets containing eulogies both to Columbus and to Furber and his associates which once decorated the entrance to the building.

"But if you are looking for the famous Smalti mosaic murals of the landing of Columbus and of Columbus at the court of Queen Isabella, you'll have to be a discoverer yourself. Once, among the sights of Chicago were the 18 feet by 8 foot twin pictures in the lobby of the Columbus Memorial Building. The tiny quarter-inch squares of colored glass which make up the pictures were set by hand over a period of years in Italy and shipped in sections to Chicago in time for the Columbian exposition. Now one is hidden behind drapes on the back wall of DeMet's tea room, 29 N. State St., and the other behind the wallboard maskings of the fitting rooms in the rear of Spiegel's dress shop, 27 No. State."

We quote again from the Chicago Daily News of October 12, 1953:

"Consuls of Spain and the Dominican Republic placed  
flowers before the statue of Columbus at the Columbus  
Memorial Building at Washington and State."

\*\*\*\*\*



CITIZENS COMMITTEE ON MONUMENTS AND MEMORIALS  
IN THE CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT

Meeting of Thursday, July 24, 1958

A meeting of the Citizens Committee on Monuments and Memorials in the Chicago Park District, was called Thursday, July 24, at 12:15 p.m., to consider the merits of the Columbus statue, arch and bas-relief work located at the entrance to the Columbus Memorial building and the two large murals within the building. Attending the meeting were Mr. Alfred P. Shaw, Mr. Paul Gerhardt, Jr., Mr. Charles H. Dornbusch and Mr. George T. Donoghue.

Demolition of the Columbus Memorial building is to start soon and the building owners have asked Mr. Donoghue if the Chicago Park District would be interested in accepting the monument and the murals. While the Park District will take no initiative to acquire these works it is understood that a number of groups have been negotiating for their acquisition with a view to having them placed in the parks.

The committee members inspected the monument, archway and bas-relief work around the entrance to the building as well as the two mosaic murals on interior walls. During luncheon at the Illinois Athletic Club discussion was held and the following conclusions reached:

It was agreed that the statue of Columbus is a better than average piece of sculpture which has interesting potentials. Because of its construction and proportions the statue cannot stand alone; wherever it is re-erected it will need a background similar to the niche in which it now stands.

Ex. B



CITY OF CHICAGO  
DEPARTMENT OF URBAN RENEWAL

320 NORTH CLARK STREET

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60610

TELEPHONE 744-4000

RICHARD J. DALEY  
MAYOR

LEWIS W. HILL  
COMMISSIONER

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

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D. E. MACKELMANN  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

APR 1 - 1966

R. G. ZUNDEL  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

Mr. Arthur L. Schultz  
Public Relations Department  
Chicago Park District  
425 East 14th Boulevard  
Chicago, Illinois - 60605


Dear Mr. Schultz:

Re: Near West Side Urban Renewal Project  
Columbus Plaza Proposal

The enclosed material on the Proposed Columbus Plaza is for your file of the Citizens Memorials Committee.

The additional photographs, together with the brochure illustrate the merits of the proposal. However, if a representative of the Department of Urban Renewal were to be present at your April 4th meeting I am sure it would be of help to your committee to have the additional first hand information immediately available.

Sincerely yours,

  
for LEWIS W. HILL  
Commissioner

Enclosures

EX. C.



## THE COLUMBUS PLAZA

### DESIGN PROPOSAL

A meaningful setting for the fine full bronze statue of Columbus is the prime objective of the Plaza.

Setting the theme are three curving walls (symbolic of wind, sail and wave forms) that modulate the flow of space. The scale and direction of the Pedestrian Greenway System (connecting the Medical Center to the University of Illinois) is culminated by the Plaza as a major focal point of the community.

The statue is subtly elevated in a reflecting pool and fountain which faces on the westward axis of Polk Street, a link in the Pedestrian Greenway.

Careful selection and placement of distinctive trees, lighting and benches complete the Plaza.

