

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

MINUTES OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON APRIL 28, 2010

Community Board Committee Members: Bob Bender, Steven Balicer, Tom Durham, Rosemary Ginty, Ari Goldman, Yael Levy

Other Committee Attendees: Maria Khury, Tony P. Cassino

Other Committee Members: Herb Barret, Lawrence Moiatto, Don Tannen & Lillian Tannen (all Memorial Grove), Lynn Schwarz (FIPNA), Christina Taylor (FVCP), Andrew Sandler (rep. Councilman Koppell), Michael Gary (rep. Sen. Espada), Christina Taylor, FVCP; Lynn Schwarz, FIPNA; Herb Barret, Memorial Grove; Don Tannen, Memorial Grove

Other Community Attendees: Richard Brause, David Bush, Edward Leonard, Enrique Juen

DPR: Ray Acosta, Michael Michalek, Ray Gomez, Margot Perron

Old Business:

The meeting began at 7 pm. The minutes of the March meeting were approved.

Margot Perron reported that water samples have been taken at the Parade Grounds and the results should be available within a week. Depending on the results, further action will be determined. Best-case scenario shows the Parade Grounds re-opening by the end of May.

The chair reported on a meeting with the president of Manhattan College, Dr. O'Donnell. He indicated that the garage may be available for public parking on fall weekends, which would alleviate parking problems along Broadway when there are activities in Van Cortlandt Park.

Margot Perron and Tony Cassino reported that a traffic study is underway to determine whether a traffic light should be installed on Broadway in the vicinity of the tortoise and hare statue.

North Riverdale Baseball League has reported problems with people using Kelly Field at times when NRBL has a permit. Ray Acosta said anyone encountering such a problem should call 646-613-1200.

Ray Acosta reported that preparations have been made for Russell Lowe's Eagle Scout service project in Seton Park on May 8. He also reported that 1500 trees were planted in the Wallenberg Forest on April 24. On "It's My Park Day," May 15, DPR's Natural Resources Group will be active in Ewen Park; volunteers will be active in Brust Park and at McLaughlin Playground.

Yael Levy provided an update on Riverfest, scheduled for June 13, 1-5 pm, at Mt. St. Vincent.

Rosemary Ginty brought up the Spuyten Duyvil Park where the contractor working on the Henry Hudson Bridge is storing equipment. Ray Acosta said he would investigate the terms of the contract to be sure the contractor is obligated to restore the property before leaving.

Michael Michalek informed the group that the Public Design Commission approved the design for the Memorial Grove restoration. Construction might begin in about four months.

New Business:

Michael Gary discussed a New York State Veterans' Hall of Fame nomination form that he presented to the committee. He also discussed Senate resolution requests for personal milestones such as 50th wedding anniversaries, etc., that Senator Espada is requesting from the community.

Michael Michalek presented a "conceptual design" of the Putnam Trail. He reported that the budget for the project has been reduced. [Margot Perron reported at a previous meeting that the budget for the portion of the trail within VCP has been cut from \$3 million to \$2.7 million.] The Putnam Trail is intended to be part of a bikeway between the East River/Harlem River and the South Westchester Trail. The iron skeleton of the old Putnam railway station in VCP will be the hub of this project, which Mr. Michalek calls Phase One. The old station framework will be cleaned. There will be various "nodes" or points where the trail will connect to other trails and pathways, especially east-west access points. The stone test area along the Putnam Trail will be refurbished; the stones themselves will be cleaned. Fencing will be removed from the trail where possible, but not where it forms the boundary of the golf course. The pathway will be paved with a hard surface. Where the old railroad ties conflict with the pavement, they will be removed.

The design must rely on asphalt, according to Mr. Michalek. The hard surface will be 10' wide in most places, 8' in some. There will be 3' natural buffers on either side of the trail.

DPR will return with a design for Phase One by the end of this year. Construction will most likely not take place until summer 2011.

There was much discussion about retaining some of the foundation under the railroad ties for the new pathway and about various access points to the Putnam Trail from elsewhere in VCP.

The committee discussed budget priorities for FY 2012. They are as follows:

Expense

1. Personnel sufficient for maintenance and enforcement in CB8 parks, especially on weekends and at times of high use.
2. Acquisition of a pick-up truck with snowplow, salt spreader, and water tank.
3. A stump grinder for Van Cortlandt Park.

Capital

1. Renovation of the playground and stairs in Seton Park, including resurfacing and new playground equipment; also funding for a study of a natural-surface pathway parallel to W. 232 St. on the parkland immediately south of and adjacent to Seton Park.
2. Reconstruction of the stairway in Brust Park.

3. Resurfacing of the pavement, repair of the gas line, and repair of the basketball courts in Classic Playground (VCP).
4. Construction of a new restroom in Fort Four Park (and related plumbing repairs).
5. Reconstruction of the Bailey Avenue playground including construction of a skate park.
6. Reconstruction of the pond wall at Spuyten Duyvil Park to prevent water runoff onto the roadway in the parking lot at the Metro-North station.
7. Reconstruction of the basketball courts and related work at Henry Hudson Park upper level.
8. Construction of a new restroom adjacent to the Parade Grounds at Broadway and West 251 Street.
9. Renovation of Van Cortlandt Stadium.

The meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

Bob Bender
Chairman
Parks and Recreation Committee

BB:db (May 3, 2010)