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**The City of New York**  
**Community Board 8 Manhattan**  
*Parks and Waterfront Committee*  
*Thursday, November 13, 2025 - 6:30PM*  
*Conducted remotely on Zoom.*

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Felice Farber, Miles Fink, Bradley Hershenson, Barry Schneider\*, Judy Schneider, Irma Torres\*

*\*Public Member*

**Approximate Number of Public Attendees: 10**

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM.

Judy Schneider announced that there will not be a Parks & Waterfront Committee meeting in December. The January meeting will feature a presentation by the Parks Department on plans for the reconstruction of Ruppert Park, which will be the only agenda item.

**Item 1: Description and Presentation of the revised plan for the reconstruction of 24 Sycamores Park, which was approved by Community Board 8.**

Judy Schneider provided an update on the Parks Department's planned design modifications to 24 Sycamores Park to incorporate community feedback. Key changes include:

**1. Swing Area Adjustments**

Two additional bucket swings for toddlers have been added, bringing the total to four. The design also retains two strap swings and one ADA swing, for a total of seven swings (an increase from the existing four). To accommodate these changes and maintain circulation around the restroom building, swing height has been reduced from 8' to 7'.

**2. Revised Seating Area**

The adjacent seating area has been reduced in size but still provides a sheltered space for birthdays, seniors, board games, and similar activities.

**3. Court Alignment**

Basketball court sidelines have been realigned to match the pickleball court sidelines to simplify linework and improve usability. This adjustment also creates a wider arc for basketball players to practice full-length 3-point shots.

#### **4. Court Line Colors**

Court lines for each sport are now shown in distinct colors to improve clarity. Parks will continue to study optimal color selection to address intersections and overlaps. The basketball “key” and pickleball “kitchen” are now differentiated with contrasting colors as well.

#### **5. Pickleball Court Orientation**

Parks evaluated reorienting the pickleball courts north–south but found it unworkable due to the required 8’ clearance behind baselines. A north–south layout would force players into fences on the basketball half-court and require taking additional space from the 5–12 play area to avoid basketball hoops obstructing lob shots. The courts will therefore remain oriented east–west to avoid injuries.

#### **6. Tree Pit Guard Removal**

Steel tree pit guards along York Avenue have been removed from the plan to help offset rising costs. Parks found no evidence of vehicles striking the trees, likely due to existing signage, poles, and the substantial curb. Tree pit expansions to support tree health remain in the design.

#### **7. Tree Relocation**

The swing reconfiguration requires relocating one tree, which will now be positioned to provide improved shade for the 2–5 play area. There will still be 24 Sycamore Trees when the plan is complete.

#### **8. Vine Planting Review**

Parks is researching the potential use of non-invasive, manageable vines along the back fence.

#### **9. Paddle Lineup Options**

Parks is continuing to study feasible methods for organizing a paddle lineup, such as a rack system, pavement markings, or other approaches.

#### **10. Updated Play Equipment**

Play equipment has been updated to incorporate manufacturer improvements received after the last meeting, including added play value, increased shade, and improved circulation.

#### **11. Teen Fitness Area Development**

The teen-focused fitness area has been further refined to enhance constructability, circulation, and regulatory compliance.

