

Cambridge City Council
City Hall, 2nd Floor
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

2003 SEP -4 P 2: 12
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
September 4, 2003

Dear Cambridge City Council Members:

This is a letter about the Charles River Conservancy's efforts to build a world-class skatepark in the New Basin Parklands in the vicinity of the Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge.

Skateboarding is an important part of the lives of many of Cambridge's youth and the City Council recognizes the importance of providing a safe, legal and easily accessible place for Cambridge's young athletes to practice their sport. The New Basin Skatepark will provide such a place, reducing Skateboarder's needs to skate on Cambridge's streets and public plazas. A world-class skateboarding facility would be a valuable resource for our youth and a wonderful amenity for the city.

Not only would a skatepark in the New Basin Parklands serve the local skateboarding community, it will become a focal point for this section of the Parklands. Neighborhood residents and park users will congregate around this oasis of energy, life and light in what might otherwise become an underused and unsafe area of the parklands. They will be captivated by the boarders' eye catching and inspiring jumps and stunts. The community members can come together at the skatepark to watch this thrilling sport, while enjoying each others company and basking in the beauty of one of the city's most treasured jewels, the Charles River and its parklands.

The Charles River Conservancy has made efforts to include state and local agencies, politicians, the skateboarding community, and citizens in the skatepark planning and design process. The Charles River Conservancy believes the skatepark will be a wonderful addition to the Charles River Parklands, benefiting both skateboarders and Charles River Parklands users, and would appreciate the support of the Cambridge City Council as the project progresses.

Sincerely,

Renata von Tscharner
President

Communication #11

A communication was received
from Renata von Tscharner, regarding
a skatepark in the New Basin
Parklands.

In City Council September 8, 2003

REFERRED TO ORDER #29

CHARLES RIVER

conservancy



104 ELDREDGE STREET
NEWTON MASSACHUSETTS
0 2 4 5 8

617 641 9131 t
617 641 9304 f

crc@charlesriverconservancy.org
www.charlesriverconservancy.org

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Renata von Tscharnner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Renata" being more prominent.

Renata von Tscharnner
President



BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

May 30, 2003

Renata von Tscharner
President
Charles River Conservancy
104 Eldredge Street
Newton, Massachusetts 02458

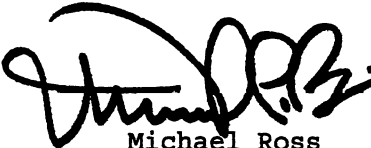
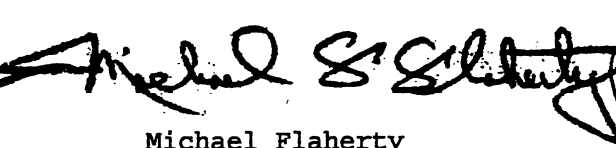
Dear Ms. von Tscharner,

This is a letter of support for the proposed concrete skatepark on MDC land under the Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge, Parcel 29F. The proposed park would be a great benefit to the City of Boston.

- The Boston area will be able to offer a world-class facility where residents and visitors can watch this athletic and artistic activity.
- A skatepark will offer skateboarders and Boston area youth a place to practice their sports, thus;
- Reducing damage to City property such as Copley Square, City Hall Plaza and Faneuil Hall caused by sports such as skateboarding, and;
- Help reduce legal violations by youth looking for places to skate and create a better relationship between skateboarders and law enforcement officers.

The Charles River Conservancy has done an excellent job involving state and city agencies, the community and skateboarders themselves in the design and proposal for the skatepark. In this spirit of cooperation, we as Boston city councilors stand behind the project.

Sincerely,

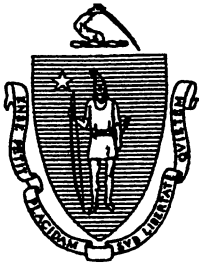
		
Michael Ross District 8 City Councilor	Michael Flaherty At-Large Council President	Paul Scapicchio District 1 City Councilor

Cc: State Senator Jarret Barrios, State Representative Paul Demakis, Mayor Thomas Menino, Karl Hagland (MDC), Mark Maloney (BRA), Sue Brown (Parks Department), Charlotte Fleetwood (CA/T)