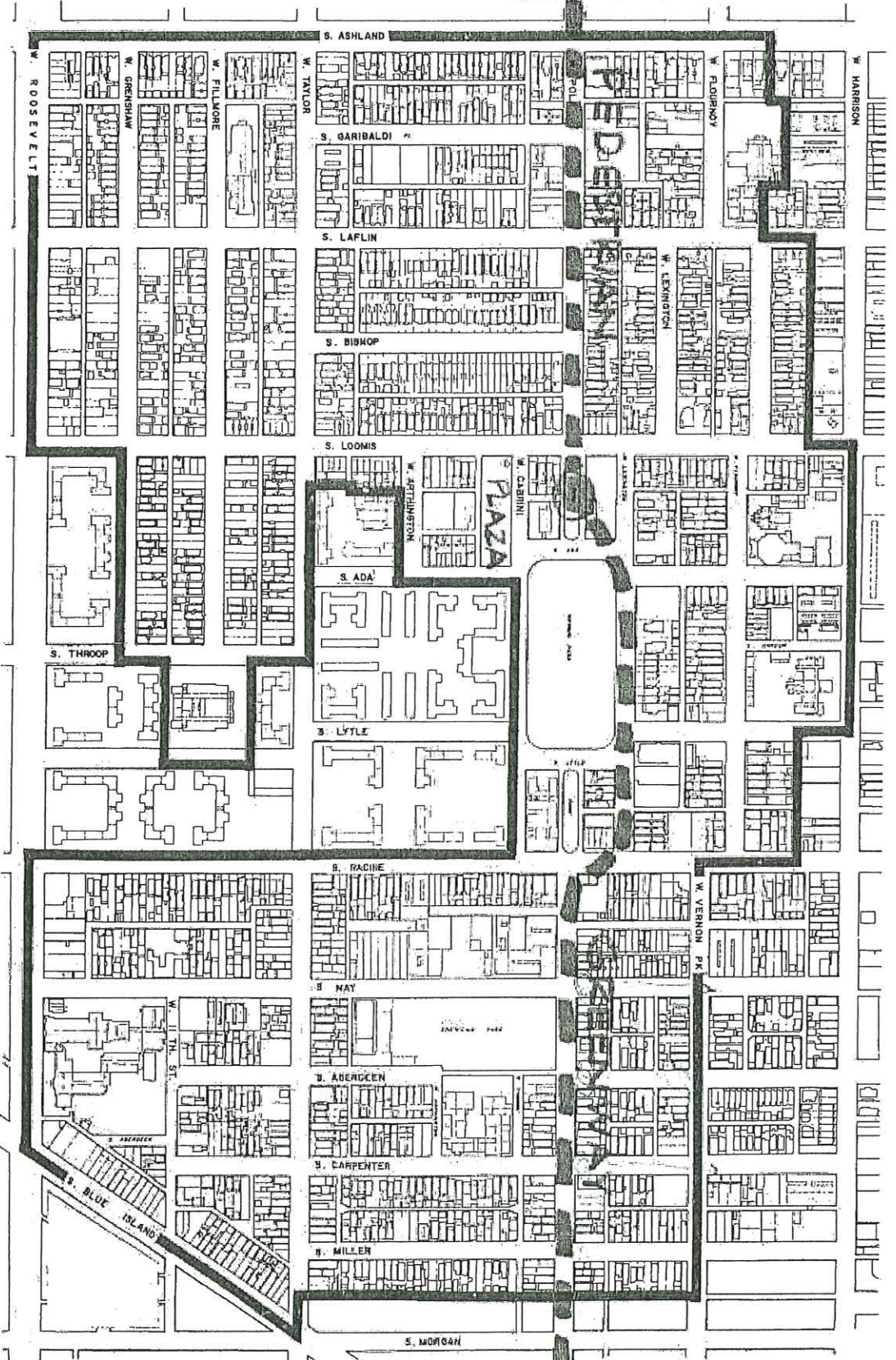
A SUGGESTED PLAZA DESIGN  
FOR  
CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS PLAZA  
WITHIN THE  
NEAR WEST SIDE URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT

PREPARED BY THE  
DEPARTMENT OF URBAN RENEWAL  
CITY OF CHICAGO

IN COOPERATION WITH  
THE NEAR WEST SIDE CONSERVATION COMMUNITY  
COUNCIL, THE MUNICIPAL ART LEAGUE OF CHICAGO,  
AND THE CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT.



