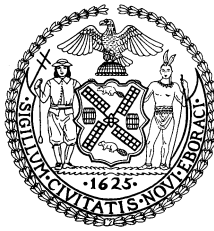


Alida Camp
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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Parks and Waterfront Committee
New York Blood Center, 310 East 67 Street, Auditorium
April 11, 2019 at 6:30 PM

MINUTES

Community Board Members (Present): Greg Kirschenbaum, Craig Lader, Rita Popper, Barbara Rudder, Tricia Shimamura, Barry Schneider

Community Board Public Members (Present): Judy Schneider

Community Board Members (Excused): Alexandra Harrington, Sofia James, Sharon Pope-Marshall, Peggy Price

Community Board Public Members (Excused): Irma Torres

1. Tribute to Henry Stern – StarQuest (1935 – 2019) by Barry Schneider – Rivera

Henry J. Stern was Parks Commissioner for 18 years under Mayors Koch and Giuliani. Building on the work of his predecessor Gordon Davis, Henry...

- Added 1,600 acres of wetlands, woodlands, meadows and even remote islands that would just be habitat for birds.
- Created the Natural Recourses Group – the first scientific approach to managing natural areas in any American urban park system.
- Directed Adrian Benepe to create The Official Historic House Trust of New York – an umbrellas conservancy for those civic assets where history comes to life. Now in its 30th year.
- Created the City Parks Foundation – the organization to take donations for parks. Today it is the nation's biggest and best promoter of programs in parks.
- Created 2001 GreenStreets by 2001.
- Wrote and posted 1,000 historic park signs
- Posted identification labels on 20,000 trees.
- Counted every NYC street tree - the first ever Street Tree Census
- Swim 7 laps at the pool at 77th Street on 7/7 at 7:07 a.m.
- Instituted the Parks Inspection Program – the scientifically observed data of a park's condition and holding supervisors or managers accountable for those conditions.
- Gave out over 10,000 park nicknames – “Noms du Parcs” - to create a community of Parkies.
- Barry ended the tribute quoting from Adrian Benepe's eulogy at the funeral service for Henry on Sunday, March 31st :

“Near the close of his funeral oration for Caesar in Shakespeare's play, Marc Anthony tells the crowd of the gifts that Caesar left to every Roman plebian in his will:

“Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,
His private arbors and new-planted orchards,
On this side Tiber. He hath left them you
And to your heirs forever—common pleasures,

To walk abroad and recreate yourselves.
Here was a Caesar! When comes such another?"

2. Parks Department Construction Update on East River Esplanade (E. 88 to E. 90 Streets) Presented by: Erik Linsalata, Gabrielle Czernik, Allaire O'Connor

- Due to unforeseen complications in the barrier walls along the esplanade, the construction period has been extended and is expected to be completed by 2020, at the latest. Parks has extended the weekday hours to help expedite the work.
- The extended hours include additional costs, but funds are available for the additional work, and no planned future sites are affected.
- Due to field conditions, Parks has adjusted (not extended) the scope of construction at this location. About 300' of the wall was originally slated for cosmetic rehabilitation work, but because the existing wall is in poor condition and does not match the original design plans on file, they have determined more extensive structural work would be necessary to bring the wall up to a safe condition.
- Several neighbors have complained about construction noise in the early hours during the week. Parks confirmed that this is large equipment needed to be delivered that is not allowed on the road during the day. The Committee requested that Parks notify the CB Office so that they can notify the community in advance of overnight activity at the site. Parks has also asked the contractor to do all it can to minimize overnight deliveries.
- The Committee requested more regular reports on this project and the Esplanade. Parks agreed September or October they would be ready to return with new information.

