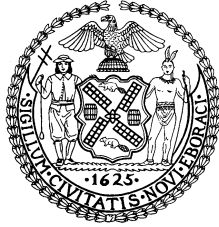


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**The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 8**

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, June 7, 2018 – 6:30PM
Hunter College, West Building Room 615
SW Corner of Lexington Avenue at E 68th Street

MINUTES

Please note: The resolutions contained in the committee minutes are recommendations to the full Community Board 8. At its monthly board meeting, these resolutions are discussed and voted upon by the Full Board.

Community Board Members (Present): Elizabeth Ashby, Billy Freeland, Alexandra Harrington, Craig Lader, Barbara Rudder, Barry Schneider, Tricia Shimamura

Community Board Members (Excused): Sophia James, Sharon Pope, Rita Popper

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

1. Presentation on ongoing work along East River Esplanade, by Allaire O'Connor & Gabrielle Czernik of NYC Department of Parks and Recreation

On the 88th to 90th Street Seawall Reconstruction:

- A temporary construction bridge is fully installed from west to east side of the FDR, in order to bring over heavy machinery to reconstruct the seawall.
 - Originally, Parks had intended for a majority of the work to be done by barge. Due to the tight confinement of the area, they needed to bring the materials over through Carl Schurz Park.
 - The construction work is tide-dependent, so it may look as though the construction has strange hours. Parks confirmed that they have a crew working on the reconstruction 5 days a week.
 - Currently the existing seawall is being demolished. They will be installing piles of concrete and steel.
 - The bridge will be one of the last pieces of construction to leave the site, as they need to ensure no more work is needed along the seawall in this section.
 - Major construction is scheduled to finish in either December 2018 or early January 2019. Parks noted that the severity of the winter will determine whether they can replant the area then, or if they have to wait until the spring. The hill will be sodded (instead of seeded) in order to allow access sooner.
 - Once completed, the section will have new seating, hexagon pavers, and new plantings.
 - Despite the fact that the project is currently estimated to cost more than originally anticipated (estimated to be at \$8 million dollars), Parks reported that no other sites slated for repair will be cut.

Pedestrian Pathway for the 90th Street Ferry:

- Parks is coordinating with EDC so that there is a pedestrian pathway from the new ferry stop to 90th street.
 - The pathway will be open during ferry hours, and will be opened and closed by the ferry operators.
 - The detour maps will remain the same, as it is the safest route for bikes to enter and exit the Esplanade.

- Currently, the pathway is planned to come from the corner of 90th street and Carl Schurz Park, along the northern side of the construction, then to the ferry dock.
 - The pathway will be made of timber steps and asphalt, with a jersey barrier and chain-link fence. Lights will be hung along the path. It will not be ADA compliant.
 - Parks is removing seawall near the ferry stop first, to ensure pedestrian safety.
 - No trees are currently planned for removal due to the pedestrian path. Any shrubs that will be removed will be replanted and replaced when the project is completed.
 - The ferry and pathway are expected to open in August of 2018.
- A Committee Member expressed the need for a detailed presentation on the pedestrian pathway, prior to installation. The Committee Co-Chairs have made the request for a more detailed presentation to EDC and are waiting for a response.
 - Attendees expressed frustrations with lack of communication from the Parks Department on this project. In response, the Committee Chairs said that they will create a new link on the CB8M website (cb8m.com) through the Parks page to post updates on this project. Parks will also return to give another update, and will email the Co-Chairs with any progress on the project. Parks also noted their efforts to have better pre-design phases and project inspections.

Additional Esplanade Updates:

- Parks was allocated \$60 million in the City Budget for structural repairs along the Esplanade, with another \$15 million to go to repairs north of 96th street and additional money to extend the Esplanade past 125th street.
 - Thanks to this funding increase, Parks will be able to do comprehensive repairs to most of the sites along the Esplanade, bringing the repairs up to either a “full repair” or “complete reconstruction.”
 - The Esplanade is undergoing a re-inspection to assess the structural needs. The inspection is expected to be finished at the end of 2018.
 - At the Con Edison site (73rd – 75th street), concrete beams embedded in the Esplanade prohibited Parks from doing their original planting design. Parks has made a new design and will begin planting in the spring.
 - Between 68th-70th street, Parks will begin topside repairs. This section will get new pavers and plantings, sea-rail repairs, and new benches. Parks is still in discussion with NY Presbyterian about the construction of a soundwall against the FDR, consistent with HSS and Rockefeller. A decision has not been made.
 - Members of the Public expressed concerns about the 81st Street pedestrian bridge, noting that the bridge is open but not finished. Parks agreed to look into the matter and speak with the Department of Design and Construction, which oversaw the project.