MEDICAL CENTER

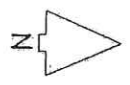


UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
CIRCLE CAMPUS

BOUNDARY MAP

NEAR WEST SIDE  
CONSERVATION PROJECT

DEPARTMENT OF URBAN RENEWAL  
CITY OF CHICAGO  
JULY, 1963







CITY OF CHICAGO  
DEPARTMENT OF URBAN RENEWAL

320 NORTH CLARK STREET

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60610

TELEPHONE 744-4000

MAY 13 1966

RICHARD J. DALEY  
MAYOR

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD  
LEWIS W. HILL  
CHAIRMAN

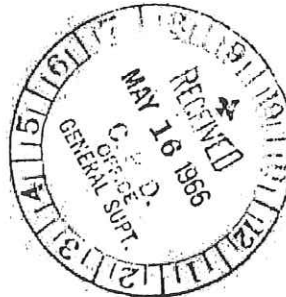
NORMAN F. BARRY  
DELBERT W. COLEMAN  
JAMES D. GREEN  
ROBERT N. LANDRUM

LEWIS W. HILL  
COMMISSIONER

D. E. MACKELMANN  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

R. G. ZUNDEL  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

Mr. Erwin Weiner  
General Superintendent  
Chicago Park District  
425 East 14th Boulevard  
Chicago, Illinois - 60605



Dear Mr. Weiner:

Attention: Mr. Robert A. Black

Re: Urban Renewal Project Near West Side  
Columbus Plaza

This is in reply to your letter of April 28, 1966, regarding the approval of the Columbus Plaza in the Near West Side Urban Renewal Project.

The following is in response to the three qualifications that you have raised:

Your first qualification was:

"1. That no cost to the Park District is involved."

The Department of Urban Renewal will erect, at its expense, the complete Plaza as detailed on the construction drawings. We would again appreciate any further comments from your design staff on the construction plans.

Your second qualification was:

"2. That a trust fund for the perpetual maintenance of the monument and surrounding plaza be established, and that all pertinent details concerning this trust fund be furnished to the Park District."

We have contacted the "Columbus Statue Committee" advising them of your request to finalize the details of the trust fund. The Committee's president, Mr. Victor Arrigo, an attorney, has stated that nearly one-fifth of the goal has been deposited and that the Committee will seek the Park District's assistance in working out the many details of the trust fund. A copy of the Committee's fund raising letter is enclosed.

XERO COPY

XERO COPY

XERO COPY

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Ex. D

CITY OF CHICAGO  
DEPARTMENT OF URBAN RENEWAL

Mr. Erwin Weiner

- 2 -

Your third qualification was:

- "3. That a qualified sculptor, preferably from the Art Institute, review the bronze figure to determine its suitability for the purpose and location intended."

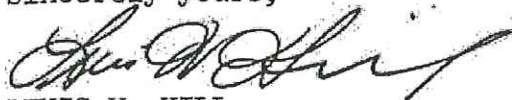
Professor Egon Weiner, the noted sculptor from the Art Institute of Chicago, has researched and reviewed the proposal as you had requested. Professor Weiner is highly in favor of the proposal. The enclosed copy of a letter from him explains more fully the depth and objectivity of the Professor's endorsement.

If you have completed your review of the contract plans, a conference between our design staffs would be worthwhile to resolve any items of refinement. Following that, I would appreciate your earliest possible approval to permit us to advertise the work in order to dedicate the Plaza on October 12, 1966.

Also enclosed, is a set of the contract terms and conditions which will be incorporated into our specifications. Insurance provisions are covered on Pages CT-17 through 20. If these provisions meet with your approval, we shall appreciate, at that time, a letter of authority to proceed with construction on the land presently owned by the Chicago Park District as defined on the enclosed plats of survey. A request has been initiated to vacate the public right of way involved.

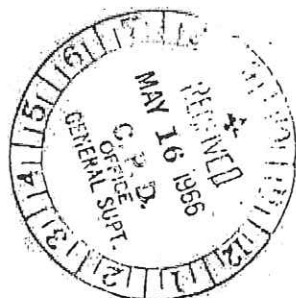
I would anticipate sale of Parcels 5 and 26 to the Park District upon completion and acceptance of the improvement on or about October 12, 1966.

