

# Detweiller Playground Trust

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From Herold1961 <herold1961@gmail.com>

To Herold1961<herold1961@gmail.com>

Date Tuesday, March 24th, 2026 at 5:41 PM

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Thank you for attending our meeting last night and your interest in helping save this asset for the people of Peoria.

Some comments from note cards

- As an avid kayaker who lives directly across from O'Brien, I am devastated. Caroline St is my entry to the river and one of my remaining reasons to stay in Peoria as a young person. We absolutely agree. Please express this to every city council person and park district board member.
- Would writing letters to the Park District and City Council help? Would donations help with the legal process? Yes & Yes, please express your feelings to both city and park district leaders. We will reach out for donations. Also looking for recommendations for lawyers at this point.
- O'Brien Steel has a long history of support for the Riverfront Trail. Has he spoken with the group? A resounding NO! We've never heard from JR O'Brien nor his father JP O'Brien! Several of us have been very active in the neighborhood (including directly with JP, for nearly 30 years! They know who we are and we only heard about this when it showed up on the park district agenda two weeks ago.
- Can people that don't live in the city of Peoria be involved? Absolutely! This is a community asset. (And if there was a fee to use the park: the city would charge anyone a 2% entertainment tax to feed the civic center!)
- Will the public still be able to launch small craft, like kayaks and paddle in the harbor? Not if this plan proceeds. You will have to be a member at one of the private boat clubs. There is no vehicle/trailer access anywhere in this plan. nor any site in the City of Peoria for this
- Downtown Peoria's Riverfront Buildings and the Riverplex provide the public with sports and music. What are their plans for land by the river for nature? The city is working on plans for redeveloping the riverfront with a music venue and seating, etc. That is a good question for the Park District and City of Peoria. I know there will be no access to the water's edge to launch any boats or kayaks.
- Will marina boat/dock access be eliminated (near Caroline st)? Absolutely, if plans go through, Caroline will be closed completely. You will have to be a member at the Peoria Boat Club to access the existing ramp.
- Will the area be shut down for any amount of time due to construction? The new McClugage Bridge trail connection to bring people to downtown Peoria will be blocked by this development. People will go to East Peoria instead. Whereas, the city nor O'Brien have shared any information with neighbors, we have no idea how much disruption there would be.
- What responsibility remains with the trust? Can legal action be taken for their breach of trust? Those are our next steps. Senator Koehler is contacting Illinois Attorney General to try to find a solution to save the land for public access. . We believe the Detweiller Playground misled the courts with some of their statements in filings. We need to find an attorney (any recommendations) and raise money to pay an attorney.
- O'Brien was stated as current owner at Park District. The Park District referred to O'Brien as a friend of the trail. There has been destruction of native plants and prevented access for the last two years. My personal thoughts are that they wanted to reduce the value of the asset to have a compelling reason to sell, at a lower price.

Thank you again. Please email me if you have suggestions for an attorney. I will reach out again when we have additional information.

Sincerely,

Tim Herold for the steering committee