

Valerie S. Mason
Chair

Will Brightbill
District Manager



505 Park Avenue, Suite 620
New York, N.Y. 10022-1106
(212) 758-4340
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)
www.cb8m.com – Website
info@cb8m.com – E-Mail

The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Parks and Waterfront Committee
Thursday, January 11, 2024 - 6:30PM
Conducted remotely on Zoom.

MINUTES

Community Board Members Present: Felice Farber, Bradley Hershenson, Sahar Husain, Rita Popper, Barbara Rudder, and Judy Schneider.

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

Approximate Number of Public Attendees: 21

Item 1: Update on Park Avenue Artwork and Art in the Parks Program

Elizabeth Masella, Sr. Arts Coordinator for NYC Parks has told us that there will be no more staff presentations to the Community Board, due to budget freezes leaving no money for after-hour presentations. Therefore, she sent the following information, which the co-chairs presented to the committee.

Summary of Temporary Installation – Jorge Otero-Pailos on Park Avenue

- Artist: Jorge Otero-Pailos
- Presenting Organizations: Queen Sofia Spanish Institute, Onera Foundation, Fund for Park Avenue
- Artwork Title: *Analogue Sites*
- Location: Park Avenue Malls (East 66th and East 67th Streets), Manhattan
- Dates: March 2024 – October 2024
- Material: Galvanized steel, paint
- Dimensions: 10 ft. high x 4 ft. wide x 4 ft. deep
- Weight: 2,081 lbs.
- Plinth Dimensions: 6 in. high x 4 ft. 4 in. wide x 4 ft. 4 in. deep

Summary of project:

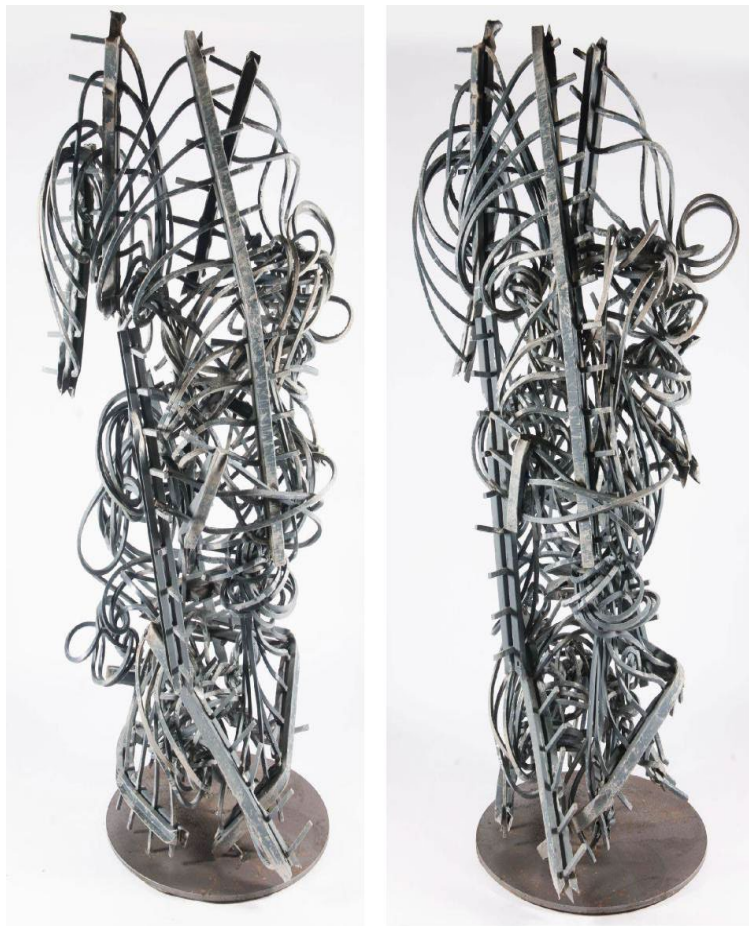
Analogue Sites exhibition features monumental sculptures created by Otero-Pailos while preserving the former U.S. Embassy in Oslo, a Saarinen-designed landmark. Made from the fence that once surrounded the building, the sculptures will be placed along Park Avenue at East 53rd, 66th, and 67th Streets, creating a dialogue with iconic modernist landmarks, international institutions, and the Park Avenue Armory.