Sincerely yours,



LEWIS W. HILL  
Commissioner

Enclosures



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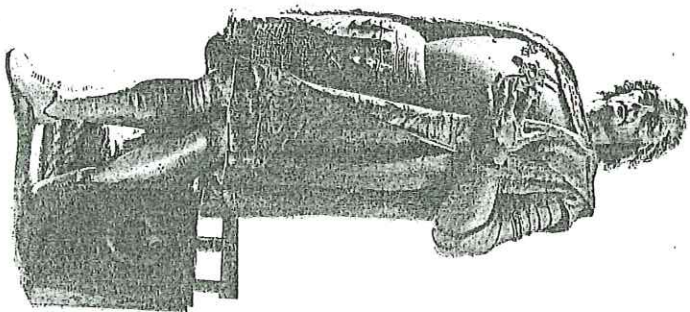
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XERO COPY

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COLUMBUS  
PLAZA  
DEDICATION



CHICAGO, ILLINOIS—OCTOBER 12, 1968

COPY

Ex. E



CITY OF CHICAGO

Richard J. Daley, Mayor  
Donald W. Parrillo, Alderman—1st Ward

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT  
OF URBAN RENEWAL

Lewis W. Hill, Chairman and Commissioner  
Louis M. Pagonis, Near West Side Coordinator  
Stephen Roman, Architect for Design

CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT

James H. Garely, President  
Erwin Weiner, General Superintendent

MUNICIPAL ART LEAGUE  
OF CHICAGO

Frank Chestrow, President

NEAR WEST SIDE  
CONSERVATION  
COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Oscar O. D'Angelo, Chairman

THE COLUMBUS  
STATUE COMMITTEE

Victor A. Arrigo, President

CONSULTING ARCHITECTS

Consoer & Morgan

CONSULTING ENGINEERS

Consoer, Townsend & Associates

PRIME CONTRACTOR

Heilby Mid-Continent Company

**PROGRAM**

Posting of Colors:

Filippo Mazzei Post No. 1 Italian-American War Veterans of U.S.A.  
Commander Hugo Panarrese  
Knights of Columbus Honor Guard  
State Deputy  
Marco De Stefano

National Anthem of Italy  
National Anthem of The

Fifth United States Army Band  
Chief Warrant Officer B. G. Cook

United States of America

**REMARKS**

Lewis W. Hill, Commissioner  
Department of Urban Renewal

Victor A. Arrigo, President  
The Columbus Statue Committee

Frank Chetrow, President  
Municipal Air League of Chicago

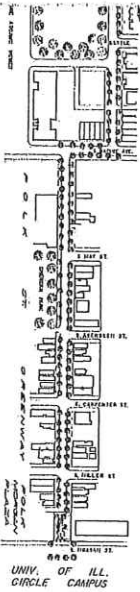
Richard J. Daley, Mayor  
City of Chicago

Frank Annunzio, Congressman  
7th U.S. Congressional District

Joseph A. Califano Jr, Special  
Assistant to the President  
of The United States

Unveiling of Statue ..... Mrs. Demetria Panepinto

Benediction ..... His Excellency the Most Reverend  
Archbishop John P. Cody





## COLUMBUS PLAZA

The statue of Christopher Columbus in the Columbus Plaza at the intersection of Polk and Loomis Streets is the creation of the noted sculptor, the late Moses Ezekiel. This nine-foot bronze tribute to Columbus was cast in Rome in 1893. Moses Ezekiel was commissioned by the owners of the Columbus Memorial Building, 31 N. State Street, to create the Statue for the opening of the World's Columbian Exposition.

The Columbus Statue was later placed in a niche over the entrance of the Columbus Memorial Building. When the Columbus Building was razed in June, 1958, the building's owners entrusted the statue to the Municipal Art League of Chicago for final disposition.

Since the Near West Side has been, traditionally, a port of entry for Italian immigrants and with the provision of improvement program made possible by the community proposed as an ideal setting.

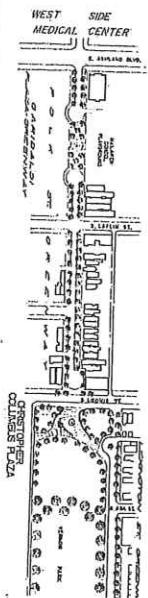
The development of the Plaza involved the cooperative efforts of the Columbus Statue Committee, the Municipal Art League, the Chicago Park District, the Municipal Conservation Community Council, the Chicago Department of Urban Renewal and other City offices.

Stephen Roman, architect-designer for the Department of Urban Renewal developed the plans for Columbus Plaza in cooperation with the Chicago Park District and supervised the restoration of the statue.

