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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Parks and Waterfront Committee
Thursday, May 11, 2023 -6:30PM
Conducted remotely on Zoom

MINUTES

Community Board Members Present: Felice Farber, Sahar Husain, Valerie Mason, John McClement, Rita Popper, Judith Schneider.

Community Board Public Board Members Present: Barry Schneider, Irma Torres.

Item 1: Introduction of new Park Personnel for our new Parks Districts

Judy Schneider introduced the new Parks personnel and gave them an opportunity to say a few words.

- New District 8 - Regional Manager - Terese Flores, was welcomed back to the community. She provided a brief background of her experience.
- New District 15 - Regional Manager - Robert McLean covers the Waterfront/Esplanade from East 37th Street to 125th Street.

Item 2: Parks Department Update on John Jay Park for the multi-purpose play area, including a new accessible entrance, and the central plaza. Presentation by Max Goodstein and Steve Simon. [May 2023 John Jay Park Presentation.](#)

Thanks to \$1M in funding from Council Member Julie Menin, the Parks Dept. will be installing an accessible ramp at the East End of the Multi-purpose play area (MPPA) and will be doing a full-depth replacement of the concrete base and asphalt overlay of the central walkway from the park entrance to the Pool House. The drainage problems will be corrected as part of this work. The MPPA will be refreshed. The tennis and basketball courts will be repainted, and there will be new basketball hoops and nets. A new, accessible water fountain will be installed in the MPPA. No work will be done on the handball courts at this time. The work will be started prior to the beginning of pool season. Work will be expedited and will not take more than 6 months.

- **Steve Simon, on behalf of Parks, thanked Julie Menin for all the work she has done for Parks in her district. The Parks Committee of Community Board 8 concurs!**
- In response to questions and concerns raised about the tree stump in the middle of the central walkway, Steve Simon indicated that he would look into removing the stump. The removal of the stump and tree replacement is not part of the current project. Parks will increase the size of the tree bed and try completing this work, before they start on the major work.
- No work will be done on the exterior of the park.

- In response to comments about significant rat burrows in the plaza area outside of the park, (essentially the continuation of Cherokee place) which is owned by the Parks Dept., Parks will arrange for rat extermination and will be in contact with the adjacent apartment building.



- Lori Knowles of Parks is looking for a good design to put in better trash cans at John Jay Park — hopefully rat proof.
- A construction sign will be posted. Parks still has to work out the sequencing of the work in order to minimize the impact on other uses of the park. The construction work has already been bid.
- Parks Dept. will explore whether the handball courts can be kept open during work on the MPPA.
- Community members requested more benches and improved planting.
- Questions were raised about the installation of tree guards around the tree beds. Steve Simon noted that it is against Parks Dept. policy to install tree guards inside of parks.
- Concerns were raised about the sandbox and the sand clogging the drains in the park. Terese Flores will look into installing signage to help with this issue.

Item 3: Parks Department Update on replacement of blue stone plaza at Carl Schurz Park.
Presentation by Max Goodstein and Steve Simon. [May 2023 Carl Schurz Park Presentation.](#)

Council Member Julie Menin secured \$300,000 for state-of-good repairs at Carl Schurz Park. The project was selected through participatory budgeting. The Parks Dept. will be replacing the bluestone in the plaza at the end of the walkways at the bottom of the stairs at 86th Street, off East End Avenue. The high-quality bluestone will be set on a concrete base. Work starts in the spring of 2024 and will take 2-3 months to complete. **The Parks Dept. and Community Board thank Council Member Menin and the Carl Schurz Park Conservancy for their support and funding for critical projects.** Steve Simon noted that most Parks Dept. capital projects are funded by elected official allocations. The bluestone stairs are being replaced by the Carl Schurz Park Conservancy.

Item 4: Presentation on Wollman Rink activities: Jacqui Kennedy General Manager of CityPickle and Greg Gushee of Related Companies

- CityPickle has been open for one month. They are open daily from 7am to 9pm. There are 14 courts. Programming includes open play, community play and private court reservations. There is also a free summer camp for kids, and adaptive pickleball for kids and adults with limitations. CityPickle is open from April to September.

- Wollman Rink season is from October to March. Priority is the ice-skating rink. Hours and pricing for next season is subject to Parks Dept. approval.

Item 5: Updates from the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation by Terese Flores

- The sandbox at Carl Schurz was filled and St. Catherine Park's will be filled soon.
- Parks recognizes that the Basketball Court area in the MPPA at Carl Schurz needs work and Parks will be announcing plans soon. Looking at what resources are needed.
- Parks now has a 311 specialist to address 311 complaints.
- Parks has exciting events coming up in Carl Schurz Park sponsored by Council Member Menin – Tango on Fridays from 4 -5:30 in June, Skate Night on June 2, and family fun day on June 10th.
- Movies in the Park sponsored by Council Member Menin:
 - St. Catherine's Park, Saturday, May 27, at 7:30 — Dune
 - John Jay Park, Wednesday, June 3 at 7:30 — Spider Man: No Way Home
 - 24 Sycamores Park, Saturday, June 10 at 7:30 — Jungle Cruise

Item 6: New Business

- Ruppert Park rest rooms are being handled by DDC and the park reconstruction is by the Parks Department.
- Muslim Volunteers of New York is sponsoring spring park environmental stewardship and beautification at Ruppert Park on Saturday May 20th. Hoping to plant over 2500 plants. Volunteers are welcome and can sign up to help out. [Here is the registration link for the event: MV4NY Ruppert Park Beautification Day](#)
- Concern was raised about lack of green space in Carl Schurz Park and the lack of maintenance and enforcement and keeping dogs off the lawn. Terese Flores will reach out to PEP officers about increased enforcement.
- A community member requested a resolution from the CB that the Parks Dept. will not issue permits for other uses on the pickleball courts. The Parks Dept. said this would not happen, except on rare occasions.
- Valerie Mason has received complaints about dogs on the reservoir track in Central Park instead of the bridle path. Terese will reach out to the Central Park Conservancy. The Central Park Conservancy is surveying the community about usage of the Central Park drives. Valerie encouraged people to take the survey. [Here is the link: www.centralparknyc.org/drives](http://www.centralparknyc.org/drives)

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

*By Felice Farber and Judy Schneider,
Co-Chairs, Parks and Waterfront Committee*