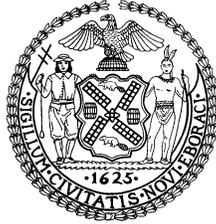


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**The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 8**

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 1, 2018 – 6:30PM
Brick Presbyterian Church, Carnegie Room
62 East 92nd Street

MINUTES

Board Members in attendance (Present): Alexandra Harrington, Sophia James, Rita Popper, Peggy Price, Barbara Rudder, Tricia Shimamura, M. Barry Schneider

Community Board Members (Excused): Susan Evans, Scott Falk, Craig Lader, Sharon Pope

Community Board Public Members (Present): Irma Torres, Judy Schneider

1. Presentation by Lane Addonizio and Desiree Gazzo of the Central Park Conservancy on three items:

A. RECONSTRUCTION OF THE SAFARI / WEST 90TH STREET PLAYGROUND

- Before the presentation started, two children who attended the park scoping session for this playground presented their models of how they would like it revamped. Cass and Lila received a well-deserved round of applause for their work and interest.
- This project is part of the Conservancy's effort to work in the sixteen playgrounds that have not been comprehensively rebuilt in the last decade, in order to raise all of Central Park's playgrounds to the same standard of excellence.
- Safari/West 90th Street Playground is located between Central Park West and the West Drive at a high point, with sweeping views of the Reservoir. The playground was originally built in 1936, as part of the system of playgrounds constructed under Parks Commissioner Robert Moses in the marginal landscapes just inside the Park perimeter.
- Scope of Work
 - Modify the existing footprint to create a wider landscape margin between playground and path, enhancing the connection between the playground and the Park landscape and working around existing mature trees.
 - Replace the 7-foot steel picket fence with a 4-foot steel picket fence, offset from the edge of the playground.
 - Remove existing non-ADA compliant stroller ramp, widen existing stairs, and add handrails.
 - Regrade the entrance path from West 90th Street and create an ADA-accessible route from the foot of the stairs to the playground, set into the steep slope that rises toward the playground, and screened with plantings.
 - Install an ADA-accessible gate at the playground entrance.
 - Within the playground, build upon the successful Safari theme, adding a series of play mounds around the central play space.

- Incorporate wood climbing elements, platforms, and slides in the largest play mound at the northern end of the playground.
- Construct an enhanced water spray feature on the southern end (in the location of the existing spray), activated by a user-operated bollard that makes the spray feature interactive and conserves water; reactivate this area with play canoes, climbable hippo sculptures, and climbing mounds.
- Scan and recast the existing play hippo sculptures.
- It is funded by the Conservancy at a cost of \$1.6 million dollars. It is expected to start construction the later part of this summer and be complete in 9 months.
- The following resolution was approved:

BE IT RESOLVED the Community Board 8 Approves this presentation for restoration of the Safari Playground.

Approved: 7-0-0 (Harrington, James, Popper, Price, Rudder, Shimamura, B. Schneider)

Approved Public Members: 2-0-0 (J. Schneider, Torres)

B. Reconstruction of the 96th Street Playground

As stated above, this project is part of the Conservancy’s effort to work in the sixteen playgrounds that have not been comprehensively rebuilt in the last decade, in order to raise all of Central Park’s playgrounds to the same standard of excellence.

- East 96th Street Playground is located east of the Reservoir and south of the 96th Street Transverse. It includes equipment and activities typical of the era, including swings, slides, see saws, kinder (sand) tables, and a water spray feature. The edge of the playground was delineated by wood and concrete benches and a low pipe-rail fence. The existing seven-foot tall steel picket fence was installed in the 1940s.
- The proposed design reorganizes and enhances the play spaces within the playground to allow for better separation of the age groups and better circulation between areas. The playground will be regraded to better integrate it into the landscape. Additionally, an ADA-accessible route will be established for the first time, providing wheelchair access to the playground.
- Scope of Work
 - Create a wider landscape margin between playground and path, enhancing the connection between the playground and the Park landscape and working around existing mature trees; add a picnic area in the southern end of the playground that is both contained and part of the Park landscape.
 - Regrade the playground, which currently slopes and steps down from west to east, leveling the ground plane to the lower elevation to remove barriers and improve the playground’s relationship to the Park. To lower the west side of the playground, install concrete seat walls (18” high) that retain the grade outside the playground.
 - Replace the 7-foot steel picket fence with a 4-foot steel picket fence. Around the picnic area, and behind the concrete retaining/seat walls (where there is sufficient opportunity for planting), install a lightweight mesh fence screened by the plantings (the same fence as developed for recently reconstructed playgrounds including East 110th, Wild West, East 72nd, and West 84th Street) to ensure that the play environment is contained.
 - Regrade the entrance path from East 96th Street and create an ADA-accessible route to the playground, consisting of a ramp set into the landscape and screened by plantings. Install an ADA-accessible gate at the playground entrance.
 - Reorganize the play spaces to better separate 2-5 and 5-12 age groups and allow for easy circulation between them.
 - Construct an enhanced water spray feature at the center of the playground, activated by a user-operated bollard that makes the spray feature interactive and conserves water.

