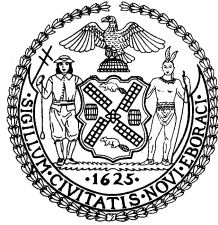


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The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 8

Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting
Brick Presbyterian Church
62 East 92nd St.
Session Room
Thursday, September 10, 2015
6:30 PM

CB8M Members Present: Daniel Dornbaum, Susan Evans, Scott Falk, Sharon Pope, Peggy Price

Public Member: Tricia Shimamura

Excused: Sophia James, Rita Popper, Barbara Rudder, Judy Schneider

1. Priorities for City Funding of NYC Parks

In advance of the September 17th CB8M Budget Committee meeting, the Parks and Recreation Committee identified three top priorities for City funding of parks. These priorities represent capital project needs and expense funding needs that can be included in the City's budget for the next fiscal year. The list does not include the committee's major Open Space initiatives--the Queensboro Oval and 1190 Second Ave. -- which, at this point, do not involve requests for City funding.

The committee's funding priorities in order of importance:

1. Provide full funding to repair, restore and design the entire East River Esplanade in the CB8M district, including upper and lower levels, and funds for irrigation along the Esplanade. (Unless monies for CB8M's 197-A project--the Andrew Haswell Green Park--can be included as a separate budget request, this request would include funding to complete the 197-A project.)
2. Preserve and expand funding for employees of parks throughout the CB8M district. This would include funding for rodent exterminators in all CB8M parks, for additional park maintenance workers and gardeners, for more Park Enforcement Patrol (PEP) workers and for park beautification.
3. Funding to renovate the basketball courts in John Jay Park. This entails providing new backboards, basketball hoops and ground sports coating.

2. Follow-Up on CB8s July Resolution Concerning the Queensboro Oval

The committee discussed steps to follow up on July's resolution, which strongly urges the Parks Dept. to stop privatizing the Queensboro Oval Park after its contract with Sutton East Tennis expires in 2017. (The July resolution states that the park, located under the Queensboro Bridge, should become accessible to the public year-round.)

The committee addressed various ways to pursue these goals. Meeting attendees agreed that elected officials should be contacted. And as a first step, a committee member volunteered to seek support of City Council Member Ben Kallos.

Other action ideas included: requesting a meeting on this issue with Parks Dept. Commissioner Mitchell Silver, and if possible, providing him with photographs of the Oval prior to the tennis club's installation, reaching out to developers to help finance the park's maintenance, holding a public meeting on this issue and seeking support of groups such as CIVITAS and New Yorkers for Parks.

3. Next Steps Toward the Creation of a Park at 1190 Second Ave. at 63rd St.

As part of its Open Space Initiative, the committee has identified a lot at 1190 Second Avenue-- now owned by the MTA-- as an ideal site for an additional park once the lot is vacated by the MTA. (The MTA is now using the lot as a construction area for the creation of its East Side Access transportation project.) But so far, the MTA has been unwilling to discuss this park project with anyone from CB8.

In July, Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright and Borough President Gale Brewer jointly wrote to the MTA requesting a meeting about converting 1190 Second Ave. to a park. But so far, the MTA has not responded.

To pursue this initiative, the committee decided to request additional assistance from elected officials and the public. The committee plans to contact elected officials to see if a press conference can be arranged--possibly tied in with an event aimed at stirring public support for the project.

In addition, some members of the public, who live near 1190 Second Ave., are being asked to help create a Friends of 1190 Second Ave. to further public support for the park project.

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