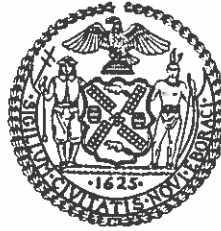


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**The City of New York**  
**Community Board 8 Manhattan**  
**Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting**  
Hunter College, 695 Park Avenue, Glass Café-3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
October 4, 2018 at 6:30 PM

*Please note: The resolutions contained in the committee minutes are recommendations submitted by the committee chair to the Community Board. At the monthly full board meeting, the resolutions are discussed and voted upon by all members of Community Board 8 Manhattan.*

**Community Board Members (Present):** Alexandra Harrington, Sophia James, Greg Kirschenbaum, Sharon Pope, Rita Popper-Marshall, Barbara Rudder, Barry Schneider, Tricia Shimamura

**Community Board Members (Excused):** Craig Lader

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

**1. Update on East River Esplanade**

Chris O'Brien, the new Executive Director of the Friends of the East River Esplanade (FERE) talked about the various activities such as: The Green Park Gardeners Volunteer day, events at the Andrew Haswell Green Pavilion on October 20 & 27, a Halloween event on the 90<sup>th</sup> Street pier, and the HSS ribbon cutting. He is also discussed FERE fundraising. The Committee congratulated him on his new position.

Tricia Shimamura reviewed work along the Esplanade and spoke about the various locations:

- 96 Street—Planting of flowers at that location by the Friends group; new community bulletin board to also be installed.
- 90 Street—The Soundview Ferry is open. The 96<sup>th</sup> Street entrance is open and is ADA accessible. Next month we will have EDC & Ferry people speak about specific issues such as unified system for fares and transferring, senior rates, boat capacity, shuttle bus, etc.
- 89 Street—Work continues on the Esplanade and in Carl Schurz Park. Parks will be asked for a monthly update. There is no night work going on in that location, as some residents reported.
- 83 Street—Brearley School will be updating the pier. They have committed to giving \$1 million for the repair and upkeep.
- 82 Street—The Transportation Committee heard the Parks Dept. present the 3<sup>rd</sup> proposed design for an accessible ramp from E. 82<sup>nd</sup> Street to John Finley walk. The Board members were very pleased with the design and materials and approved the plan unanimously. Next steps are CB approval, then on to the Public Design Commission for approval. Very well received by members of the public representing the two affected buildings on either side of the ramp.

- 70/72 Streets—There was a ribbon cutting for the Hospital for Special Surgery, which had sound barrier walls, water fountain, paving and the greenery will be sprinkled. They have committed in the future to redo 72 to 78 Streets.
- 68-70 Streets— Thanks to funding from CM Kallos, the Parks department is looking to connect topside repair work to the north and south. Bids for the work are still underway, as present bids came back too high.
- 64/68 Streets—The Rockefeller University section of the Esplanade will have a ribbon cutting on Oct 19<sup>th</sup>.
- 62/59 Streets—Barry spoke about Andrew Haswell Green (AHG). The Pavilion (Phase IIA) is open. Phase IIB design should be complete by early 2019. Actual construction should be started sometime in 2019. The design contained various plantings, a great lawn and wide concrete staircase. Phase III, the former sanitation building, is just in the scoping stage. The proposed design also contained a food kiosk, bathrooms, phone, cameras, and a staircase from the waterfront level up to the Pavilion. One design concern is that the area is in a flood plain, so it will be necessary to get waivers from the BSA. East Midtown Greenway portion will have a bicycle/pedestrian path coming up from 53<sup>rd</sup> Street to come into CB8 at 59<sup>th</sup> Street and pass through the former sanitation building and meet up with AHG Park Phase III.
- NOTE: Please keep a look out for a notice about the next 197-A Committee meeting for further discussion of this area of the Esplanade and the East Midtown Greenway
- The Committee also discussed concerns of homelessness along the Esplanade. Wes Hamilton suggested to call 311 to report the problem, unless it was very dangerous then 911. Parks Dept. has been working with the 19<sup>th</sup> Precinct on this problem, and the Friends of the East River Esplanade discussed posting homeless resources in a new community bulletin board at 96<sup>th</sup> Street on the esplanade.

