

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, March 13, 2025 - 6:30PM
Conducted remotely on Zoom.

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

Resolutions for Approval:

Item 2: **Approval to support and endorse Community Board 6 Manhattan's resolution and report on reimagining the FDR to increase the amount of green and open space in Manhattan Community District 6**
Item 3: **Approval of the installations of sculptures to be temporarily installed from April to October 2025 on the Park Avenue Malls between East 52nd Street to 70th Street**

MINUTES

Present: Alida Camp, Felice Farber, Bradley Hershenson, Sahar Husain, Craig Lader, Valerie Mason, Sharon Pope-Marshall, Barry Schneider*, Judy Schneider, Robin Seligson, Irma Torres*

Excused: Rita Popper

**Public Member*

Approximate Number of Public Attendees: 26

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

Item 1: Reminder of Parks Department Zoom Meeting on March 26 for Community Input on Reconstruction of 24 Sycamores Park

Judy Schneider announced that the Parks Department will be holding a meeting to gather community input on the reconstruction of 24 Sycamores Park on March 26th between 6:30 PM and 8:00 PM. She noted that advance registration before **5:30 PM on March 26th** is required in order to participate in the outreach event.

The link to register is: <https://www.nycgovparks.org/reg/community-input-meetings/16910/register>

Item 2: Presentation by Manhattan Community Board 6 on ways to reimagine the FDR Drive to prioritize waterfront access, increase open space, and improve environmental resiliency. Sandy McKee, CB6 Chair and Majed Abdulsamad, Chair of Land Use & Waterfront Committee CB6 (Joint item with the Transportation Committee)

Sandy McKee, Community Board 6 Manhattan Chair, introduced the project, and Majed Abdulsamad presented CB6's study to reimagine the Franklin Delano Roosevelt East River Drive (FDR Drive). They noted the lack of parks and open space in the neighborhood.

Majed referenced the history of the FDR drive and then delved into the vision and goals of the project. Key issues to be addressed in the proposal include (1) mobility, congestion, and road safety and (2) environmental resiliency.

The study makes three suggestions for reimagining the FDR Drive and the development of open space.

- Overbuild Park atop segments of the FDR Drive
- “Boulevardization” by converting the FDR into a boulevard similar to the West Side
- Activating Segments below the FDR Drive through enhanced lighting, design, and access to the waterfront

WHEREAS Manhattan Community Board 6 conducted a study to reimagine the FDR Drive to prioritize waterfront access, increase open space, and improve environmental resiliency;

WHEREAS Manhattan Community District 6 and District 8 rank low in the amount of green space within community districts;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Manhattan Community Board 8 supports Manhattan Community Board 6’s resolution supporting the FDR Reimagined report and endorses the visions and principles set forth to increase the amount of green and open space in Manhattan Community District 6.

Board Member Vote: 10-0-0 Camp, Farber, Hershenson, Husain, Lader, Pope-Marshall, Torres*, B. Schneider*, J. Schneider, Seligson

*Public Member

Item 3: CB 8 presentation of Park Avenue Mall Artwork by Alma Allen (Joint item with the Arts Committee)

[Public Art Summary, Alma Allen Presentation](#)

Felice Farber presented the proposal for ten freestanding sculptures by the artist Alma Allen to be exhibited between April and October 2025 from 52nd Street to 70th Street.

WHEREAS the Parks Department proposes to install 10 sculptures in bronze and marble by the American artist Alma Allen along the Park Avenue Mall between East 52nd and 70th Streets between April and October 2025;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED Manhattan Community Board 8 supports the installation of sculptures to be temporarily installed on the Park Avenue Malls at East 52nd/53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 66th, 67th, and 70th Streets, by the artist Alma Allen, from April to October 2025.

Board Member Vote: 8-0-0 Camp, Farber, Hershenson, Husain, Pope-Marshall, B. Schneider*, J. Schneider, Seligson

*Public Member

Item 4: Report by Robert Mclean, NYC Parks, Regional Manager

- **24 Sycamore Playground** – A community kick-off meeting is scheduled for March 26th at 6:30 pm to discuss the planned renovation of 24 Sycamore Playground.
- **Carl Schurz Park** – Robert has assigned PEP officers to arrive at Carl Schurz Park at 6:00 am and clean up the bird food immediately after it is dropped and identify the person spreading the bird seed along the promenade. The “bird lady” as she is known, is creating a hazardous condition along the promenade.
- **Samuel Seabury Playground** – The scaffolding from the adjacent building has not yet been removed. Actively working to address this matter.
- **East River Esplanade:** The demo and clean-up of the existing piles are ongoing. Completed 102 of 383 piles.

Item 5: Report by Shena Kaufman, NYC Parks, District Manager 8 and 15

- **24 Sycamores Playground** - Flyers about the community input meeting on the reconstruction of the 24 Sycamores Playground park have been posted at the park and around the area, including neighboring parks.
- **Carl Schurz Park** – There is no exact date yet to install the pickleball nets in the MPPA (multi-purpose play area). Sheena will notify the community board when a date is set.
- **St. Catherines Park**– There is hope that construction at St. Catherines Park will start in the Spring of 2026. The project has not yet been put out to bid.
- **Ruppert Park:** As noted last month, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and NYC Parks Department met to discuss the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and any additional requirements to finalize the SWPPP approval and put the project out to bid. DEP is requiring the NYC Parks Department to install a separate sewer line for the spray shower out to the sidewalk. NYC Parks Department expects to resubmit the SWPPP to DEP by the end of May and expects the SWPPP to be fully approved by August or September.
- **Public Question/Comment:** Would like replacements of the Big Belly trash cans in John Jay Park to address rodent control, as the trash cans are stuck closed. Sheena noted that there is no money in the NYC Parks Department budget for this. (This should be added to the Community Board's budget request). Would like flower beds or attractive shrubbery at John Jay Park. Sheena noted that the shrubs were ripped out by dog owners within two days of being installed, and there are not enough Parks Enforcement Patrol (PEP) Officers to address the problem. The NYC Parks Department will install wood chips in the area.

Item 6 & 7: Old and New Business

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:41 PM.

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