Columbus Plaza is located in the heart of the Near West Side Conservation Area in the center of the Polk-Loomis Greenway, one of the first park-malls being built in the City of Chicago community improvement program. A cluster of Linden trees in the Morgan-Polk plaza start the pedestrian Greenway along Polk Street from Morgan to Racine Avenues. From Racine, the Lexington Street row of Lindens graciously enters the Columbus Plaza.

The flow theme is carried out symbolically in the Columbus Plaza. The large mass of the north wall, with its earth berm, represent the force of wind. Open inserts in the south wall with its earth berm represents the force waves. The third free-standing wall represents a sail. The statue of Columbus in the granite fountain faces the westward axis of the Polk Street Greenway.

From the Plaza, the row of Lindens will continue along Polk Street to a new Garibaldi Greenway near Ashland Blvd. Italian-American community sentiment and pride in heritage were factors in the selection of a meaningful site for Columbus Plaza. But just as Columbus belongs to all Americans, Columbus Plaza was created for the enjoyment of all Chicagoans.



JOSEPH SCOVILLE  
ATTORNEY AT LAW  
100 NORTH LA SALLE STREET  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602  
TELEPHONE STATE 2-6639

July 27, 1973

The Officers and Members of the  
Board of Directors of the  
Columbus Statue Committee

Gentlemen:

As you know, the undersigned is acting in behalf  
of Victor A. Arrigo who, at the present time, is ill.

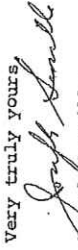
He has instructed me to communicate with you in  
regard to turning over the \$10,000.00 which is now in  
our bank account, and to donate it to the Park District  
for the upkeep of the Columbus Statue in Vernon Park.

Attached hereto and made a part of this letter  
is a photocopy of a letter from the Chicago Park  
District, dated May 16, 1973, addressed to Mr. Arrigo  
and signed by Edmund L. Kelly.

Will each of you approve the transfer of the said  
funds to the Park District for the purposes as stated in  
the attached letter, by signing this letter and returning  
it to the undersigned.

Call me should you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

  
Joseph Scoville

JS/lf

Enclosure

APPROVED:

---

COPY

Ex. F1

LAW OFFICES

FIFFER AND D'ANGELO

SUITE 1100-209 SOUTH LA SALLE STREET  
CHICAGO 60604

OF COUNSEL  
LEONARD L. COWAN (944-1689)

- ROBERT S. FIFFER
- OSCAR O. D'ANGELO
- HOWARD KORENGOLD
- ALAN L. LUSK
- MICHAEL G. CHERNOFF
- MARVEY I. LAPIN
- WALTER J. OZLUCHKI
- BURTON B. VLAY
- JOEL L. WIDMAN
- STEPHEN J. FISHER
- NICHOLAS J. BOSEN
- ANDREW J. WISNIEWSKI
- RICHARD M. PANICHI
- HOWARD P. ALTERMAN

August 8, 1973

Mr. Joseph Scoville, Esquire  
100 North LaSalle Street  
Chicago, Illinois

Re: Columbus Statue Committee

Dear Joe:

Enclosed please find the original and copy of a proposed Agreement between the Columbus Statue Committee and the Chicago Park District. I have sent copies to the other members of the Committee and request that any comments be directed to you. I feel that the Agreement is adequate and should be acceptable to the Chicago Park District in view of the fact that they have been operating the fountain and maintaining the grounds under the same conditions set forth in the Agreement.

You will note that the amount stated in the Agreement (\$10,695.74) is approximately \$350.00 less than the amount actually existing in the account. The reason being that Mr. Tony Nutini of Illinois Bronze Company is replacing the cross and twelve links of the chain that were stolen approximately one year ago for the approximate amount of \$350.00. If you have any questions please feel free to call on me.