BOSTON CITY HALL ♦ ONE CITY HALL SQUARE ♦ BOSTON, MA 02201

PHONE (617) 635 - 3040 ♦ FAX (617) 635 - 4203

WWW.CI.BOSTON.MA.US



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

SENATOR JARRETT T. BARRIOS
MIDDLESEX, SUFFOLK & ESSEX DISTRICT
ROOM 309, STATE HOUSE
TEL. (617) 722-1850
FAX. (617) 722-1323
E-Mail: jbarrios@senate.state.ma.us

COMMITTEES:
PUBLIC SAFETY (CHAIR)
HEALTH CARE (VICE CHAIR)
HUMAN SERVICES
THIRD READING

May 9, 2003

To whom it may concern,

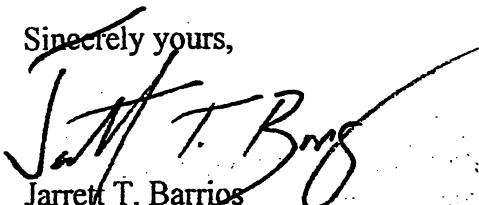
Charlestown is an extraordinary neighborhood filled with character, charm and beautiful parks, including the recently completed Paul Revere Park along the "New Basin" of the Charles River. Yet if a resident walks upstream from Paul Revere Park into the area between Bunker Hill Community College and the Charles River, the character, charm and beauty disappears. In its place are large tracts of formerly industrial land now either abandoned or being used as staging grounds for the Big Dig. Central Artery/Tunnel plans call for this area to be transformed into parklands, with plantings as the shady location permits and pathways replacing the former industrial site.

All of this new construction needs a focal point, a place of beauty and excitement where people can gather and community can be formed. The skatepark proposed by the Charles River Conservancy will provide such a focus. The curves and bowls of the park will be sculpture. The graceful acrobatics of the skaters will be art. The activity will attract spectators and community will be formed among those who skate, those who watch and those who pass through.

The popularity of skateboarding has taken the nation and the city of Boston by storm. The foresight of the government, neighborhood groups and developers has created a city rich with parks and plazas, sculptures, benches and playgrounds. Yet skateboarders, who range from first graders to young adults seeking a place to master their sport and perfect their craft, have overrun these areas. The new City of Boston ordinance, levying fines of up to \$100 on individuals caught skateboarding on city property, will only serve to make the stakes higher in the ongoing game of cat and mouse routinely played between skaters and police. This ordinance will only solve the problems of property damage and pedestrian interference if we give the skateboarders a park and plaza, sculpture and benches to call their own.

I support such a place in Charlestown and hope to see skateboarding as the centerpiece of the new parks being built along the Charles River. I am

Sincerely yours,



Jarrett T. Barrios
STATE SENATOR

The Boston Globe

FRIDAY, JULY 25, 2003

THE BOSTON GLOBE

FRIDAY, JULY 25, 2003

New park would have skateboarders on roll

By Tony Chamberlain

GLOBE STAFF

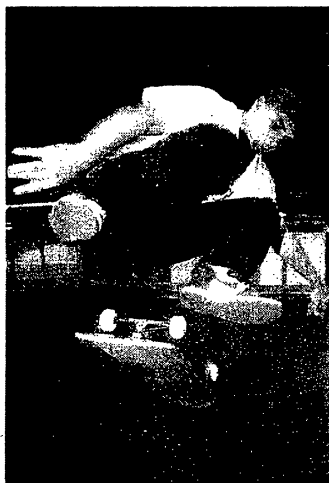
You hear them first, their wheels rattling along the sidewalk and clacking on the pavement whenever a rider attempts one of those wild leaps in the air, the board spinning under his feet.

Pedestrians look annoyed. Old folks scatter out of their way. Cops bust them. The city now fines them \$100.

They have been called various names from "skate rats" to "extreme athletes", and the only thing really sure about skateboarders is that they're here to stay.

Like basketball and tennis, skateboarding is sport bred in the confined spaces and hard surfaces of the city. But in Boston, where skateboarding is illegal in public spaces, there are few opportunities to practice. Throughout this college-laden city with its thousands of skateboarders — as well as stunt bike riders and inline roller bladers — there are few places to ride casually or compete.

But if a growing movement of park enthusiasts is successful, Boston could have its own world-



GLOBE STAFF PHOTO/JOANNE RATHE

The construction of a park for skateboarders would have Vanik Hacopian doing flips.

class skateboard park within two years, according to advocates from the Charles River Conservancy. At 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, boarders, inline skaters and other extreme athletes along with civic and community leaders will meet in Boston Public Library to discuss the planning of a skateboard park to be constructed on the New Basin parklands in the vicinity of

the Leonard P. Zakim Bridge.

