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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Parks and Waterfront Committee
Thursday, October 12, 2023 -6:30PM
Conducted remotely on Zoom

MINUTES

Community Board Members Present: Juno Chowla-Song, Felice Farber, Bradley Hershenson, Sahar Husain, Barbara Rudder, Judith Schneider.

Community Board Public Board Members Present: Barry Schneider.

***Excused:** Rita Popper, Irma Torres (Public Member)

Item 1: Update from the Carl Schurz Park Conservancy by Executive Director Patrick McClosky and President Judy Howard

Conservancy Executive Director Patrick McClosky provided an update on some of the infrastructure work the Conservancy is doing in the park, efforts to plant more sustainable flora and fauna, and some of the park events and educational programs. He noted that the Park is being heavily used since Covid. He thanked the Parks Department for their partnership. Finally, he noted that the Conservancy will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary next year.

Highlights of the projects include:

- A complete renovation of southeast 86th Street stairs. They are completing the northside staircase now. Total cost for the project is \$250,000.
- The Parks Department installed security stanchions at all of the entrances to the Park at East End Avenue. Parks partnered with the Conservancy make sure the stanchion work allowed for access of maintenance vehicles, and a swing gate is being installed.
- Garbage cans have been replaced with more attractive ones that are rat proof.
- The park continues to be impacted by climate change and flooding. The conservancy is using planting treatments to keep soil from washing down and clogging drains during heavy rain. The Conservancy is also working closely with Parks to have the storm drains cleaned after a heavy storm.
- Earth Day was celebrated in the Park for the second year. The Conservancy planted native and pollinator friendly plants. This brought back bees to the park and has helped with other flowering plants in the park. Earth Day activities included information on pollinators.
- The Conservancy has also established a zone gardener program, and volunteers for the zones are provided guidance on plantings from the Conservancy's fulltime horticulturalist.
- The Conservancy is holding 5-6 bird tours each season. These fill up quickly.
- The Conservancy has identified more than 150 bird species in the park.
- More information on their website at: www.CarlSchurzParkNYC.org. or Patrick@CarlSchurzParkNYC.org
- On October 22, there will be a Halloween Howl event from 1-3pm, registration from 11-1. There will also be a Healthy Hound Fair starting at 12 noon.

Item 2: Presentation by Kat Brady of Central Park Conservancy about fall programming in Central Park

- CentralParkNYC.org – you can find information on fall programs at Central Park. Upcoming programs include the following:
 - 10/21 – 10am-4pm Chess, Checkers, Puzzles, and other trivia games at newly renovated Chess & Checkers House
 - 10/26 – 4pm-7pm Pumpkin flotilla across Harlem Meer. Free event but should reserve in advance.
 - 10/29 at 11am on 10/31 at 11am Fall Forest bathing tours – it is a tour and mindfulness exercise.
 - Multiple dates - Foliage tours
 - Self-guided tour with peak fall foliage map to find the most vibrant colors.
 - Check out Conservancy fall guide for more info.

Item 3: Ruppert Park Beautification Volunteer Day by Muslim Volunteers 4 New York – by Mubeen Siddiqui

The Ruppert Park Beautification Day will be held on October 21, 2023, from 10:00am – 1:00pm. Volunteers will be planting daffodils, mulching the NE quadrant of the field, painting the red brick façade and more. There will be music, refreshments, and giveaways. Thanks to NYC Parks and Council Member Julie Menin for funding the event. It will be held rain or shine.

[Registration link for the event: MV4NY Ruppert Park Beautification Day Form](#)

Item 4: Report by NYC Parks Dept. Manager, Shena Kaufman

- The Swing Gate on 86th Street Plaza was installed
- East 87th Street restroom in Carl Schurz will cost about \$2.2 million, maybe more if water lines have to be replaced.
- Renovations to MPPA at Carl Schurz– scheduled to start in April 2024.
- 24 Sycamore – there is no start date for the design work. Sheena will update when there is more information.
- St. Catherines Park – design work is in progress.
- Ruppert – nothing new to report. Hope to start the project next year in the early part of the year. (The park is baited monthly.)
 - In response to significant community concerns about the delayed start of the reconstruction project, the Community Board agreed to include the reconstruction project status on the agenda for each meeting.
- John Jay – pool deck and MPPA scheduled to start this fall. Minor renovations contract. The MPPA will be repaved, hopefully in the coming weeks. They are not doing the handball court area. There is not sufficient funding at this time. Will also do the pool deck and will be working on both projects at the same time.
- Stanley Isaacs, working hard to keep restrooms open for this winter. Upgraded electricity is needed but may not be able to buy the heating unit needed.
- Samuel Seabury – cannot keep open the public restroom this winter because doesn't have the funding needed.
- PEP Unit – No summons issued at Rupert, John Jay, and Carl Schurz. Shows that their regular enforcement is working.

Items 5 and 6: Old Business/New Business

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:37 PM.

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