2. Presentation on the Raccoon Management Project by Angie Loannidis of NYC Department of Parks & Recreation’s Wildlife Unit

- This unit was created 1 ½ years ago to address wildlife in city Parks.
- Raccoons are in most parks throughout the City. 5 Items you should be aware of:
 - Raccoons can be seen day or night.
 - Do not feed raccoons.
 - Observe and enjoy raccoons from a distance.
 - Seal potential raccoon den locations—block access to areas of your home, garage or outdoor shed where raccoons might make their homes.
 - Vaccinate your cats and dogs.
- Q&A followed. Elizabeth Ashby noted that Central Park is a destination for migratory birds and that the tall glass-clad buildings surrounding the park present a hazard to the flying visitors. There are specialized types of glass that do not present a challenge to the birds; property owners should be encouraged to install such windows that will prevent birds from crashing into their structures. Question of what to do when you see a dead bird. If it is a bird of prey call 311, as the city and state track these. When asked by a member of the public, Ms. Loannidis confirmed that a raccoon would likely win in a fight with a rat, however both eat the same food so please seal trash bags/garbage cans.

3. Presentation by Prince Shah & Stephen Noone of Roosevelt Island Operating Corp. (RIOC) on the Tram Elevator Replacement

- Two new elevators are being installed to replace the existing elevator and lift. They will be ADA compliant and allow for a large queue area on the platform.
 - The new building will be all glass: 118' High. X 20' wide x18' deep and will be lit 24 hours.
 - The new structure will add more space at the platform level with covering in front of the elevators in case of rain.
 - The majority of Tramway Plaza will be enclosed by a green wooden construction fence around it for the duration of construction. This fence will be kept graffiti free.
 - Five trees will be removed for this project, as well as some of the plantings. Additionally, the size of one planting bed will be reduced.
 - RIOC has agreed to replace all trees (in various locations to be determined), plants, benches, fences removed during construction and that they be in good condition when the plaza is returned to the public.
 - The project is budgeted at \$6 million and is expected to take one year. The park will be effectively closed to the public with no seating.
- Committee Members and the Public expressed numerous concerns and suggestions about this project, including the following:
- It was suggested that the contractor put in a timer to control the lighting of the new building when the Tram was not in operation overnight.
 - It was suggested that the plantings removed from the project site could be used in Andrew Haswell Green park Phase I.

- A. **WHEREAS**, The Roosevelt Island Tram does not operate 24 hours every day, and **WHEREAS**, The new elevators and Tramway Plaza abuts numerous residences in the surrounding area, therefore **BE IT RESOLVED Community Board 8 requests the elevator building to be lit only when the tram is in operation.**

Approved: 8-0-0 (Ashby, Freeland, Harrington, Lader, Popper, Rudder, B. Schneider, Shimamura)

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

- B. **WHEREAS**, RIOC presented a plan to remove five trees from Tramway Plaza, and **WHEREAS**, It was not made clear in RIOC's presentation as to the necessity to remove all five trees, and **WHEREAS**, RIOC and the Parks Department have not presented any plans to replace the trees in Tramway Plaza, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED Community Board 8 requests that RIOC & the Parks Department to reconsider the tree removal, and if trees must be removed, that they be replaced within Tramway Plaza.

Approved: 8-0-0 (Ashby, Freeland, Harrington, Lader, Popper, Rudder, B. Schneider, Shimamura)

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

- C. **WHEREAS**, Tramway Plaza is being closed to the public for a least one year, and **WHEREAS**, the plumbing and other infrastructure for a decorative water feature or fountain was installed when the Plaza was originally created, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED Community Board 8 requests RIOC to install a water feature/fountain in Tramway Plaza.

Approved: 8-0-0 (Ashby, Freeland, Harrington, Lader, Popper, Rudder, B. Schneider, Shimamura)

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

4. Report by Wesley Hamilton Community District 8 Manager for NYC Parks & Recreation

- At Carl Schurz Park on: 6/21 Make Music; 7/13 Romeo and Juliet
- At John Jay Park on: 6/9 Family fun day and a movie
- At St. Catherine's Park on: 6/13 Despicable Me 3 Movie
- At Andrew Haswell Green Pavilion: 6/23 Jazz Concert at 4 pm

5. Old/New Business

- Questions about Ruppert Park and dogs, which will be discussed at a future meeting and at our Dog Forum in the fall.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:35PM.

Submitted by,

Tricia Shimamura and Barry Schneider, Co-Chairs