Very truly yours,

FIFFER AND D'ANGELO



Oscar O. D'Angelo

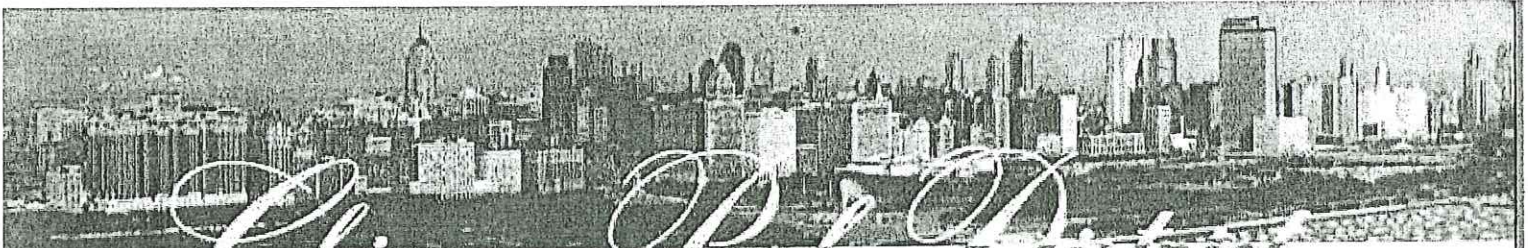
OOD:klw

cc: Members of the Committee

COPY

Ex. G





ADMINISTRATION BUILDING 425 EAST McFETRIDGE DRIVE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60605 • PHONE 294-2200  
PATRICK L. O'MALLEY, President • WILLIAM A. LEE, Vice-Pres. • EDWARD J. ROSEWELL, GALE E. SAYERS, FRANKLIN B. SCHMICK, Commissioners • EDMUND L. KELLY, Genl. Supt.

August 25, 1973

SUBJECT: Agreement with Columbus Statue Committee  
to maintain the Columbus Statue and  
Plaza in Vernon Park

To the Honorable  
Board of Commissioners of the  
Chicago Park District

Gentlemen:

I submit herewith and recommend the adoption of an order  
approving an agreement with the Columbus Statue Committee  
whereby the Committee will transfer \$10,695.74 to the  
Park District for the purpose of maintaining in perpetuity  
the Columbus Statue and Plaza in Vernon Park.

Respectfully submitted,

*Edmund L. Kelly*  
EDMUND L. KELLY  
General Superintendent

APPROVED:

*Daniel P. Coman*  
DANIEL P. COMAN  
General Attorney

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

*Daniel P. Coman*  
DANIEL P. COMAN  
General Attorney

RFD/mig

EX. H

10-10-73

JOURNAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
OF THE  
CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT

Adjourned Regular Meeting held Wednesday, October 10, 1973  
at 10:00 o'clock A.M.

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - BURNHAM PARK  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

OFFICIAL RECORD

Present- Commissioners Rosewell, Lee, O'Malley.

Absent- Commissioners Sayers, Schmick.

CALL TO ORDER

On Wednesday, October 10, 1973 , at ten o'clock in the forenoon  
(the day and hour appointed for the meeting), Honorable Patrick L. O'Malley  
president, called the board to order.

QUORUM

The secretary called the roll of members and there was found to be a  
quorum present.

EX. I

10-10-73

AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE COLUMBUS STATUE COMMITTEE TO  
MAINTAIN THE COLUMBUS STATUE AND PLAZA IN VERNON PARK

(15)

The general superintendent submitted his report, wherein he recommended that the following order be adopted:

ORDERED, That authority be granted to execute an agreement with the Columbus Statue Committee whereby the Committee will transfer \$10,695.74 to the Park District for the purpose of maintaining in perpetuity the Columbus Statue and Plaza in Vernon Park.

Commissioner Lee moved that the report be filed and that the order be adopted.

The motion prevailed and the order was adopted, by yeas and nays as follows:

Yeas: Commissioners Rosewell, Lee, O'Malley - 3.

Nays: None.



A G R E E M E N T

THIS AGREEMENT made and entered into as of the 10th  
day of ~~September~~<sup>October</sup>, 1973 by and between the COLUMBUS STATUE  
COMMITTEE, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, herein-  
<sup>BY O.O.R.</sup> after referred to as the "COMMITTEE" and the CHICAGO PARK  
DISTRICT, a body politic and corporate, hereinafter referred  
to as the "DISTRICT".

