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

*Parks and Waterfront Committee Jointly with the 197-a Committee  
Thursday, November 9, 2023 - 6:30PM  
Conducted remotely on Zoom.*

*Please note: The resolution contained in the committee minutes are recommendations submitted by the committee co-chairs to the Community Board. At the monthly full board meeting, the resolution is discussed and voted upon by all members of Community Board 8 Manhattan.*

**Resolution for Approval:**

**Item 2: A Resolution to approve the design of the West 85th Street Playground as presented by the Central Park Conservancy.**

**MINUTES**

**Community Board Members Present:** Felice Farber, Rita Popper, Barbara Rudder, Abraham Salcedo, Judy Schneider.

**Community Board Public Board Members Present:** Barry Schneider.

**\*Excused:** Irma Torres (Public Member)

**Item 1: 197a Committee: Update on the finalization of Andrew Haswell Green Phase 2B and East Midtown Greenway by EDC: Tara Das, Ankita Nalvade, Kathryn Prybylski and by Parks: Michael Bradley and Kusalee Vachananda**

**Presentation**

- **Update on efforts to install security cameras on the Esplanade.**
  - Police Officer Larkin from the 19<sup>th</sup> Precinct and EDC discussed efforts to install security cameras on the Esplanade in the area of Andrew Haswell Green Park and East Midtown Greenway. EDC explained that as part of the construction project, conduits for the cameras, spare conduits, and a secure area for additional camera equipment have been installed. The 24/7 power source is in place to support the security cameras. No wiring for the cameras was installed, only the infrastructure to allow for the installation of security cameras.
  - NYPD can install the cameras. There are multiple locations, most of which are on lampposts, but also on the former sanitation structure and other locations.
  - EDC and Parks will coordinate with the NYPD on height of lampposts – generally NYPD wants the lampposts to be 17' or higher (from ground level) for the camera installation, in order to ensure a clear signal and to deter vandalism, and location for camera installation.
  - Parks noted that the layout plan for the cameras is designed to get 100% site coverage. Parks anticipated hardwired cameras with the heads in secure locations. Parks Designed to a certain industry standard camera type.
  - An on-site meeting will be arranged so this part of the project can get started.
- **Update on Finalization of AHG 2B and East Midtown Greenway**

- EDC provided background on the 197-A plan for improved waterfront access.
- EDC is Currently constructing Phase 2B of Andrew Haswell Green Park (AHB). Phase 1 and 2A are completed. Phase 3 is underneath the Pavilion and is not yet funded.
- The Project includes the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the East 60<sup>th</sup> Street Overpass.
- EDC showed photos of the nearly completed project.
- 8 Park benches were installed under the pavilion along the water. EDC thanked Judy Schneider for suggesting the installation of benches in that area.
- Parks will take over maintenance responsibility when the project is turned over, including mowing the grass and caring for the trees and plants as per Robert McLean and Michael Bradley.
- EDC – irrigation is fully installed and operational. The Parks plumbers and Maintenance & Operations were trained on the operating and maintenance of the irrigation system. Robert McLean received the protocol for lawn care from the Conservancy, and Parks will be implementing that protocol to protect the lawn.
- Parks will install range fencing around the lawn to keep people off the lawn during the winter and to give the new sod an opportunity to take hold.
- Problems with the irrigation system on the top part of AHG park-Phase 2A were due to an issue with the original contractor. The problem has been rectified and there is an irrigation system that is confirmed to be working throughout.
- EDC was able to open the wall on the east side of the former sanitation building to improve access to the East River as part of the project and that is where the benches are placed.
- Park Opening/Ribbon Cutting in next 2-3 months.

**Item 2: Presentation by the Central Park Conservancy (CPC) on the West 85<sup>th</sup> Street Playground Reconstruction project by: Diane Jackier, Nick Koster VP for program management and Sandy Huber**

**Presentation**

- The playground is located on the West Side of Central Park between Central Park West and West Drive and between West 85<sup>th</sup> Street and the West 86<sup>th</sup> Street Transverse. It is one of 21 playgrounds that ring the park and one of only 3 playgrounds that have not been reconstructed.
- The reconstruction will be consistent with the goals for playground restoration set forth in the Plan for Play.
- The playground is in the area of Seneca Village, a predominantly African American community that existed in the area prior to the taking of the property through eminent domain for the construction of Central Park. The Parks Department conducted extensive archeological research in this area and is engaging in community conversations to figure out how to best commemorate Seneca Village in the reconstruction of the playground.
- The Playground will be designed for the 5-to-12-year-old age group.
- CPC will be removing the large sand area to have more room for play equipment.
- The play equipment will reflect the surrounding landscape with wood play equipment and boulders for the water features.