Each artwork will be attached to a plinth that will sit on the ground. As required, the artist has submitted signed and sealed engineering drawings for review by the MTA Metro-North engineering team to avoid negative impact on the train shed below.

Analogue Sites is a sponsored project of the New York Foundation for the Arts with funding provided by the Onera Foundation, the Queen Sofia Spanish Institute, the AECID, the New York State Council for the Arts, and individual donors.

In addition to the two artworks at East 66th and East 67th Streets, an additional artwork will be sited on Park Avenue at East 53rd Street.

Jorge Otero-Pailos (b. 1971, Madrid) is an American-Spanish artist, preservation architect, scholar, and educator renowned for pioneering experimental preservation practices. Alongside his artistic practice, he is Director and Professor of Historic Preservation at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation (GSAPP), where he also directs the Columbia Preservation Technology Lab, and where he founded the first Ph.D. program in Historic Preservation in the U.S. His works have been commissioned by and exhibited at major heritage sites, museums, foundations, and biennials.



Item 2: Review of the 2023 and discussions of 2024 Projects

➤ Parks Department Reorganization

Parks Manager Sheena Kaufman kept us updated throughout the year on the Parks in Community District 8. Therese Flores took over responsibility as Regional Manager for the East Side beginning in April.

The East River Esplanade, District 15, is overseen by Regional Manager Robert McLean. The District Manager for District 15 is Geoff Martin.

➤ **Parks Department Presented Park Avenue Art Installation Project**

Installation of artwork by the Artist Sophia Vari on the Park Avenue Mall between 53rd and 62nd Streets

➤ **Carl Schurz Park Activities and Updates**

Thanks to support from Council Member Julie Menin and the Carl Schurz Park Conservancy, the Parks Department was able to replace the bluestone in the plaza at 86th Street off East End Avenue.

Council Member Menin also provided funding for work in the Multipurpose Play Area. 3 temporary Pickleball Courts were installed in the play area. With council funding the entire MPAA will be refurbished in 2024.

Other work in the park includes a complete renovation of the southeast and northeast stairs at 86th Street and the installation of security stanchions at all of the entrances to the Park.

➤ **Central Park Conservancy Projects**

▪ **Re-envisioning of the pool and rink at the Harlem Meer (formerly Lasker Rink)**

The Central Park Conservancy in partnership with NYC Parks are rebuilding the former Lasker Rink and Pool to better integrate the facility into the landscape, offer new and enhanced outdoor activities, and increase access for communities around the north end of Central Park.

The transformation of the Lasker Rink and Pool site on the Harlem Meer is the most significant and complex project ever undertaken by the Conservancy. It represents the culmination of their work to re-establish the north end of the Park as a vital resource for the surrounding community. When complete, the fully accessible Harlem Meer Center will offer new and enhanced outdoor activities and provide unhindered access across the north end of the Park—both by reconnecting the watercourse that travels through the Ravine, allowing it to run unobstructed from the Pool into the Meer, and re-establishing the pedestrian path that was once alongside it.

Construction began in 2021 and the new facility is expected to open in 2024. The Central Park Conservancy provided the Committee with several updates on the status of the project.

▪ **Reconstruction of Public Restrooms:** CPC is reconstructing the **Delacorte Theater’s public restroom** and improving accessibility in the surrounding area. The work is taking place in tandem with the Public Theater’s reconstruction of the Delacorte Theater. The work began in the Fall of 2023.

The public restrooms are also being reconstructed as part of the work at the **North Meadow Center** located on the north side of the 97th Street Transverse Road, at the southern edge of the North Meadow. The facility houses Park operations and program staff along with public restrooms and includes outdoor recreation courts and operational space. Construction is expected to continue through 2025.

▪ **Restoration of the Conservatory Garden** – CPC is restoring the conservatory garden, located off Fifth Avenue between 104th and 106th Streets, focusing on hardscapes, architectural features, and utilities. The restoration of the South Garden was completed in early 2023. The entire restoration project is projected to be completed in early 2025.

▪ **Park Perimeter Restoration** – CPC is restoring the perimeter and reconstructing existing pavements in multiple locations around the park. The restoration is occurring in phases.