- Relocate sand area to the 2-5 play area; reconstruct to include a sand table for ADA access.
- Move existing swing area for 2-5-year-olds that currently includes six bucket swings to the northern end of the playground and replace them with three bucket swings, four strap swings, and one ADA-accessible swing.
- It is funded by the Conservancy at a cost of \$3 million dollars. It is expected to start construction the later part of this summer and be complete in 9 months.
- The following resolution was approved:

BE IT RESOLVED the Community Board 8 Approves this presentation for restoration of the 96th Street Playground.

Approved: 7-0-0 (Harrington, James, Popper, Price, Rudder, Shimamura, B. Schneider)

Approved Public Members: 2-0-0 (J. Schneider, Torres)

C. Restoration of the Comfort Station at Merchant’s Gate

- Constructed in 1924, the West 61st Street Comfort Station is located just inside Central Park west, one block north of Merchants’ Gate at the southwest corner of the Park. The elevation of the Park landscape in this location is below that of the adjacent perimeter sidewalk, and the roof of the stone building—which is built into a slope and abuts the perimeter wall—is a plaza off of Central Park West.
- The building footprint is 1,265 SF with an overall height of approximately 13’-9” at the east elevation. It houses public restrooms, with a men’s restroom located on the south end of the structure, a women’s restroom on the north side, and a utility room located between the two. The exterior walls of the building are of granite masonry construction with mortar-filled joints. The plaza on the roof is paved in brick with a granite border, and the parapet is an extension of the park perimeter wall. Three granite benches are sited along the parapet, and two decorative light standards are mounted on it near the corners of the plaza. Aluminum framed windows, with metal grilles at the exterior are located on the north and south walls.
- It is unheated and closed in the winter. The building is in need of a substantial renovation to address moisture infiltration and accessibility issues. The public restrooms are not ADA-accessible. Windows and doors require replacement.
- Scope of Work
 - Make the facility ADA-accessible
 - Renovate the interior and convert the restroom from seasonal to year-round use
 - Repair damage caused by water-infiltration and ensure protection from future water damage
 - Restore architectural features
- It is funded by the Conservancy at a cost of \$3 million dollars. It is expected to start construction this summer and will take six months.
- The following resolution was approved:

BE IT RESOLVED the Community Board 8 Approves this presentation for renovation of the comfort station at Merchant’s Gate.

Approved: 7-0-0 (Harrington, James, Popper, Price, Rudder, Shimamura, B. Schneider)

Approved Public Members: 2-0-0 (J. Schneider, Torres)

2. Mr. Schneider welcomed Wes Hamilton, new District Manager for Community District 8. He chatted with us and answered a number of questions.

3. John Jay Park announcement was made about the scoping session that is to occur at the Town School on Thursday, March 8th at 540 East 76 Street, 6:30 to 9 pm. Everyone is invited to participate in the discussion of the Older Adult Fitness area and how it could be renovated.

The other issue discussed about the park was the status of the pool. Wes Hamilton, NYC Parks Dept., said that it would be inspected prior to the pool's season opening for needed repairs and that, if needed, it would be painted.

4. Review of items from the February Parks Meeting:

- East River Esplanade – Ms. Shimamura asked Wes Hamilton to get back to us regarding the status of the Esplanade since a meeting, convened by Congress Woman Carolyn Maloney and Council Member Ben Kallos, hasn't been held for over 5 months.
- Queensboro Oval – exploring strategies in response to the RFP issued by Parks on February 16, 2018.
- Ruppert Park & Dog Issue – we discussed the CB #8 resolution requesting a landscape architect to access the park. We also discussed the issue of dogs and Ruppert Park. The sense of the meeting was that the dog/park issue should be the subject of a forum later this spring.
- 1190 Second Avenue – Mr. Schneider said he will begin a discussion with the Real Estate Davison of the MTA concerning the site following the completion of East Side Access in 2022.
- 24 Sycamores Park – we have learned the lower portion of the park will be open when the upper part is being renovated.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Tricia Shimamura and M. Barry Schneider, Co-Chairs