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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Parks and Waterfront Committee
Thursday, July 13, 2023 -6:30PM
Conducted remotely on Zoom

MINUTES

Community Board Members Present: Felice Farber, Bradley Hershenson, Rita Popper, Judith Schneider.

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

Item 1: Update on East Midtown Greenway and Andrew Haswell Green Park-Phase 2B by Kathryn Prybylski, Yvi McEvily, & Sakiru Okeowo, of EDC. (Joint Item with the 197-a Queensboro Bridge Area Committee)

Updated provided by Ankita Nalava, EDC Capital Division. She provided an overview of the projects completed to date and the remaining work to be performed. In summary, plans for Andrew Haswell Green (AHG) Park include phase 1, just north of 2B, which includes the dog run and planting. Phase 2A the Pavilion, is above the former sanitation station. These projects have been completed. Currently under construction and set to be completed by December 2023 is Phase 2B. Phase 3 is the transition area between the East Midtown Greenway and AHG 2B and underneath the Pavilion. This phase is not yet funded.

An overview of the East Midtown Greenway project, between East 53rd and East 61st Streets, was provided as well.

Current construction activities on AHG 2B includes demolishing the curtain walls between the transition area. Ongoing work includes work on the bulkhead, lawn, grand staircase, and ramp leading to the 60th Street overpass. EDC will be repaving and installing trees and a large lawn on the Esplanade – the construction fence by the dog run has been extended to allow this work to take place. The dog run will be shut down for 48 hours to allow for repaving. The community and Community Board will be notified in advance when this work will take place. There are also closures on the FDR NB between 60th and 64th Street between 1 AM – 5AM Monday to Friday through August to allow for trenching for a Con Ed conduit. This will allow for the future installation of security cameras. EDC will provide the Community Board and the 19th Precinct the location of the conduits to help facilitate future installation of security cameras.

Questions were raised about railing along the grand staircase – EDC noted there will be handrails at the sides and in the middle of the staircase. Questions were also raised about lighting. EDC noted that the project includes lighting and will give us more information at their next presentation.

Item 2: Update on Central Park Boat House by Chris Gallo, of Legends

Chris Gallo, regional director of operations for Legends Hospitality provided an update on efforts to reopen the Boat House.

The project was divided into two phases: the first phase involved reopening the rowboat area, boat rentals, and café by the start of the summer; and the second phase entails the renovation and reopening of the event space and restaurant.

Phase 1: Completed in June. Replaced 100 rowboats and reopened the outdoor café.

Phase 2: Goal is to open the event space and restaurant by the end of the summer. All kitchen equipment is being replaced. Other renovations include work on the roof, HVAC system and ADA compliance.

Item 3: Update on John Jay Park pool deck reconstruction by Nicolas Grefenstette, NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation

The Parks Department will be replacing the concrete deck area around the pool and diving pool, repairing or replacing railings, and working on other pool items at John Jay Park. The work will be coordinated with other work set to take place in the park so as to minimize park area closures. The work includes using color pigments in the concrete to have a “beachy” look. The project also includes planters and plantings. A request was made to cover dirt patches and uses planters instead of in-ground planting, to limit opportunities for rat burrows. The total budget for the project is \$1.4 million.

Item 4: Plan for NY Rangers to Renovate Stanley Isaacs Playground Hockey Rink at the South Side of 1st Ave. & 96th Street by Christine Dabrow, Chief Marketing and Development Officer, NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation

Refurbishing the Stanley Isaacs Playground Hockey Rink will be funded by The Garden of Dreams Foundation, and the New York Rangers will be managing the project on their behalf. This is to be done through the NYC Parks Adopt-A-Park Program. The project only entails refurbishing the Hockey Rink. Expect construction to start shortly and take 6 to 8 weeks from when they begin to finish. The Parks Dept. schedules recreation activities at the facility. There will be a ribbon cutting when the project is complete.

Item 5: NYC Parks Dept. Regional Manager, Terese Flores

The pool at John Jay Park is mostly 100% open. There is no lap swim this year. In general, there is no lap swim in the City. Parks is partnering with the nearby building to gain access to exterminate the rats between the park and the adjacent building.

In response to questions about Ruppert Park, Steve Simon provided the following update:

- The design work is completed, and the project has entered the procurement phase. The contract documents are being reviewed by the lawyers. Hope solicitation to take place by the end of the summer/September and award by the end of the year.
- The restroom is being constructed by DDC. Steve needs to get an update on the status. The restroom is in a pre-design phase. All of the utility lines necessary to connect with the restroom building are included in the park project. There should be no reason to dig up the park during construction of the restroom.
- Parks is putting in a new building that will include storage space for parks materials.

Items 6 and 7: Old Business/New Business

A member of the community asked about the \$2.7M allocated for Carl Schurz and 24 Sycamores Park by our Council Members. Steve Simon said there will be an open discussion with the community on priorities for the funding of these parks and will be scheduled for after the summer. The funding comes with some parameters that it be put towards the following:

- At Carl Schurz, the funding will go towards the Multi-Purpose Play Area.

- At 24 Sycamores – the funding will likely go toward the upper area where the play equipment is located.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM.

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