#### **12. Light Pole Placement**

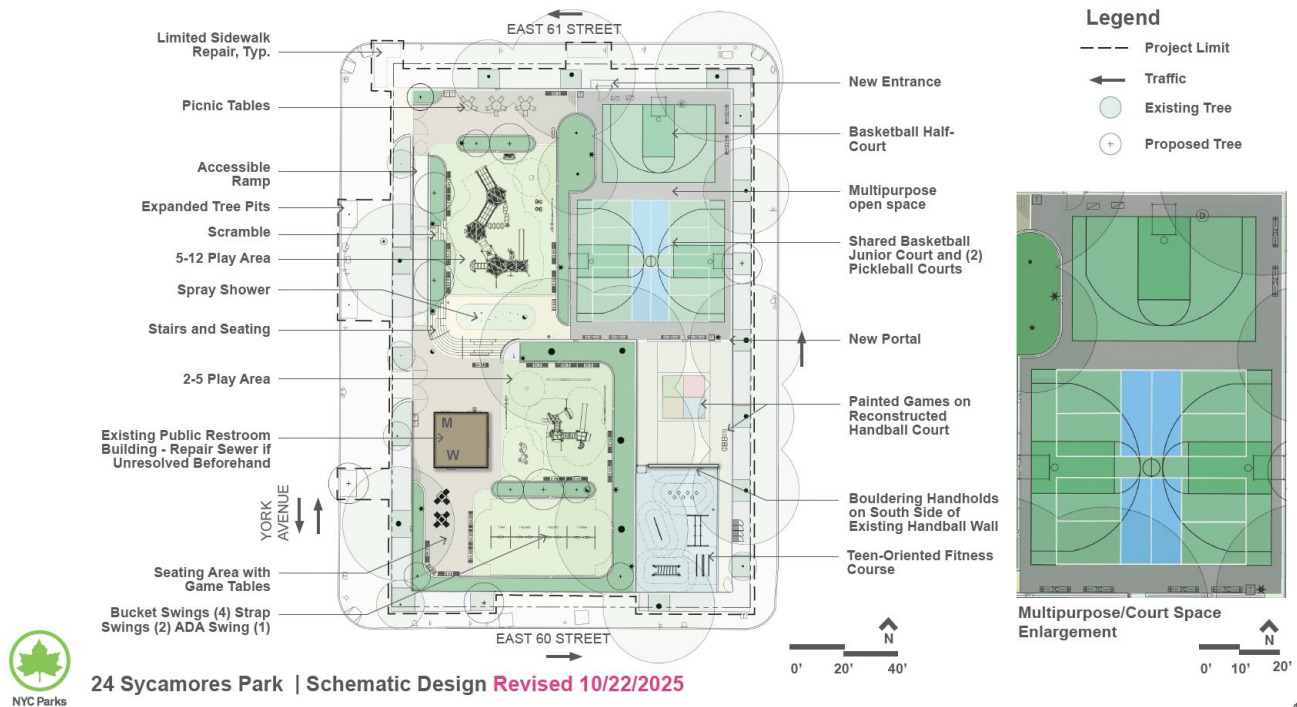
Light pole locations have been adjusted based on the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) guidance regarding proximity to underground assets and further refined for safety and lighting coverage. These placements remain preliminary pending engineering review.

The design and construction process is expected to take three years, with construction of 24 Sycamores Park scheduled to start at the end of 2027 and be completed by 2028.

#### Public Comment:

A member of the public raised concerns about potential safety issues with the proposed new entrance to the park at East 61st Street and the Franklin D. Roosevelt East River Drive (FDR Drive).

**The revised 24 Sycamores Park plan below was presented at the previous Full Board meeting on October 22nd and at the recent Parks and Waterfront Committee meeting.**



#### Item 2: Report by Robert McLean, NYC Parks, Regional Manager

Robert McLean described the extensive efforts of interns and volunteers weeding and removing garbage on the East Midtown Greenway. He expects the interns to work through November and potentially through December, weather permitting. The interns are from the Night and Day High School, and they are paid by the school.

#### Item 3: Report by Shena Kaufman, NYC Parks, District Manager 8 & 15

District Manager Shena Kaufman was unable to attend the meeting.

#### Item 4: Old Business

A member of the public asked about the status of the reconstruction of the multi-purpose play area in Carl Schurz Park and the need for an upgraded surface. Board Member Bradley Hersenson reinforced the issue, noting that the current condition of the MPPA (multi-purpose play area) surface creates a

potential safety issue. Judy Schneider noted that the Parks Department plans to present to the Parks Committee in the Spring the plans for the MPPA.

**Item 4: New Business**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:09 PM.

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