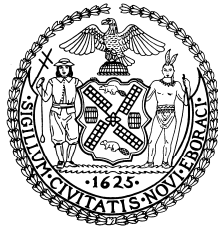


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The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 8

Parks Committee Meeting
Lenox Hill Hospital
130 East 77th Street
Michael Bruno Presentation Room
Thursday, June 13, 2013
6:30 PM

CB8M Members present: Elizabeth Ashby, Scott Falk, Rita Popper, Peggy Price, Barbara Rudder, Barry Schneider, Judy Schneider, Teri Slater
Excused: Molly Blayney, Susan Evans, Helen Simon

1. Requested Support of New Yorkers for Parks' Parks Platform 2013

Lisa Kaplan, a representative of New Yorkers for Parks (NY4P) presented her organization's Parks Platform 2013. It's a 10-point agenda that addresses some of the key financial and operational issues facing NYC's parks and Parks Department.

As explained, NY4P is attempting to get each of this year's NYC mayoral candidates to agree to adopt this agenda, if elected. To help achieve this goal, NY4P is asking all of NYC's community Boards, including CB8M, to back its platform. Later this summer, NY4P will hold a "major rally" to spur support for this agenda, Ms. Kaplan said. NY4P believes this platform is needed because parks issues haven't gotten as much attention as other aspects of City operations, she added.

The 10-point platform, unanimously backed by the Parks Committee:

- 1) The Parks Department should have its own **discretionary capital budget**.
- 2) The Parks Department's maintenance budget should be increased, and funding for core functions should be baselined—meaning automatically renewed—in its annual expense budget.
- 4) The Parks Department should know the **cost to maintain every City park**, as well as the **amount of public and private funding** that supports each.
- 6) Organizations in **public-private partnerships** with the Parks Department should **report annual revenues, expenses and other critical financial information** in a simple, consistent manner to be shared on the Department's website.
- 7) Parkland alienation should not occur unless **no other land is available to serve an essential public need**.
- 8) State and local laws regulating parkland alienation should be strengthened to require **earlier and broader notification** of alienation actions, and to mandate **acre-for-acre replacement** of lost parkland.
- 9) Parks are part of a **broad network of public spaces**, and **City agencies should collaborate** to maximize neighborhood open space and citywide environmental benefits.
- 10) The City should be more proactive in **involving neighborhood residents in their parks**, both as volunteer stewards and in planning for the future.

RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS studies show that the CB8M area has among the least amount of parkland of any districts in New York City; and

WHEREAS CB8M has been actively promoting the need for more parkland and open space on Manhattan's Upper East Side; and

WHEREAS CB8M believes that parkland funding, development and maintenance issues are critical to the quality of life for all New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS New Yorkers for Parks has created a Parks Platform 2013, which calls upon NYC's next mayor and administration to implement a 10-point program to improve parks' financing and operations. It would: overhaul how the Parks Dept. is funded; boost transparency and efficiency at the Parks Dept.; restrict the privatization of parks; and integrate parks planning into neighborhood and citywide planning; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that CB8M supports New Yorkers for Parks' Platform 2013, which calls on New York City's next mayor and administration to adopt a 10-point program that would improve the financing and operations of New York City's parks. As its major thrusts, the platform would overhaul how the Parks Dept. is funded, increase transparency and efficiency at the Parks Dept., restrict the privatization of parks, and integrate parks planning into overall neighborhood and citywide planning.

VOTE: 8-0-0.

In favor: Elizabeth Ashby, Scott Falk, Rita Popper, Peggy Price, Barbara Rudder, Barry Schneider, Judy Schneider, Teri Slater

New Business

1. Update on Improvements to the East River Esplanade

The East River Esplanade Task Force, headed by Council Member Jessica Lappin and Congress member Carolyn Maloney, met on June 7, 2013 to discuss the Parks Department's progress toward improving the Esplanade.

Among the key points discussed at that session:

Con Edison

Con Edison currently leases from the City a portion for the esplanade from East 74 to East 75 St. About 8,000 sq. feet of this land, but not including the large building, will be returned to the City. Parks will landscape about half of this area with trees and flowers. This project is expected to start in the fall and last 3 to 4 months.

East River Esplanade Engineering Study

The City hired engineers to study the river wall from E 38th to E 124 Streets. It will cost more than \$400 million fix the entire esplanade. However, the study detailed a plan to fix vital areas over 10 years that will cost \$115 million. Parks is working with to get some initial funding.

CIVITAS Report

Hunter Armstrong, Executive Director of CIVITAS, reported that several community groups, including CIVITAS, Friends of the East River Esplanade, NY C.R.E.W., Harlem Community Development Corp, Upper Green Side, and Trees NY, created a list of goals for improving the Esplanade. Some of the suggestions are:

- Investment by elected officials and government agencies in a community-based planning process to improve access, resilience, recreational opportunities and maintenance in the park between East 60th and 125th Streets. This would include a planning process to redesign and reopen Pier 107.
- Completion of repair of sinkholes and fencing along the Esplanade.

- Improvements to the 96th Street crosswalk, including repainting the crosswalk, installing timed traffic lights and moving stop bars for cars out of the pedestrian zone.
- Assistance by elected officials and government agencies with pursuing funding to make improvements.
- Engagement of major institutions (including hospitals and educational institutions) to support Esplanade improvements.
- Reactivation of ferry service at 90th Street.

At the June Parks Committee meeting, attendees expressed concern that the community had not been notified of Con Ed's plans. Other problems include a lack of irrigation to maintain the plantings in the Esplanade area. The Parks Committee plans to invite Council Member Lappin and a Parks Dept. official to its September meeting to discuss these issues and progress, overall, on improving the Esplanade in the CB8M area.

Old Business

Ticketing of Dog Owners in Central Park

At the March, 2013 full board meeting, Community Board 8M passed a resolution requesting that the Central Park Conservancy review unfair ticketing practices imposed on dog owners, and urged CPC to meet with dog owners to resolve these issues. Doug Blonsky, President of the Conservancy, has met with dog owners, but complaints of harassment by the Parks Enforcement Patrol persist. It was decided that the Parks Committee's co-chairs will write to Parks Dept. officials, requesting that the harassment cease.

Margaret Price and Barbara Rudder, Parks Committee Co-Chairs