"I think a skateboarding park is a really good idea because right now skaters have no place to go," said Joe Headrick, a Boston University freshman quoted in the student newspaper, *The Daily Free Press*. "It's not like I can take my board and just skate down Comm. Ave. We need a park where we will be able to skate without getting fined."

According to Renata von Tscharnier, founder of Charles River Conservancy, a parklands advocate group, the idea for the skate park came to life four years ago when, nearing the end of the Big Dig, the New Basin Parklands opened for multiple public recreational uses. But in a larger sense, says von Tscharnier, the seeds of the idea really go back to the 19th century, when Frederick Law Olmsted and Charles Eliot designed the first outdoor gymnasium in the country in front of Massachusetts General Hospital.

Then a century later, President Dwight D. Eisenhower's cardiologist, Paul Dudley White, provided the impetus for the creation of a bicycle trail within the parklands, and the White Pathway is still one of the most highly used

public athletic facilities in the city. The new skate park, says von Tscharnier, would be built in the same spirit.

"The idea for a skate park accessible by foot from Cambridge, Somerville, Charlestown, and Boston, and with four T stops nearby, capitalizes on space under the Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge and access ramps where no trees and grass would grow," says von Tscharnier.

Though the design is not yet under way, the early proposals call for a facility between 20,000 and 40,000 square feet, with a cost between \$500,000 and \$1 million. If the park is anywhere near the large end — nearly an acre — it would be one of the largest skate facilities in the country.

"The exact site at the moment is under consideration," says von Tscharnier, whose group is trying to resolve issues such as road access, parking, and police oversight.

Once cut off by development, this land has been opening piece by piece for recreation. In 1999, Paul Revere Park opened, followed by Nashua Meadows across from the Suffolk County Jail. As this land was becoming available, a Radcliffe architectural seminar

taught by von Tscharnier designed the first prototype.

"They designed a park beneath I-93 where people could still walk along the shores of the Charles River, but also young skaters from across Boston could come skateboard," von Tscharnier said, adding that it will be "a very attractive area."

Over the last two decades, the extreme sports have grown among urban kids. According to 25-year-old professional skateboarder Vanik Hacopian, another voice in the push for the Charles River Basin skateboard park, the ruling against skateboarders left hundreds of Boston kids with no place to practice a sport they are passionate about.

Hacopian, a native of East Boston, likes riding man-made terrain — railings, stairs, curbs, and benches. He was a familiar sight around his neighborhood streets and other Boston areas, but when the City Council voted to ban the sport, and to fine violators \$100, he wanted to know. "If you kick kids out of the street, where are we supposed to go?"

Hacopian says of the Boston proposal: "This is the most effort I've seen anyone put in. That's

Moving online

The listings of things to do and places to go, which appeared on the What's Happening page along with a recreation feature in SportsPlus, will be exclusively published in its entirety on Boston.com. Debuting today in SportsPlus is the Sports/Women page, which has been moved from Wednesday.

probably because it's a CRC [Charles River Conservancy] project. I think it's going to be an amazing park when it's finally done. They're starting off right, taking a lot of time to plan it right. The location is just great."

Perhaps in answer to Hacopian's original question, the City Council has voiced support of the skateboard park.

And state Senator Jarrett T. Barrios (D-Cambridge) has thrown in his enthusiastic support for the project.

In Wednesday's meeting, community leaders will be able to question a panel which will include von Tscharnier and Hacopian, among others. For more information, call the Charles River Conservancy at 617-641-9131.



New Basin Skatepark

Background:

Providing a place for active recreation within the Charles River Parklands is a tradition that goes back to the 19th century and the work of landscape architects Frederick Law Olmsted and Charles Eliot who designed America's first outdoor gymnasium (which no longer exists) in front of Mass General Hospital. Cardiologist Dr. Paul Dudley White, physician to President Eisenhower, also encouraged outdoor exercise and advocated for the creation of the pathway, which now bears his name, along the River. The Charles River Conservancy (CRC) is hoping to continue the legacy of active recreation along the Charles by incorporating a world-class skatepark into the New Basin parklands near the base of the Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge.

As advocates for the stewardship and renewal of the Charles River parklands, the CRC recognized the concept of a skatepark along the river as a wonderful way to bring athletes as well as spectators to what would otherwise be an underused section of parklands. Currently, this land is part of the Central Artery's parcel 29F, the last section of New Basin land to be designed as part of the \$95 million mitigation efforts in connection with the Big Dig. And, while parts of parcel 29F are being considered for plantings, there are areas that lie in the shade of the bridge and ramps that are not suitable for growing trees or grass, but which would be ideal for a skatepark.

