

Russell Squire
Chair

Will Brightbill
District Manager



505 Park Avenue, Suite 620
New York, N.Y. 10022-1106
(212) 758-4340
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)
www.cb8m.com – Website
info@cb8m.com – E-Mail

**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Parks and Waterfront Committee**

Via Zoom with Will Brightbill, District Manager Hosting
December 9, 2021

Community Board Members Present: Felice Farber, Craig Lader, Sharon Pope-Marshall, Rita Popper, Barbara Rudder Barry Schneider, Tricia Shimamura

Community Board Public Members Present: Judy Schneider, Irma Torres

Community Board Member Excused: Lowell Barton

1. FOR INFORMATION ONLY: A presentation by NYC Department of Parks & Recreation of concept plan for the reconstruction of Ruppert Park

- First our Council Member Ben Kallos gave a few remarks, as this is his last 22 days in office. The Park Committee wishes to thank him for all he has done for Parks in our district. The following funds have been allocated for this project: CM Kallos \$5.3 million; Speaker Cory Johnson & Manhattan Delegation \$3.3 million; CM Powers \$200,000; BP Brewer \$100,000. The Council Member believes the priorities are a bathroom, swings, water features, slide in the topography and a fence separation between the children and adult area.
- Steve Simon of Parks gave a short introduction and stressed that they had a lot of input from the community on this project. They will come back to the January 2022 Parks & Waterfront Committee meeting with the final design for approval. He then introduced Leslie Peoples and Alex Zervos from Parks.
- Alex gave the presentation on the proposed layout.
 - It is one acre of land which is not in the flood zone, with 88 trees—some of which are in poor condition. The park has a slope—a 15-foot grade change.
 - There will now be 2 entrances on Second Ave. and one each on 90 and 91 Streets and they will have gently curving paths that are ADA accessible.
 - The east side of the park will have seating and two passive lawn areas, with NE Corner to have a future Comfort station. There is not funding for the comfort station/Park House at this time.
 - The West side of the park will have a low fence and contain a playground area for 5- to 12-year-olds and a play area for 2 to 5-year-olds. In the center will be water play and in the upper NW corner will be the swings. Landscape Structures is the manufacturer Parks has been speaking with about the play equipment.
 - The fence on the west wall of the park will remain and the other 3 sides of the park will have a 4-foot fence.
 - Planting will be native plants. And the paving will be concrete not asphalt.
- Alex and Leslie then listened to suggestions and answered questions:
 - The question of a location for dogs came up. Many were in favor and said it was necessary to have space. Many were not in favor and said they create noise and leave feces. It was mentioned 91st street is a closed street and dogs walk there all the time.
 - There was a request for more swings.
 - Spray showers will not run all the time with the new DEP rules require that a press of a button in needed for a 10-minute run.

- Comfort station was requested by the community, and fund raising will begin now. It was requested that plumbing and electric etc. be installed now with the new park so there was no need to dig up the park when all the funds were secured.
- Rats are a problem. Parks mentioned with a comfort station there could be a fixed post person at the park that would keep the park clean and therefore rats would be less of a problem. Also mentioned that dog feces cause rat infestation. Also, the planned Big Belly trash cans will help with the rat problem.
- Signage for the areas where no pets are allowed.
- The site will be well lit.
- There was much discussion of the NEW exterior 4-foot fence. Some members of the community were in favor and others thought the low fence was sure to create a homeless problem.
- See attached layout for the new Ruppert Park



2. Discussion of planning for floods and resiliency in public parks and the waterfront in Community District 8 (Joint with Environment and Sanitation Committee.)

- Barbara Rudder, co-chair of the Environment and Sanitation Committee, asked for our committee's thoughts about resiliency due to climate change and the need to integrate and adopt

sustainability and resilience principals, such as: types of lighting and tree beds with more grounding to prevent floods.

- Tricia and Barry said they would discuss this offline, but they thought the best way to approach this was to form a sub-committee. They will advise the committee.

3. Discussion of a possible neighborhood off-leash dog park area in Community District 8

- Council Member Kallos suggested that the Stanley Isaac Park on 90 Street & 1st Avenue could possibly be used for two dog runs. It has a comfort station. The park itself is not in particularly good condition.
- John Jay Park came up about dogs and other issues. Tricia said that we will make John Jay Park an agenda item in the future, maybe February

4. Update from the NYC Parks Department by Shena Kaufman, District Manager

- Shena has been with the Park Dept. for 35 years, but she is just getting to know our district.
- She reported that the Esplanade from 100 to 101 Streets finished the repaving today.
- She was asked to look into the UES BLM group that hold a nightly vigil at the central plaza of Carl Schurz Park. They are having problems with people smearing feces. Shena will have park staff and PEP officers check it out. Unfortunately, they do not have permanent officers there. There are also problems with dogs off leash in areas they don't belong.
- Tricia would like to take a walk and talk with Shena about our parks.
- Possibility of cameras at BLM vigil at Carl Schurz? Shena said Parks doesn't do this. It is the responsibility of NYPD. Council Member Kallos suggested that the Argus cameras are already in place and one camera could be pointed at the park, since there are two cameras in the unit. The Council Member will work with Will Brightbill on this.

4. New/Old Business

- Tramway Plaza
Manhattan Aerial Tramway Station project is being constructed in two phases. Phase 1 (East elevator) opened to the public in October, and we are now working on the second elevator (Phase 2). Demolition of the existing elevator and the foundation work for second elevator platform is complete. They anticipate installing the remaining glass panels in the next few weeks. The overall completion of the project is dependent on the weather and regulatory sign offs. We will share the completion date once we know.
- Hospital for Special Surgery
Following the beautification of the portion of the Esplanade from 72nd to 78th Street being completed by HSS, HSS will extend its current maintenance of the Esplanade between 70th and 72nd Street to this area up to 78th Street. Current maintenance includes irrigation and landscaping of plantings, and painting of railings.
- A member of the public asked what is happening with the project on the Promenade over the FDR from 81 to 84 Streets. This project was presented in May 2021. Chairs will check with DOT and Parks.
- John Jay Park: Request to move the two pull-up bars to some other place in the park, so they can be used while the construction is going on. Request to replace the SE basketball rim as the incorrect one was installed, and no net can be hung from it. These items will be looked into.

Tricia Shimamura and Barry Schneider
Co-Chairs, Parks and Waterfront Committee