W I T N E S S E T H:

WHEREAS, the Department of Urban Renewal of the City of  
Chicago purchased the site at Polk and Loomis Streets, Chicago,  
Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Art League of Chicago donated to  
the City of Chicago a nine-foot bronze statue of Christopher  
Columbus executed in 1893 by sculptor Moses Ezekiel; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Urban Renewal of the City of  
Chicago caused a Plaza to be constructed at Polk and Loomis  
Streets, Chicago, Illinois, and such statue of Christopher  
Columbus was placed in the Plaza and the statue formally  
dedicated on October 11, 1966; and

WHEREAS, the COMMITTEE has raised and deposited with the  
Cosmopolitan National Bank of Chicago, 801 North Clark Street,  
Chicago, Illinois, Ten Thousand, Six Hundred Ninety-five and

EX. J

74/100th Dollars (\$10,695.74) with a view to the perpetual care and maintenance of this plaza and the Columbus Statue; and

WHEREAS, the DISTRICT has requested the transfer of such funds held by the COMMITTEE to the DISTRICT for the purpose of helping to defray the cost of maintaining and caring for the Columbus Plaza and Columbus Statue;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises, covenants and agreements herein contained, the parties hereto agree as follows:

TRANSFER OF FUNDS TO THE DISTRICT

1. Upon execution of this agreement, the COMMITTEE will promptly transfer to the DISTRICT the funds in the amount of Ten Thousand, Six Hundred Ninety-five and 74/100th Dollars (\$10,695.74), now on deposit with the Cosmopolitan National Bank of Chicago, to use for the purposes specified in paragraph two herein:

DUTY OF THE DISTRICT TO MAINTAIN AND CARE  
FOR COLUMBUS PLAZA AND COLUMBUS STATUE

2. Upon execution of this agreement, the DISTRICT will, in perpetuity,

a. Maintain, keep and preserve, in good order, condition and repair and in the highest possible standards, the Plaza and Statue and all parts thereof and improvements thereto (including without limitation the grounds, concrete walls, lights, fountain and statue);

b. Operate the fountain located in Columbus Plaza and have reasonable quantities of water running therein from 10:00 A.M. to 11:59 P.M., seven days a week, from April 1st to the Monday after the first Sunday in November or no later than the 10th of November of each and every calendar year; and,

c. Obtain the approval, in writing, of the COMMITTEE before making any substantial change to Columbus Plaza or Columbus Statue. If the COMMITTEE shall not be in existence then the approval of the Joint Civic Committee of the Italian Americans (the "JCCIA") shall be obtained prior to such change.

#### NOTICES

3. Any and all notices required to be sent pursuant to the terms of this agreement shall be sent registered mail and addressed as follows:

To the DISTRICT  
Chicago Park District  
c/o General Superintendent  
425 East McFetridge Drive  
Chicago, Illinois 60605

To the COMMITTEE  
c/o Joseph Schoville  
100 North La Salle Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

#### ENTIRE AGREEMENT

4. This instrument contains the entire Agreement between the parties hereto with respect to the transactions contemplated herein, all prior representations, agreements, or understandings, written or oral, having been merged herein and superseded hereby.



COUNTERPARTS

5. This agreement has been executed in multiple counterparts, each of which shall, for all purposes, constitute a duplicate original.

AUTHORITY

6. The individual officers, agents and employees of the COMMITTEE and the DISTRICT who have executed this agreement do hereby individually represent and warrant that they have full power and lawful authority to execute this agreement and perform the transactions contemplated hereunder, on behalf of and in the name of their respective principals and/or employer.

CLAUSE HEADINGS

7. The clause headings appearing in this agreement have been inserted for the purpose of convenience and ready reference. They do not purport to, and shall not be deemed to, define, limit or extend the scope or intent of the clauses to which they pertain.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, by their respective duly authorized agents or representatives, have executed and delivered this agreement all as of the day and year first above written.

CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT

By Patrick L. O'Riada  
President

(SEAL)

By Michael H. M. Desmond  
Secretary

COLUMBUS STATUE COMMITTEE

By Victor A. Avrujo  
President

(SEAL)

By Dean O. D'Angelis  
Secretary

APPROVED:

E. J. Kelly  
General Superintendent

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM

J. K. [Signature]  
Chief Engineer

Daniel P. Coman  
General Attorney

Date 9-25-73

No. 15

AGREEMENT WITH THE COLUMBUS STATUE COMMITTEE: SAID COMMITTEE TO TRANSFER \$10,695.74 TO THE CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAINTAINING IN PERPETUITY THE COLUMBUS STATUE & PLAZA IN VERNON PARK:

Report from: Gen. Supt.

Moved by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_

Roll Call	Yeas	Nays	Board Action
Comm. Rosewell _____			Referred to _____
Comm. Sayers _____			Adopted _____
Comm. Schmick _____			Passed _____
Comm. Lee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _____			Approved _____
Pres. O'Malley _____			Rec'd. and Filed _____

Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

(A29389)