Since the idea's initial proposal in 1999, the CRC has advocated for the skatepark, raising funding, organizing meetings, and conducting research on skateparks in order to see this portion of the Charles River parklands come to life.

ABOUT THE NEW BASIN SKATEPARK:

Carol R. Johnson Associates (a landscape architecture firm) has been awarded the contract for parcel 29F. Together with the CA/T and the current landowners, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (formerly known as the MDC), Carol R. Johnson Associates is working with the CRC to decide upon a location for the skatepark. The budget for parcel 29F only covers minimal landscape treatment, and the CRC will have to secure funds for additional design efforts as well as for the implementation costs that exceed the planned square footage price. Design costs are estimated to be between \$50,000-\$100,000, while construction costs will likely run between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000.

The exact design of the skatepark will depend on many factors; but preliminary plans are calling for a 20,000-40,000 square foot concrete park that will accommodate inline skaters, bikers, and skateboarders. New England Skateparks has been advising the CRC on design issues. Preliminary designs are expected in the fall of 2003, and final designs by Spring 2004. With the support of many elected officials (including State Senator Jarrett Barrios, Congressman Michael Capuano, and Boston City Councilors Flaherty, Ross, and Scapicchio), other non-profit organizations (including the Charles River Watershed Association, Save the Harbor Save the Bay, and Friends of the Community Path), professional skateboarder, Vanik Hacobian, public health experts (including Dr. Walter Willett of the Harvard School of Public Health), community leaders and media advocates, the New Basin skatepark is shaping up to be a wonderful opportunity for Boston's athletes! Easily accessible by public transportation, this

skatepark will provide people with a legal and world-class venue at which to practice their sports.

The Charles River Conservancy's advocacy efforts include the involvement of the future users themselves. Their participation will not only improve the design, but is crucial to creating a skatepark that is safe and well maintained. Funding for this effort comes from the Tony Hawk Foundation, the Boston Foundation, and the generosity of individual donors.

With skateboarding ranking as the third largest participant sport among people ages 6-18 in 1993, and it is continuing gain in popularity, the time has come for Boston to have this world-class skatepark.

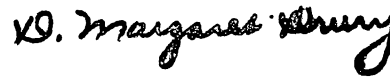
For more information on this project, visit the CRC online at www.charlesriverconservancy.org or call us at 617-641-9131.

The Charles River Conservancy
104 Eldredge Street
Newton, MA 02458

RESOLVED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution to the Charles River Conservancy on behalf of the entire City Council.

In City Council September 8, 2003
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.
Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk

A true copy;

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Margaret Drury". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk



City of Cambridge

O-29
IN CITY COUNCIL
September 8, 2003

COUNCILLOR MURPHY
MAYOR SULLIVAN
VICE MAYOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR DECKER
COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO
COUNCILLOR MAHER
COUNCILLOR REEVES
COUNCILLOR SIMMONS
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

- WHEREAS: It has come to the City Council's attention that the Charles River Conservancy is endeavoring to build a world-class skatepark in the New Basin Parklands in the vicinity of the Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge; and
- WHEREAS: Skateboarding is an important part of the lives of many of Cambridge's youth and the City Council recognizes the importance of providing a safe, legal and easily accessible place for Cambridge's young athletes to practice their sport; and
- WHEREAS: The New Basin Skatepark will provide such a place, eliminating skateboarders' needs to skate on Cambridge's streets and public plazas. A world-class skateboarding facility would be a valuable resource for our youth and a wonderful amenity for the city; and
- WHEREAS: The Charles River Conservancy has made efforts to include state and local agencies, the skateboarding community, and residents in the skatepark planning and design process; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED: That the Cambridge City Council go on record supporting the work of the Charles River Conservancy to build a skatepark in the New Basin Parklands, and further expressing its belief that the skatepark will be a wonderful addition to the Charles River Parklands, benefiting both skateboarders and Charles River Parklands users; and be it further

R 1128

ORDER#29

Requesting the City Council go on record supporting the work of the Charles River Conservancy to build a skatepark in the New Basin Parklands and express its belief that the skatepark will be a wonderful addition to the Charles River Parklands.

**Councillor Murphy, Mayor Sullivan
and entire membership**

In City Council September 8, 2003

ORDER ADOPTED