

United States Senate

July 30, 1965

Mr. Roger Starr
Executive Director
CITIZENS HOUSING AND PLANNING COUNCIL
OF NEW YORK INC.
20 West 40th Street
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Starr:

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for all you have done during the past six weeks to assure the success of the special committee on outdoor recreation. I am sorry that it was not possible for you to join us last Monday.

I think that the committee has done an excellent job during this period. The recommendations made at the meeting on Monday at Hunter should, I believe, prove very helpful over the long run. I am enclosing a copy of these recommendations as they were revised during the meeting.

They represent an extremely good start but they are no more than a start. It would be unfortunate if the initiatives from a number of sources which distinguished the committee's work were to lessen in any way during the months ahead.

I look forward to continuing the work we have shared over the past six weeks.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,



Robert F. Kennedy

Encl. [1]

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SPECIAL

COMMITTEE ON OUTDOOR RECREATION

- 1) That New York City develop a comprehensive outdoor recreation program. It has been recommended, after consultation with appropriate City and State officials, that application for a planning grant be made to the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and the Housing and Home Finance Agency. It is further recommended that a special unit be formed to work with the Planning Commission, the City Administrator's Office, the Budget Bureau, the Department of Parks and other City agencies to develop this plan.
- 2) That the two agencies within the Federal government most directly responsible for urban conservation and recreation -- the Interior Department and HHFA -- coordinate their activities so as to offer New York City adequate funds and the direction and flexibility necessary for their effective use.
- 3) In view of the sharply increasing needs of large urban centers for open space and outdoor recreation facilities, it is recommended that New York City participate to the maximum extent possible in all New York State programs in this area; that the State continue and extend its coordinating role for urban areas with Federal programs; and that the State Park Commission be asked to explore the desirability of establishing State parks within the City of New York.
- 4) We urge that the task force undertaking the special study give special attention to coordinating the multiple Federal programs that can be helpful to urban areas in supporting a comprehensive outdoor recreation program. As an example of such programs, we suggest that the New York City Community Action Agency, under the terms of the Economic Opportunity Act, initiate programs to train and employ supervisory personnel working in the development and maintenance of recreation and open space facilities, and urban beautification. Also the Office of Economic Opportunity should establish a Job Corps Camp for the specific purpose of providing youth professional education necessary for work in the field of urban conservation and outdoor recreation.
- 5) That the Federal and State government explore the possibility of legislation to provide grants in aid to assist urban areas in the maintenance and operation of recreational and open space areas.