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Lakefront park scheme doesn't please everyone
Forget Daniel Burnham:
Make no more plans like these – big or little

Friends of the Parks is not a friend of the South Shore neighborhood. Friends of the Parks has proposed that the Chicago Park District destroy four blocks of public and private beaches on the South Side from 71st Street to 75th Street. Its proposal has met staunch opposition, and Friends of the Parks policymakers are just not listening.

The South Shore community does not want beaches destroyed for a four-block continuation of the bike path. The proposal to build islands in the lake to extend the bike path is ludicrous and irresponsible to the taxpayers. Eleanor Roemer, public trust and policy director for Friends of the Parks, and Erma Tranter, its president, on Nov. 16, 2006, at the Rainbow Beach beach house, professed to a packed house and to Ald. William Beavers that they would drop the plan for the islands and consider other plans for the bike path. Since that meeting, there have been other meetings in the Loop where Friends of the Parks continues to aggressively promote the island plan.

Ladies, please listen to this: South Shore is in desperate need of more parks! Other lakefront neighborhoods, Rogers Park and Edgewater, have 30 parks and 45 parks, respectively. South Shore has eight! South Shore is a strong community, and you will lose this battle. Forget the Burnham Plan. The city would not have developed the lakefront land for living if they wanted islands for a bike path in the lake. Focus on where parks are needed and wanted, not where you think they should be.

I don't doubt the good that Friends of the Parks has done over the years. However, the plan to develop these islands to continue the bike path is so off-base it is an insult to the lakefront residents of our community.

I urge the South Shore community to attend a community forum June 20 at 6 p.m. at the South Shore Cultural Center to discuss this critical issue.

Timothy A. Bartkiewicz, spokesman,

Save Our Beaches campaign,

South Shore