

COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX

**MINUTES OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD APRIL 23, 2008
AT THE COMMUNITY BOARD 8 OFFICE**

PRESENT

Robert Bender
Anthony Cassino
Thomas Durham
Maria Khury
Evelyn Tucker
Bob Altman
Ray Acosta
Tory P. Cagan
Eileen Connolly
James A. Donaldson
Steve DesNoyer
Leon Fendley
S.C. Johnson
Chris Navarro
Margot Perron
Charles Reich
Paul Schubert
Jane Sokolow
Christine Taylor

AFFILIATION

CB #8 Committee Chair
CB #8
CB #8
CB #8
CB #8
Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Parks and Recreation
Friends of Van Cortlandt Stadium
Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Parks and Recreation
Kingsbridge Little League
Administrator, Van Cortlandt Park
Department of Parks and Recreation
BCEQ
Friends of Van Cortlandt Park

Van Cortlandt Park Mitigation Projects:

Steve DesNoyer of the Parks Department discussed the Croton Mitigation Projects in Van Cortlandt Park outside the Parade Grounds (which were the subject of the January and March 2008 meetings). Mr. DesNoyer reported that the Parade Grounds project previously described is out to bid and that construction is expected to begin around September 1.

The Old Croton Aqueduct Trail project is not yet ready for discussion but could be discussed in May. Mr. DesNoyer and Van Cortlandt Park Administrator Margot Perron suggested holding a joint meeting with Community Boards 8, 12, and 7 in May to discuss the Aqueduct Trail.

The Putnam Trail project within Van Cortlandt Park is ready for a Scope meeting. The Parks Department has begun the ULURP process on the portion of the Putnam Trail south of Van Cortlandt Park to 225th Street. A multi-use trail is proposed, but this will be discussed at the Scope meeting, date of which is to be announced.

Paul Schubert of the Department of Parks and Recreation discussed the upcoming renovation of the Broadway/Manhattan College Parkway comfort station/Van Cortlandt Park administration building. The project will address structural problems in the building and will make the comfort station ADA accessible. Minor work will be done on the basement of the building. The staging area for this work will be located in the rear of the building (i.e., within the park itself). The contract will go out to bid in two to three months with an estimated November/December start for construction. Construction is estimated to take one year. Access to the comfort station when the work is completed will be from Broadway.

Margot Perron said that the Van Cortlandt Stadium contract to study a potential renovation of the stadium has been let and the results of the study are expected by June 30.

New Business:

Margot Perron reported that a \$200,000 pruning contract has been awarded for Van Cortlandt Park.

There was discussion of the distinction between maintenance funds and capital funds. There was general agreement that maintenance within the park ought to be a higher priority for the City of New York.

Chris Navarro, president of the Kingsbridge Little League, discussed various problems that the League has. He specifically mentioned problems with rodent control and with tree branches impacting power lines. Eileen Connolly, administrator for the parks within Community Board 8, observed that the rodent problem was occurring on DOT property and that the Kingsbridge Little League should call 311. She said that the trees overhanging the field had been pruned last year and that trees impacting power lines should be reported to Con Edison.

Mr. Navarro complained that Kingsbridge Little League is obligated to buy its own clay for Cooney Grauer Field under its maintenance agreement with the Parks Department but must also get Parks Department approval for the type of clay it uses. He said that it was difficult to get Parks Department approval in a timely fashion. Both Eileen Connolly and Ray Acosta of Parks suggested how this process might be expedited in the future.

Budget Priorities:

Committee members discussed budget priorities for the 2010 fiscal year. The priorities are as follows:

Capital:

- 1) Funding of the unfunded portion of the Van Cortlandt Park Parade Grounds renovation (Phase 3), including construction of a restroom near Broadway and 251st Street.
- 2) Construction of a higher and sturdier fence at Ft. Independence Park to prevent vandalism of property at 3850 Sedgwick Ave.
- 3) Construction of a new restroom at Fort Four Park along with correction of drainage problems.
- 4) Restoration and renovation of the veterans' Memorial Grove in Van Cortlandt Park.
- 5) Reconstruction of the pond wall in Spuyten Duyvil park to prevent runoff onto the roadway and parking lot at the Metro-North train station.
- 6) Completion of renovation work at the Van Cortlandt mansion/museum building.
- 7) Funding of local matching funds for the Riverdale Park portion of the Hudson Valley Greenway Project.
- 8) Fort Four Park Phase II work, including new sidewalk benches, park pathways, and landscaping.
- 9) Henry Hudson Park upper level: reconstruction of basketball courts and related work.
- 10) Ewen Park: reconstruction of basketball courts and related work.
- 11) Repair of Van Cortlandt Park perimeter sidewalks where needed.
- 12) Reconstruction of Bailey Avenue playground.
- 13) Reconstruction of Caryl Field in Van Cortlandt Park to correct drainage problems.
- 14) Reconstruction of pathways in Seton Park.
- 15) Renovation of bathrooms in Van Cortlandt Stadium (pending report of the engineering study of Van Cortlandt Stadium).

Expense:

- 1) District 8 personnel: Sufficient personnel for maintenance in CB8 parks, including
- 2) PEP personnel.
- 3) Improved lighting in CB8 parks, including but not limited to Van Cortlandt Park.
- 4) Repair of the walkways in the Greenstreets at Broadway and Manhattan College Parkway and at Broadway and Van Cortlandt Park South.
- 6) Acquisition of three pickup trucks with snowplows and water tanks.
- 7) Street tree planting throughout CB8.

Next meeting will be May 28, 7 PM at the Board Office.

Bob Bender
Chairman
Parks and Recreation Committee

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