

COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX

**MINUTES OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD MAY 28, 2008
AT THE COMMUNITY BOARD 8 OFFICE**

PRESENT

Robert Bender
Thomas Durham
Evelyn Tucker
James Plaza
Ray Acosta
Herb Barret
Eileen Connolly
Margot Perron
Donald Tannen
Christine Taylor

AFFILIATION

CB #8 Committee Chair
CB #8
CB #8
CB #8
Department of Parks and Recreation
Memorial Grove
Department of Parks and Recreation
Administrator, Van Cortlandt Park
Memorial Grove
Friends of Van Cortlandt Park

Christina Taylor, Executive Director of the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park (FVCP), spoke about her organization. Founded in 1992, FVCP works closely with the Parks Department. Among other activities, it hires youngsters to do clean-up work in the park in the summer. Since 1996 it has been working with Riverdale Neighborhood House on year-round programs. Over 2500 children and adults have been involved. FVCP also works with the Mosholu Montefiore Community Center.

Funding comes primarily from foundation grants and also from individuals. Amalgamated housing provides office space. More recently Horace Mann and Fieldston have begun working with FVCP.

FVCP has a junior naturalist program at MS 141.

This summer FVCP volunteers will assist the Parks Department in trail restoration in the Park. Thirty teens will be involved in the program. Right now FVCP has to turn away some interested school groups because of lack of funding.

Community outreach is a priority for FVCP. Every year there is a large event that is also a fundraiser. This year there will be a fall event, possibly a crafts fair; exact date and location to be determined.

Margot Perron reported on the recent Scope meeting on the Putnam Trail located within Van Cortlandt Park. There was a diversity of opinion over whether the trail should be paved, partly paved, or remain unpaved. Of particular interest was the question of whether the trail should be designed to accommodate bicycles and wheelchairs. There will have to be an archaeological review before any work begins; there have been

reports of slave burials in the vicinity of the trail. The next step will be a design that will incorporate the comments made at the Scope meeting. The committee will have a chance to review and discuss this design report.

Work will begin in August on the infield at the Van Cortlandt Park Stadium, the first phase of the Parade Grounds renovation. Work is also scheduled to begin over the summer in the Shandler area in the eastern section of the park.

The contract to review the condition of Van Cortlandt Park Stadium from an engineering perspective has been delayed. Although it was previously reported that the contract had been let; that is not the case, and the contract has been pushed into FY09.

Eileen Connolly reported that the person who was going to supervise the dog run in Seton Park is unable to do so, and a new dog-run supervisor (a volunteer community position) is needed.

Tom Durham reported that the pine tree in Brust Park that leans over a private residence seems to be leaning more than ever. Eileen Connolly said she would report this to the forestry division.

Herb Barret said that he was told by the offices of Assemblyman Dinowitz and State Senator Klein that they needed proposal from Parks for renovation of the Memorial Grove. However, Assemblyman Dinowitz's office also reported that they do not have money to fund any work in the Memorial Grove. Bob Bender suggested asking Councilman Koppell, who has pledged \$250,000 to the renovation project, for assistance in meeting with Congressman Engel and others for funding.

The next Parks & Recreation Committee meeting will be held on September 24th at 7:00 PM.

Submitted by,

Bob Bender
Chairman
Parks and Recreation Committee

BB:db (June 2, 2008)