3. Old Business: Queensboro Oval Presented by: Dave Cerron-Concessions & Internal Audit, Phil Abramson-Concessions & Revenue, Matt Drury-Director, Government Relations

Dave Cerron thanked the Committee for its input into the future of the Queensboro Oval space, noting that Parks took Community Board 8 comments very seriously when they released the RFP. He particularly noted the Community Board's concerns regarding accessibility and affordability. He also reiterated that the Oval is DOT property and is the only all red clay court in NYC that is air conditioned and available all year round. Ultimately, Parks decided to rent the space out to Sutton East Tennis for another 10 year lease, full time with the following changes in the contract:

- Shift from 12 to 22 week Summer Season: 6 of the 8 Courts will be available for Tennis Parks Permit holders from 6 am to 11 pm. During this time, any City Permit holder can reserve a court, just like in any other NYC tennis court. City Permits are \$100 for the season and \$15 for a single use. If you have an IDNYC card you can get 10% off permit cost. Members of the community: Seniors 62 and older the cost will be \$20; Under 18 the cost will be \$10.
- During the Winter Season: there will be \$10 Senior Instruction; \$10 Cardio Tennis; and \$10 Walk-in rates, as well as donated resources for Yorkville Youth Athletics and the City Parks Foundation programs for youth.

The draft of the new contract will be available on April 29th. **There will be a public at the hearing at the Franchise and Concession Review Committee (FCRC) on May 6, at 2 Lafayette Street, 14th Floor, at 2:30 pm.**

Many board members still felt this piece of park land was not being used for the good of the greatest number of people in the community. They pointed out that in the past Queensboro Oval was used by the community for such things at track, jogging, soccer, soft ball, fitness, yoga etc. Board members also requested that the bubble should be cleaned at least once a year, and that Parks should improve its messaging to the community regarding public programs in the bubble.

Further Discussion of East River Crew Temporary Relocation Location

- The East River Crew met with Steve Simon and Mark Vaccaro and identified a temporary location to relocate their equipment. Wes Hamilton, Parks and Recreation Manager to CB8, will follow up and get back to the co-chairs next week.
- The group has been in their 96th Street location since 2006. It is a free, all-volunteer, 501(c)3 organization, with insurance, who does not want to lose their momentum. Their 96th location has been closed due to safety concerns.
- East River Crew reiterated unresolved issues including: moving and relocating the davit (boat hoist); ladder relocated and fendering protection; gate; shipping container (which could be located under the 92nd Street Sanitation ramp temporarily).
- Erik Linsalata volunteered to look at the location from an engineer's point of view for suitability.

1. Follow up pm East 72nd Street Cul-de-sac

- DOT has said it is their property. A city agency group must be responsible for major repairs of cobble stones, benches and lights, etc.
- The Committee is talking to Parks about signing an MOU (memorandum of understanding) with DOT.
- There is a group headed up by local neighbors who are eager to talk to other residents and organize a "Friends of" group. It was suggested that a flyer be sent to all the neighbors on the block to get together and work on forming a formal group.
- Some of the problems are: bench wood cracked, cobblestone cracked and missing, greenery needs help, 2 tree beds need enlarging, railing at the overlook need painting, not all street lights are working, etc.
- Need a name for the area such as "**East 72nd Street Overlook**".

2. Update on Tramway Plaza

- The revisions to the design are currently under review by NYC Transit and NYC DOB and therefore are not finalized. The Committee was advised that all proposed revisions are below ground and that there aren't any changes to the above ground features.

3. Parks Department Update by: Wes Hamilton, Parks and Recreation Manager to CB8

- This Saturday Ruppert Park will host a clean-up day led by the Muslim Volunteers of NY.
- New dog signage has been ordered for the park. Originally no pets. Community spoke and now allow pets on leash on the paths but never in the lawn/fenced-off areas.
- With the help of Partnership for Parks, Adrien and Dominic Padrone have formed a "Friends of Ruppert Park" and have plans to do small clean ups, farmers market and other projects. They are going to be working with the Muslim Volunteers of NY and are speaking with Rita Popper about community engagement.

M. Barry Schneider and Tricia Shimamura, Co-Chairs