## 2. Update on Ruppert Park

Mubeen Siddiqui, from Muslim Volunteers of NY (MV4NY), reported on park programming. They have been volunteering there since 2016, partnering with Nancy Ploeger, a longtime park advocate. MV4NY organizes two clean-ups a year. The next event will be on October 13 and will consist of: mulching & weeding, music and arts & crafts for children. They have been working with Parks Dept. to get benches painted and dead trees removed. They will be planting bulbs that will flower in the spring. This summer, MV4NY had 2 musical events and a Fun & Games day for the children.

A discussion followed about ongoing dog problems in this park. One resident described it as a “pet toilet”. Wes said the new signs were posted, indicating that the entire area is designated as a playground and dogs are not permitted. The committee also discussed PEP and 19<sup>th</sup> Precinct NYPD patrol of this area as it is not safe for the children, as well as attempts to change the behavior of park users. The Parks Committee will do a flyer to be handed out at the park. MV4NY remains committed to caring for this park, and when they hold events, they do so wearing tshirts and badges so they look like authoritative figures. However, the Committee agreed that enforcing parks rules should not fall on the shoulders of MV4NY, who focus on caring for the plants and providing community programming.

The following **RESOLUTION** was passed.

**WHEREAS** the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation has determined that the entire area within Ruppert Park is a designated playground; and

**WHEREAS** dogs are not permitted in any New York City Playground; and

**WHEREAS** local residents and other Ruppert Park users have repeatedly reported seeing dog owners allow their dogs to run off leash in the planted areas within the park; and

**WHEREAS** local residents and other Ruppert Park users repeatedly report seeing dog owners neglecting to pick up after their dogs, and

**WHEREAS** the most problematic time for park rule infraction is 6 – 9 am and 6 – 7 pm,

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** Community Board 8 recommends the Parks Department PEP Officers work with the 19<sup>th</sup> Precinct NYPD Officers for closer and more regular supervision and issuance of tickets in Ruppert Park, particularly during peak morning and evening hours.

**Approved Board Members:** 8-0-0 (Yes Harrington, James, Kirschenbaum, Pope-Marshall, Popper, Rudder, B. Schneider, Shimamura)

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

**3. Tramway Plaza update from the contractor:**

Contractor is “continuing excavation phase and sub-surface evaluation”. Park Dept. is working with RIOC for RIOC to contribute funds to Tramway Plaza when work is completed.

**4. Updates of Various Parks**

24 Sycamores Park. Project has reentered the procurement phase. It should be out for bid by end of year. Construction should begin next summer.

John Jay Park. Renovation plans are still being discussed. Hopefully Parks will be back in November.

14 Honey Locust Park. Planning scoping meeting before end of October. Community Board will advise on date and location.

66<sup>th</sup> Street GreenStreets at 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues - Contractor withdrew and it now has to go back for bid, hopefully by January.

**5. Review of City Charter**

Per the recommendation of CB8 Chair Alida Camp, the Committee discussed the upcoming Charter revision process in 2019 and possible recommended changes to the Charter regarding the Department of Parks and Recreation. These changes in the charter will not be voted on until 2019, so the Committee has some time to have an ongoing discussion.

Below are some initial thoughts on the Charter expressed and supported by Committee members:

- All recreational spaces should be extended the same protection official park space has, such as ball field and playground properties connected to schools.
- All funding from Parks Property Concessions should go in a lock box for the Parks Dept. and not to the general fund.

- Entities that are not currently in the Charter include: Conservancies, Friends of groups, green gardens, dog parks/runs. The Committee will discuss how these entities might be included in a revised Charter.
- Currently the Parks Dept. is charged with the task of maintaining existing park space. The Committee discussed potentially adding language that charges the Department to actively seek out new spaces to increase the amount of open space in New York.

#### **6. Discussion of Upcoming Dog Forum**

The Committee further discussed a dog forum, which will likely take place in January. The purpose of the forum will be to:

- 1) Educate the public on rules pertaining to dogs in NYC Parks
- 2) Offer resources to dog owners and park users for how to follow rules and how to report park violations
- 3) Engage dog owners and other park users in a conversation to discuss needed resources or services that could improve parks experience for all.

We also wish to discuss responsible dog ownership as it pertains to curbing your dog and preserving our City's trees and sidewalks.

Next steps for the forum: Barry and Tricia will begin to reach out to possible speakers and will work with the office to finalize a date and location.

There being no Old or New Business, the meeting was adjourned.

**Tricia Shimamura and Barry Schneider  
Co-Chairs, Parks and Recreation Committee**