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

*Parks and Waterfront Committee Jointly with the 197-a Committee  
Thursday, January 12, 2023 -6:30PM*

**MINUTES**

**Board Members Present:** Felice Farber, Sahar Husain, Rita Popper, Barbara Rudder, Judy Schneider

**Public Members Present:** Barry Schneider, Irma Torres

**Excused Members:** Sharon Pope-Marshall

(Information added after meeting)

**Item 1: Update on active projects by Lane Addonizio of the Central Park Conservancy**

- **Re-envisioning of the pool and rink at the Harlem Meer.** Was known as the Lasker Rink. Located at NE Corner of the park. Building an elongated and narrower pool to reconnect a water course that comes from the North Woods that entered into the Harlem Meer, which is pushing the building into the slope on the eastern part of the site. HUGH ENDENVOR. The building will tuck in and follow the curve of the Drive. The Conservancy built a temporary dam to pump the water out of that portion of the Meer in order to do the work on the shoreline. They did a fish rescue and brought them to the other side where there is still water. There is a lot of engineering involved in project. Most extensive project at a cost of \$150 million, includes the maintenance piece and capital reserve. Target to open the pool for Summer of 2024.
- **Conservancy Gardens.** Divided into three sections and the work is devoted to the hardscape and infrastructure. The first time any real work has been done since it was built in 1937. Started a year ago on the English Garden and should be complete in about a month or so. Drainage issue, and infrastructure work should be finished in Spring. French Garden should start in late winter and finish in the Spring. Pergola and Central Fountain work will occur from Spring to Fall 2023. Italian Garden and the entrance stair should be complete 2024. New Fence installed on a concrete curb to keep the water from flowing into garden.
- **Kinderberg Chess + Checkers House.** Replacing the existing pergola with something more rustic. Restoring and renovating the Chess and Checkers House. They have various programs and hand out chess and checkers, which can be played at the tables outside. A new restroom is being installed, for which there is a great need. This is on a high point so an accessible ramp will be created screened by planting. Anticipated completion in late spring 2023.
- **Rebuild lost Rustic Structures in the Ramble.** Rebuild three lost rustic shelters with seats and one rustic structure that needs to be restored. Construction on two of the structures should start in late spring and be completed by end of 2024.
- **Rebuild Perimeter Restoration.** Rebuilding pavements and preplacing trees. E. 85 to 90 Streets has been completed. Next piece will be from E. 90 to 96 Streets. At bus stop or benches within the tree margins that line the walkway, the paving is being replaced with an accessible version of the historic granite block. Work will start early summer. Completed in early 2024.
- **Great Hill Comfort Station.** Reconfigure the inside and make it accessible. Currently in design. Expected to go into construction next winter and be complete by summer 2024. Cost approximately \$1 million.
- **North Meadow Center.** Is going out to bid. New storm water requirements that went into effect as the design was being completed necessitated a significant amount of redesign, delaying the start of the project. Expect to go out to bid in the next month and start in the spring 2023. It will take at least 18 months to complete.

- **Changes and expansion of CPC Team**

- ✓ Lane is transitioning in her role with the Conservancy and will be leaving the staff. She will be consulting on focused projects in the future. We all thank Lane for the tremendous work she has done for the Park. BRAVO!
- ✓ Lane introduced the people we will now be working with. Some have been with the Conservancy a long time, and some are new: Sandra Huber heading up Capital Projects Division; Gabby Chinae coordinating Public Review; Diane Jackier Kestenbaum came from Parks and Historic landmarks background. She will be doing Planning and Program Management; Nicholas Koster is an architect and Landscape Architect. Heading up the Design Studio—architects and landscape architects will be working with him.

## **Item 2: Discussion of what we did in 2022 by Felice and Judy covered 2023**

### **2022**

- Ruppert Park—we passed a resolution with a dog park. Council Member Menin provided funding for comfort station.
- Presentation by the Nature Conservancy for the Bond Act for clean water, clean air and green jobs, which subsequently passed. Hopefully we will see some money coming our way for our parks.
- Status of East Midtown Greenway and Andrew Haswell Green Phase-2B scheduled to be completed by the end of 2023—Another Ribbon Cutting.
- Honey Locust Park has reopened and now we need Ribbon Cutting.
- Had a Ribbon Cutting for the new sign on Andrew Haswell Green Park (AHG).
- Look forward to start advocating AHG Phase 3 for funds.
- Fitness equipment under the ramp at 78 Street on Esplanade by Hospital for Special Surgery
- John Jay Park Seating area is completed ahead of schedule. Also advocating for an accessible ramp for multi-purpose play area. Thank you Council Member Menin for funding this project.
- Renovation of the North Meadow, on which we just had an update.
- Heard from the Conservancy about getting dogs back on leash.
- Recently heard from EDC about the Esplanade from 94 to 107 Street, including the pier. We want to make sure that the East River Crew's materials are included in the renovation. The committee decided CB8 should write a letter to Kathryn Prybylski, EDC, to make sure that the Davit, Ladder and Steps get included in the renovation at 96<sup>th</sup> Street.
- New sink hole on the Esplanade across from John Jay Park needs to be followed up

### **2023**

- Looking forward to having presentations from parks on the following items this year:
  - ✓ Presentation on the Ruppert Park comfort station and update on the entire park
  - ✓ Presentation on John Jay all that was mentioned by Felice, as well as a tennis court and pickleball court—a new design will be needed.
  - ✓ Presentation on the Esplanade work.
  - ✓ Commissioner Perez needs to see AHG-Phase 3, so we can meet with him and start fund raising \$50 million for the project.
- February agenda: Commissioner Perez will be our special guest to speak on pickleball in Community District 8.
- March agenda: Hospital for Special Surgery come and talk about the Esplanade from E. 72 to 78 Streets and speak on the new Kellen Tower. We will invite Parks, as well as EDC for fitness equipment. The underside work will be discussed with Parks before this meeting.
- Hoping to have a ribbon cutting for Honey Locust Park. Humane Society across the street from the park has expressed how happy they are to have the park open and are looking after it.

- Making the 72<sup>nd</sup> Street cul-de-sac a Green Street. Active issue because of a recently passed bill by the City Council allowing unused pieces of land such as cul-de-sac's to be converted to parks/Green Streets. DOT will be happy to work with Parks, who would be doing the upkeep.
- Repair of the Esplanade by DOT from E. 81 to 90 Streets, which is the roof of the FDR Drive has the following schedule: Preliminary design complete 12/2021; Final Design start 6/2023 and Complete 8/2024; anticipated construction 8/2025; anticipated construction completion 8/2028. The Brearly piece will be last.
- Spoke to parks about asking about \$50,000 for benches or does parks have the benches and can they install them?

**Item 3: Parks District Manager Shena Kaufman (in her stunning hat) gave the following report:**

- Honey Locust Park Ribbon Cutting will be in February. We will advise, as soon as the date is known.
- John Jay Park—Parks will be doing an accessible ramp and the entire multi-purpose area to be done over and there will be a new tennis court and pickleball court. A presentation will be made in 2024.
- Carl Schurz Park—Parks will be replacing the bluestone pavement on 86<sup>th</sup> street staircase and will make presentation in 2024.
- Ruppert Park is getting complaints about the noise. Parks is thinking of shifting the location of the temporary dog park to where it will be in the final plan. This quadrant is not really used. The Committee agreed that this would be a good suggestion.
- Carl Schurz and John Jay Parks projects are being funded by Council Member Menin. It was agreed we should write a letter of thank you to the Council Member.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

*By Felice Farber and Judy Schneider*