- **Reconstruction of the Ramble’s Historic Structures** – CPC is reconstructing 4 open air shelters that once existed in high points on the landscape.
 - **CPC Gave a Presentation on the West 85th Street Playground** and plans for reconstruction of the playground.
 - **Wollman Rink:** City Pickle updated the community on the new pickle ball courts open between April and September in Wollman Rink. From October to March Wollman Rink will be used for ice skating.
 - **Loeb Boathouse:** Legends Hospitality provided an update on the Central Park Boathouse. 100 rowboats were replaced, and the outdoor café reopened in June. An update was provided on work on the event space and restaurant.
- **Friends of East River Esplanade, Asphalt Green, and Carl Schurz Conservancy continue to provide updates on their events and activities.**
 - **St. Catherines Park:** Presentation by Parks of design and discussion with the public for the redo of the park. The Parks Dept. has not come back with a plan as of yet.
 - **Stanley Isaac Skating Rink:** Being updated by the NY Rangers and Benjamin Moore. We are waiting for an opening date.
 - **John Jay Park:** Multi-purpose play area, central walkway, handball court, Pool Deck were discussed and are now in progress.
 - **Ruppert Park & Rest Rooms:** We expect monthly follow-up on this project. The park is in progress. As of now the Rest Rooms have not been started. Hopefully Shena has something to report.
 - **Hospital for special Surgery (HSS):** HSS is building a new hospital building — Kellen Tower and improving the Esplanade from 72-78 Streets. They will be installing Exercise Equipment near the Con Ed Station. Project should be completed sometime in 2025.
 - **Esplanade from 81 to 90 Streets:** This is a DOT project to fix the FDR and will affect the Carl Schurz Park/John Finley Walk and the Brearly School which reports to DCAS. We have had no word on the progress of this work.
 - **East Midtown Greenway (EMG) & Andrew Haswell Green (AHG) Phase 2B:** will be reported on by Geoff Martin District 15 Manager.
 - **Andrew Haswell Green (AHG) Phase 3:** This is the space inside the former sanitation garage, beyond the EMG. This project was estimated to cost 30 million some years ago. Therefore, it will now probably cost about 40 million. We will start raising funds in this fiscal year and it probably will take several years before the project can start. The drawing shown was by Stantec after several meetings with the public. It included: an electric room, rest rooms, bike racks, charging kiosks, food concession, movable chairs, swing looking out at East River, and room for park storage.

Item 3: Updates by Geoff Martin, Parks District 15 Manager (Esplanade)

- Andrew Haswell Green (AHG) Phase 2B had the ribbon cutting and is now open to the public. It is getting a lot of use, people walking with their dogs. If you see people with their dogs in the plantings try to encourage “them not to do that.” CB 8 also requests that we have more PEP officers in the area while the park is new. Geoff will also look into getting 2 Mutt Mitts along the EMG so that people will be able to pick-up after their dogs. Also, the Parks Dept has a power washer that can be used in warmer weather to keep the walk clean.

- AHG-Phase 2B—Work has started on the piling—doing inspections. The work is underneath the back of the former sanitation garage—behind the fenced area of the building. This work will take about 2 years. Since this space is not available for parks staff now, District 15 has taken over the responsibility for 24 Sycamores Park and is using that park house. District 15 will also be responsible for the Queensboro Oval. CB8 requested the Queensboro Oval be cleaned.
- Esplanade Phase 3 Parks Projects: 63/64; 76/80; and 90/93 Streets expect to receive bids by January 30th. Parks hopes construction will start by summer.
- Parks Dept. is prepared with equipment, if we have snow.
- They are keeping an eye on spots on the Esplanade that need patching. It will take 3 / 4 days of continuous good weather before the work can be done.
- There has been some vandalism in the gardening area, and they are working with the police on it.

Item 4: Updates on District 8 by Geoff Martin, as Shena Kaufman was unable to attend.

- The John Jay Pool Deck is being worked on and will be open before the spring pool season. Work on the Center walkway, multi-purpose play area and a new accessible entrance will start in the spring of this year.
- Ruppert Park is in Procurement pending approval of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and legal review.
- Rest Rooms for Ruppert Park will have a design builder on board by the end of the year. The Park project and restrooms will be closely coordinated so that nothing will have to be torn up. This work is being done by DDC.
- St. Catherine’s Park should have the preliminary design phase plans ready in the spring to present to the community. The engineer consultant was just hired. Funds are being transferred to a separate project for restrooms, which will be done by Parks.
- Completion date for Stanley Isaacs hockey rink is still undetermined.

Items 5 & 6: Old and New Business

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 PM.

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