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**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Parks and Waterfront Committee
April 8, 2021 at 6:30 PM Via Zoom**

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.

Resolution for Approval: Item 1 Unanimous

MINUTES:

Community Board Members Present: Lowell Barton, Brian Correia, Felice Farber, Craig Lader, Rita Popper, Barbara Rudder, Barry Schneider, Tricia Shimamura, Marco Tamayo

Community Board Public Members (Present):

197-a Committee: A. Scott Falk, Judy Schneider

Parks Committee: Judy Schneider, Irma Torres

Excused Community Board Members:

197-a Committee: Peggy Price, Will Sanchez

Parks Committee: Takako Kono

1. Updated Presentation on East River Greenway (ERG) and Andrew Haswell Green Park (AHG) Phase 2B by: Will Fisher & Yvi McEvelly & Kathryn Pryblski of EDC and George Bloomer, Michael Bradley & Steve Simon of Parks Department

- Yvi started with an overview of the project from East 53 Street to East 62 Street.
- The Focus tonight is where the ERG starts with the Clara Coffey Park Pedestrian bridge at East 53 Street going over the river and meeting up with AHG Park. This part of the Esplanade over the river is about 40 feet wide. There will be educational nodes along the river, seating, planting, artwork, as well as pedestrian and bike paths, which will be delineated by the paving.
- The work in Community Board 8 is as follows:
 - ❖ Critical structural repairs for the 60 Street ramp are completed. The ramp can now support trucks.
 - ❖ Marine work will start June 2021 and will complete July 2022.
 - ❖ The Civil/ Landscape work will start summer 2022 and complete summer 2023. There will be activity in the East River for the caissons & pile caps installation so that the topside can be installed and then work their way back out so that the AHG landscape will be the last piece before they demobilize.
 - ❖ Expect the entire project to open in the fall of 2023.
 - ❖ New sea rail will be installed.
 - ❖ Inside the former sanitation building:
 - ✓ New hex paving, dark and light grey pavers to delineate the paths between pedestrians and bikes.
 - ✓ Park space to the west of the path will have an 8' fence for the safety of the pedestrians, for the time being.
 - ✓ 4 large bays exist now and additional openings on the eastern wall of the building will be cut but not full height. Bays are about 13' wide.
 - ✓ Openings in the building will be moved and will now line up north and south and will be used for emergency vehicles as well.

- ✓ The lower half of the columns will be light grey painted up to 11 feet high.
 - ✓ 6 new lights attached to the interior columns
 - ❖ Signage on tram structure at East 60 street is in advanced stage of work allowing for early procurement by contractor. Signage should be able to be installed by this summer. The sign will be gold letters, one foot tall and mounted to the beam structure of the Tram.
- Q & A
 - ❖ There will be no exit/entrance from AHG to East 59 Street, which would avoid going up the hill from East 59 to 60 Streets. It is not Parks property. Parks will look into it to see if it is feasible.
 - ❖ There will be new benches at the river railing along the path going north from the building.
 - ❖ There is a ramp at East 63 Street that will take you to AHG Park, as well as the East 53 Street Bridge in Clara Coffey Park, both of which are ADA accessible.
 - ❖ People questioned why East 60 Street ramp was not ADA accessible. EDC/Parks advised East 60 Street ramp repair is a minor modification to a highway ramp vs new construction. The Park Department Specialist for Disabilities has met many times with the NYC Commissioner for People with Disabilities of the Mayor's office and this issue has been carefully reviewed. Parks will send documentation showing approval by the Mayor's office to the Community Board office.
 - ❖ Column paint inside the building is not graffiti resistant, but Parks says this is a standard color for them. They have paint readily available to address the graffiti.
 - ❖ Can water be brought from Phase 2B up to Alice Aycock Pavilion? EDC/Parks said ground hydrants exists but the connection for water source was never finished being hooked up in Phase 2A. This will be looked into to see if this can be completed as part of the Phase 2B contract. Phase 2 B has water. The planting contractor will maintain plantings for the 1-year guarantee that comes with the planting contract. Then Parks will be responsible for maintenance. There is an in-irrigation system is part of the contract.
 - ❖ Security cameras are not part of the scope of this contract. However, the underneath part of the building is very well lit.
 - ❖ Concerns were raised that the former sanitation building will be a magnet for the Homeless.
 - ❖ There are no plans for ferry station in this area. Army Corps of engineers ruled out a ferry many years ago because of the currents in that area.
 - ❖ Repeatedly some benches have been requested in the opening in the former sanitation building. EDC/Parks said this will be looked into. There is always the possibility this may affect a new design review.
 - ❖ Are Parks using American made materials—what is your policy? EDC/Parks said this is not a City policy but is for most federal funded projects. Sources overseas can be used if needed to complete project. What is the percentage of foreign materials? EDC/Parks will look into this.
- Resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8 recommends that Phase 2B work by EDC/Parks provide Alice Aycock Pavilion with water needed to keep it green and to be able to use the drinking fountain.

