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The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 8

Parks and Recreation Committee

Brick Presbyterian Church
62 East 92nd Street (Park-Madison)
Tuesday, January 12, 2016, 6:30 PM

CB8M Members present: Daniel Dornbaum, Susan Evans Sharon Pope, Rita Popper, Peggy Price, Barbara Rudder.

Public Members present: Judy Schneider, Tricia Shimamura.

Excused: Scott Falk, Sophia James.

1. Tree Planting in the CB8M District

Laura Hernandez, a Parks Dept. senior forester, reported on the status of tree planting in the CB8M district.

As of this fall, 302 trees have been planted as part of the Second Avenue Subway for the Second Avenue Tree Restoration Project (SATR), with 50 to 100 more such plantings scheduled for spring, 2016, according to Ms. Hernandez.

However, as of now, only 10 street trees outside of the SATR will be planted in CB8 this spring--a number which won't meet the community's needs, meeting attendees stressed.

To address the problem, the committee is seeking help from the community. Following the January Parks Committee's meeting, the committee asked the board office to e-blast an alert, asking area residents to identify sites needing new or replacement street trees. The message specifies how to apply for a street tree and the late-January deadline for applications for inclusion in the spring planting.

Specifically, the message asks area residents to email the board office by January 25 the exact address of a desired new tree. The board office will compile a list of these desired sites and forward it to the Parks Dept.

Specific tree planting requests cited at the committee meeting: filling four empty tree beds on the east side of Second Ave., between East 75th and East 76th streets, and planting in the area surrounding the Marine Transfer Station.

Related issues: the inadequate watering of new tree plantings—done only bi-weekly by the Parks Dept.—and the lack of tree guards in many locations. With current and upcoming plantings, tree guards will be installed around tree beds only in the SATR area, Ms. Hernandez reported.

2. Advancing the Queensboro Oval and 1190 Second Ave. Park Projects

Queensboro Oval: the committee is actively pursuing CB8's goal to return the Queensboro Oval Park to the public full-time, starting in 2017. That's when the City's lease of the space to Sutton East Tennis expires.

To advance that de-privatization plan, the committee opted for the following steps:

---Providing members of the public and of CB8 with suggested letters they could email to the Parks Dept. asking for the Oval to be returned to the public full-time;

--Seeking additional publicity on the issue;

--Bringing the issue to the attention of residents in the Queensboro Oval area;

--Working with elected officials. In this latter case, Council Member Kallos has offered to ask other elected officials to join him in signing a letter to the Parks Dept. requesting that the Oval become accessible to the public full-time, starting in 2017.

1190 Second Avenue: The committee created an internal working group, headed by Tricia Shimamura, to focus on advancing CB8's aim for a future park at 1190 Second Ave at 63rd St. That Second Ave. site now serves as a staging area for construction of the MTA's East Side Access Transportation Project. However, the MTA plans to vacate that site in 2018.

Operating under the auspices of the Parks Committee, the new working group will consist of representatives of various groups, including CB8 members, civic organizations, area residents and elected officials. Members will devise and carry out an action plan to further the goal of creating a new park in CB8M.

The working group's first meeting will take place February 4 as part of the Parks Committee's next monthly meeting. Everyone is welcome.

**Susan Evans and Margaret Price
Co-Chairs, Parks Committee**