

Friend of the Parks wants to avoid confrontational meetings with citizens whose properties will be degraded by their plans. It is only the efforts of our own neighbors delivering flyers before the meetings that alert us of the time and place of a meeting. We all should be very thankful for our neighbors' alertness and efforts to inform us.

The main problem with Friends of the Parks is that they admire something nice owned by someone else and think of the possibilities for change. After all, according to Friends of the Parks, why should somebody own something so nice when it can be changed so that it can be used by other people for some other purpose? Don't worry about the property owners or what happens to the property that they own. On March 11 of this year Erma Tranter, president of Friends of the Parks, stated in The Chicago Tribune Voice of the People that their plan had the keen support of the broader South Shore and Southeast communities. Why worry about the private property owners on the lake? The broader South Shore and Southeast communities will provide keen support. The broader South Shore and Southeast communities barely know where we are. We are pointed out as a small area of resistance on a map. Until they see the map they don't even know that we exist.

We were told by Friends of the Parks that a major problem in Chicago is a lack of public park area. They told us that the park area per capita in Chicago is way down on the list compared to other cities. If this is true, there is something that we should all wonder about. Friends of the Parks has been in existence since 1975. When the USX Corporation ceased its south side operations in 1991, why didn't Friends of the Parks start and complete a movement to acquire the abandoned USX property to develop into a park? What went wrong? The abandoned property is approximately the size of Jackson Park and the adjacent South Shore Cultural Center combined. The abandoned property stretches from 79<sup>th</sup> Street to 92<sup>nd</sup> Street along the lake. This is a distance of about 1-1/2 miles. Jackson Park and the South Shore Cultural Center extend from approximately 57<sup>th</sup> street to 71<sup>st</sup> Street along the lake. This is a distance of about 1-1/2 miles. Sound familiar? Both have the same area and both have the same length along the lake front. We were told how desperately we need new park land in Chicago and nobody succeeded in starting a movement to acquire the abandoned USX property for park use.

USX wanted \$85,000,000 for their property. This property is so huge compared to Meigs Field that the cost per acre would have been only 1/7 of the proposed cost per acre of Meigs Field. If Friends of the Parks is as good at planning park facilities as they claim they are, then when it comes to Meigs field and the USX property it appears that they had us keep the small fish and throw the big fish away.

Robert G. Mican  
2565 East 72<sup>nd</sup> Place  
Chicago, IL 60649-2727  
(773)721-7816  
rgmican@earthlink.net