**BE IT RESOLVED Community Board 8M approves the Central Park Conservancy proposal as presented for the reconstruction of the West 85<sup>th</sup> Street Playground.**

**Unanimously approved: 5-0-0 (Board Members: Rudder, Salcedo, Popper, J. Schneider, Farber)  
Public Members: 1-0-0 (B. Schneider)**

**Item 3: Update by the Central Park Conservancy on the Conservatory Garden Crab Apple Planting by: Nick Koster**

**Presentation**

- CPC provided an update on efforts to reconstruct the Conservatory Garden which includes the English Garden (completed), the French Garden (scheduled to be completed Spring 2024), the Italian Garden, the Pergola (scheduled for completion Spring 2024).
- CPC is in the process of working on the Crab Apple Allee (located on both sides of the Italian Garden) and showed photos of the progress of the work. The existing crab apple trees were damaged and diseased and were removed. The conservancy purchased 70 trees and selected 44 for planting in the park and these new crab apple trees are being pruned to reflect the desired architectural shape for the trees.

**Item 4: Presentation on Asphalt Green (AG) by: Jordon Brackett and Karen Borsari, Senior Director External Engagement**

- AG just celebrated its 50th Anniversary and developed a new strategic plan for the next 50 years.
- AG wants to be a partner with CB8 and wants to hear the goals of the community.
- AG partners closely with Stanley Isaacs. They also have a downtown location, where they have a very strong culinary education program and are looking for a café partner to help build out a culinary program.
- They are starting a class pass type initiative with neighborhood businesses. It was suggested they talk offline with Abraham Salcedo, chair of the Street life committee for suggestions.

**Items 5: Report by Parks Department Manager Shena Kaufman**

**Ruppert Park –**

- Parks Dept. Legal Reviewing documents needed for bidding process and are expected to be finished this month. Next, they will be reviewed by Corp. Counsel before they can go out for bid.
- Completed coordination work with DOT for removal of utility shed.
- Currently seeking approval of SWPPP (Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan) from Dept. of Environmental Protection. We are trying to push this project through as quickly as possible.
- Put benches in the dog area of the park but additional chairs have been added that are not allowed. Shena will look to see if can install another bench and have chairs removed.

**St. Catherines Park –**

- Design should be ready to be presented to the Committee in January or more likely February.

**John Jay Park –**

- Will shut the bright lights now along the poolside of the park. Lights will be put back on during the pool season.
- Posted signs at John Jay – start construction on November 13. Parks will start the pool deck first. The MPP area will start in Spring. The MPPA will remain open until the construction starts next year, when the asphalt can be done.
- Most of the central walkway will be closed with construction fence and remain closed until the end of the project.
- Access to the seating area, restrooms and playground will be maintained at all times. All Contractor Vehicle movements from the park entrance to the staging area will be flagged by the contractor.

**24 Sycamore –**

- No start date for design work. (Need to get an increased allocation of funds so the balance of the park can be done at one time.)

**Stanley Isaacs –**

- The reopening of the skating rink on November 16 with a ribbon cutting.

**East River Esplanade –**

- Corp. Counsel has approved the construction documents for the Phase 3 projects covering: 62/63 Streets; 76/80 Streets and 90/94 Streets. The projects will go out for bid by the end of the year and if all goes well the projects should be in construction next year. Parks investigating the sink hole at East 74<sup>th</sup> Street.

Judy added that HSS is bidding out work on the esplanade now. Goal to complete in summer of 2025.

**Items 6 and 7: Old Business/New Business**

- Anthony Perez, left Parks Dept to become the Bronx Borough Commissioner of Dept. of Transportation. He was replaced on an interim basis by Paul D'Amore.
- Mubeen Siddiqui – Announced the Muslim Volunteers 4 New York's 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Thanksgiving Food Drive to benefit New York Common Pantry, City Meals on Wheels, and West Side Campaign Against Hunger. The food drive flyer can be found on the CB8M website.

***Note: There will be no Parks & Waterfront Committee meeting in December.***

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:34 PM.

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