

Minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting of November 30, 2016

At the Riverdale Temple, 4545 Independence Avenue

Attendees:

Committee: Bob Bender (chair), Eric Bell, Robert Fanuzzi, David Gellman, Tao Moran, Amy Joy Robateau, Laura Spalter (CB8); Christina Taylor (Community Committee Member)

Absent: Sylvia Alexander, Marvin Goodman, David Kornbluh; Herb Barret

Other CB8: Arturo Guzman

DPR: Margot Perron, Dennis Burton, Tony Rosa, Will Harris, David McConnell, Jennifer Nemecek

Community: Joshua Stephenson (Councilman Cohen's office), IC L'Engel (BCEQ)

Agenda:

The meeting began at approximately 7:05 pm.

Minutes of the October meeting were unanimously approved.

Parks Without Borders, Van Cortlandt Park

With the approval of committee members, the chair altered the agenda to accommodate the DPR representatives who came to discuss the Van Cortlandt Park "Parks Without Borders" process. The chair provided background to committee members based on the November 10 scoping meeting for the project that was held at Horace Mann School and which was attended by the chair, David Gellman, and Christina Taylor. Following the background presentation, the DPR representatives explained the timeline for the project. Design will take place in 2017. During that year the design will be presented to CB8, the Landmarks Preservation Commission, and the Public Design Commission. Once approved, the design will go into procurement, the process in which bids for the project are solicited and a contractor is chosen, and then construction is expected to begin in 2019 and take about 12 to 18 months.

Committee members commented on the suggestions made at the scoping meeting and offered additional suggestions regarding how the area could be renovated. (The area in question is the entrance to the park at Broadway and W. 242 St and contiguous space from the entrance to the stadium north to the park headquarters/restroom building on the periphery of the park.) The DPR designers are coordinating with the MTA's Outside Projects Group because the area in question is a major transportation hub for the community.

DPR anticipates returning to the committee in January 2017 with a schematic design.

Parks Inspections Assignments

Committee members confirmed the assignment of outstanding parks to be inspected as determined via email prior to the meeting.

Update from SWPPP Working Group

DPR has not yet produced its draft SWPPP for the Putnam Trail renovation, so there was no update from the Working Group. Once the draft SWPPP is made available, the Working Group will review and comment on it. Those comments will be discussed at the next committee meeting following the Working Group's review.

Update on the Parks Resource Guide

Bob Fanuzzi and Christina Taylor reported that they are at work on the proposed resource guide and will have a report for the committee in January.

Legislative Update

The chair reviewed five pieces of legislation signed into law in 2015 and 2016 that affect our parks. Two of these laws have not yet been fully implemented: an annual report on ADA compliance in parks and an annual report on maintenance expenditures in every city park. Parks manager Tony Rosa said that data is being collected on parks in preparation for the annual maintenance expenditure report. The committee will follow up.

Old Business

The chair noted two important websites on the DPR web pages. One is a capital projects tracker, which shows the status of capital projects for each park; the other is a street tree finder that shows the location of all the street trees in New York City and provides information such as size, species, and so forth for each tree.

The URLs are:

<https://www.nycgovparks.org/planning-and-building/capital-project-tracker>

<https://www.nycgovparks.org/trees> Click on the "NYC Street Tree Map" tab. It should be noted that more than 865,000 street trees have been mapped and can be reviewed on the site.

The chair noted that there seems to be significant movement on the committee's longstanding #1 capital budget priority, the proposed restroom for Fort Four Park. Last year Borough President Diaz allocated \$500,000 toward the \$3.2 million cost, and this year Councilman Cabrera has allocated \$1.1 million. The committee is hopeful that the remaining funds can be raised soon.

The chair reported that according to the DPR Forestry department, the remaining trees owed to the community in compensation for the tree removals on the berm in Fort Independence Park adjacent

to the Jerome Park Reservoir should be planted this year. The chair will follow up to verify that this has happened and to request information on the location of the newly planted trees.

New Business

Bob Fanuzzi asked about Van Cortlandt's Tail, the small park located on the southeast corner of Van Cortlandt Park South and Broadway. It is DPR property, not a part of VCP. Bob suggested that it might be a good site for an art project or a City as Living Laboratory (CALL) project.

Committee members were polled on whether they could attend a meeting on December 28. It appeared that a quorum might be difficult to achieve, so it was agreed to cancel that meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximate 8:30 pm.