Approved Board Members: 9-0-0 (Yes: Barton, Correia, Farber, Lader, Propper, Rudder, B. Schneider, Shimamura, Tamayo)

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

2. Updates from Friends of the East River Esplanade by Stacy Papas and Q & A

- Stacy made a presentation for fitness equipment to be located at AHG Park Phase 2B by several different companies, as well as showing equipment in various parks in NYC.
- She stated that there is a need now due to: the fact that gyms are closed; financial problems that now exist, as trainers are expensive; people want to work out in the fresh air as opposed to inside.
- She estimated the cost of the concept is about \$250,000 which Friends would support.
- People expressed concerned about the maintenance of the lawn. People felt there was enough time to redesign the space to accommodate the fitness equipment.
- Since Phase 3 will not be started for 6 or 7 years, is it a big deal to go back to Design Commission to redesign Phase 2B to include fitness equipment?

EDC/Parks said they worked closely on the original design with the community, as well as with many city agencies. It is really not possible at this time to do a redesign and return to all the city agencies for approval. Locating fitness equipment in the lawn area is too steep. It generally requires a level area. Each piece of equipment has a required training envelope of space around it. We would be required to install retaining walls and would have to go back to the Design Commission. The current design is to be a passive space. Basically, building a hillside so the lawn will not be flat. A redesign would just delay the process and there may not be enough money to complete the project. During the design phase there were multiple opportunities to propose fitness equipment.

- Are there other areas that the Parks Department could look at to use? AHG Phase 3 which is not complete in design and is a valid location for placement. Parks has a lot of experience in designing fitness areas. Timing is not right for AHG Phase 2B and the EMG, when a carefully designed park is in progress to change design. Parks supports the fitness equipment project, but just not in this location.
- Friends would look forward to working with Parks to locate the fitness equipment in another area.
- People thanked the agencies for all their work on this project, as we have a big need for it.
- Phase 3 has a cost estimate of about 30 million dollars.

3. Report by the Muslim Volunteers for NY, Stewards for Ruppert Park by Sahara Husain & Mubeen Siddiqui

Sahara

- We are a 501 c 3 not-for-profit and work on 4 platforms and the environment platform is one of our strongest platforms, as evidenced by the work we do in Ruppert Park.
- 2017 we were made the Stewards of Ruppert Park.
- We are in the park in the Spring for planting and in the fall for cleaning.
- During the summer we have a diverse group from the community, Parks Department, and Elected Officials for our events.
- We wish to thank Council Member Kallos for his financial support of all our activities.
- We had to hold two virtual activities during Covid, consisting of: Nature Series from all around the world, as well as Going Green a virtual day at Ruppert showing the Paul on the piano who played his own composition; arts and crafts; book reading—Curious George Plants a Tree read aloud; Nila who did a sustainability project of single use plastic bags in her community in NJ; and craft activity with recycle materials.

Mubeen

- Thanked Kristy & Ashley from Partnership for Parks; Council Member Kallos for their support for all the park events; and a thank you to all the volunteers.
- The first event held in August with no more than 10 individuals and accomplished a lot. Everyone maintaining the protocol and was masked. It lasted 1 ½ hours.
- October was a planting event with two shifts of 25 volunteers for 3 hours. Partnership for Parks gave 2000 bulbs and thousands of perennials. Everything got planted.
- May 22 is the next event of two shifts of 50 volunteers each. Will reach out to get a live band from NYC Parks.
- On the redesign and reconstruction of the Park, Steve Simon said they are still trying to work out the funding issues. They hope to have a community meeting to solicit community input in the near future, which is always the way Parks works to start an initial design. We want the park to better serve the community, but the additional funding still needs to be secured. This is a challenging park because of the hardscape and Parks would like to redesign the park to make it greener and enlarge the children's play area are some of the thoughts. There is a dedicated interest by the Parks Commissioner to make the park new.

4. Updates from Park Department by Steve Simon, Assistant Commissioner & Q& A

- 400 parks project were held up around the City because of Covid.
- The projects are being staggered so they don't all hit the market at one time.

- Two of the capital projects in this Community District are proceeding. They have been submitted to the Comptroller's office. Work is expected to start on them in the next 6 to 8 weeks.
 - ❖ East 68 to 70 streets on the Esplanade. This has been funded by Council Member Kallos. The project will replicate the work done by Rockefeller & Hospital for Special Surgery to have a consistent look for the Esplanade. No structural work top side improvements only. People should note that the Esplanade will be disrupted during that period.
 - ❖ Sitting area at John Jay Park
- Additional projects that are proceeding in our community Board are:
 - ❖ Tree planting
 - ❖ Honey Locust Park bids are due April 19. Hopefully they will not exceed the existing budget.
 - ❖ St Catherine's Park will go out to bid sometime between May and June.
- Question was raised about East 79th Street on the Esplanade appears to be caving in. People in the engineering division are doing further investigation, so don't get anxious if you see lifted pavers to look at conditions below.
- Hospital for Special Surgery is planning on work that would improve the Esplanade from East 72 to 78 Streets.
- The May meeting next month, we will probably address the issue of St Catherine's Park, as the ULURP for the NY Blood Center will have been received by Community Board in April.

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

Tricia Shimamura and Barry Schneider
 Co-Chairs, Parks and Waterfront Committee
 Barry Schneider, Chair 197-a Committee
 Judith Schneider, Scribe