

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, March 10th, 2021, 6:30 pm

Hon. Karen Horry, Chair

Meeting began at 6:32 pm and was held via Zoom link. The meeting was chaired by Hon. Karen Horry, Committee Chair.

Committee Members in Attendance: Chair, Hon. Karen Horry, Hon. Barbara Nelson, Hon. Marcus Wilson, Hon. Terri Wisdom, Hon. Karen Dixon, Hon. Derek Perkinson, Hon. Tahanie Aboushi and Hon. Kevin Bitterman

Committee Members Absent: Hon. Deborah Gilliard and Hon. Nadine Pinkett

Board Members Present: - Board Chair Hon. Cecily Harris and Hon. Donna Gill

District Office: Jasmin Heatley (Community Assistant)

Guests in attendance: Gregory Baggett (A. Phillip Randolph Neighborhood Alliance) Jamie Baez (Community Resident), Randolph Ballard (Member A Phillip Randolph Neighborhood Alliance), Maryam Boddi (Founder Mayam's Yum Yum/ Food Truck Owner) Renee Cuenca (Partnership for Parks Outreach Coordinator), Dolina Duzant, Zakiyah DeGraffe (Hansborough Recreation Center), Cordelia Dixon (Parent of Tyrell Dixon, Supporter of Healthy Food Trucks), Tyrell Dixon (Health Nation Food Trucks), Dominic Fanelli (Principal St Marks the Evangelist), Shena Kaufman (Parks Manager District 10 & 11), Shanti Nagel (Landscape Designer), Chris Noel (Community Member i-Phone), Daniel Paterson (Harlem Resident/ Community Organizer), K. Samuels, Shamier Settle (A. Phillip Randolph Neighborhood Alliance), Abena Smith (President, 32nd Precinct Council), Daniel Tainow- Urban Park Ranger, Louis Miguel Walters, Ken Williams, 28th Precinct NCOB (Officer Kennedy Neighborhood Coordination Officers)

I. Welcome/Introductions

II. Presentation

- a. A. Philip Randolph Square Alliance Philip Randolph Square Alliance (APRSA) made a presentation with respect to concerns about the syncing of vendors and their current design plans which the group is in the process of developing in collaboration with NYC Parks and Clemson University. The 0.07 acreage - park ID M021 is a triangle/plaza that has been plagued by loitering and anti-social behaviors. APRSA is currently engaged in developing and implementing design plans that will eradicate the behaviors and increase community utilization of the area. APSRSA conducted a survey and presented their results which are driving the design plans based upon responses solicited from the community.
 - i. Re: Vending Trucks : NYC Parks: *“We expect to issue the Request for Bids in mid/late spring. Assuming we receive acceptable bids, a food cart (not a truck) would be placed at A. Philip Randolph, and a roving ice cream or food truck would move between three sites: Fred Samuel Playground, Renaissance Playground and Holcombe Rucker Park.”* - Steve Simon - Manhattan Chief of Staff - NYC Parks. NYC Parks issues a request for bids approximately twice a year for the operation of non-processing pushcarts, mobile food trucks, and/or processing food

carts on NYC parkland. There are several hundred designated sites available for food vending in NYC parks. Individuals can also submit a request for a new location for a food vending unit. All menu items can be submitted for consideration. This information only encompasses parks-related aspects of the request for bid process for obtaining a Parks permit. Please be aware that the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) has a separate process by which businesses must apply for food handling licenses and mobile food unit permits. CB10 is advocating for preference to be prioritized for CB10 restaurants and floor vendors who have been impacted by the ravages of COVID-19, struggling to remain afloat in the midst of the pandemic. We must support and retain these businesses.

1. Vendors in attendance:
 - a. Sugar Hill Creamery, Petrushka & Nick, hello@sugarhillcreamery.com
 - b. Maryam's Yum Yum Inc., Maryam Boddie, sales@yumyumevents.com
 - c. Health Station food trucks and fruit carts Tyrell Dixon,

Outcome: The Parks and Recreation Committee will draft a letter to be forwarded to the EC and General Board to support the need to provide CB10 local area restaurants and food vendors “first right of refusal” for NYC Parks Request for Bids for vendor trucks and carts for the CB 10 area.

III. Discussions

- a. Clemson University - Resilient Urban Design - Tactical Urbanism - Follow-up/ Updates - (B.D. Wortham-Galvin, Ph.D. Director + Associate Professor/Master of Resilient Urban Design, Clemson University) and NYC Parks:
 - i. A. Philip Randolph Square - Had another meeting to finalize feedback visualizing the survey data. We anticipated having this wrapped up at end of March. NYC Parks denied a community request on the project's behalf to access existing conditions documentation, we have spent the past month creating our own. This was unanticipated but we will be able to begin design visualization work next week and will set up a meeting to share that work with the Friends of A. Philip Randolph Square for feedback by late March.
 - i. Harlem River Park - NYC Parks denied a community request on the project's behalf to access existing conditions documentation. We have spent the past month creating our own. This was unanticipated and may effect the accuracy of our efforts. We are doing our best to construct this information using remote resources. This foundational material will be done by the end of March at which point we anticipate starting the design visualization and related work.
 - a. NYC Parks Urban Rangers “The Natural Classroom” is ready to provide waterfront programming for CB10 students. The comprehensive format includes history, nature (aquatic life and habitats, water quality, etc.) and how to protect local parks and waterways. The program

introduces students to the diverse world of birds, invertebrates, fish, mammals, and reptiles with whom we share New York City. Students are introduced to how NYC Parks supports biodiversity and manages wildlife, and how they can take an active role in protecting biodiversity. Site-specific activities help students explore topics including: growth and life cycles, behavior and adaptations, classification and habitats. Schools and groups can request classroom opportunities. The Weekend Adventures program provides equipment and supervision for fishing clinics. This program is accessible for day school, after school and holidays. Currently, COVID-19 restrictions will be adhered to. Requests can be made to Urban Park Ranger Daniel Tainow: daniel.tainow@parks.nyc.gov. For further information visit website - <https://www.nycgovparks.org/programs/rangers/natural-classroom>. The program will use an existing waterfront access area that will function as a protected “tide deck” in **Harlem River Park between 142nd and 143rd Streets**. A tide deck is an engineered rocky salt marsh created to provide an immersive and educational river ecology experience. As an example; the western edge of Manhattan’s pier 26 is accessible to park patrons as a tide deck while also providing a supportive -environment for wildlife. The Natural Classroom programs are offered as in-person park visits or through virtual classroom visits. In-person programs are about 1 hour long, but can be adjusted to meet scheduling needs. Virtual classroom visits can be synchronous (live) or asynchronous (recorded) based on program topic and preference. All programs must be scheduled in advance. Students and chaperones should come prepared to be outside for the duration of the program. In-person programs are limited to a maximum of thirty students. In order to provide the best possible student experience, your group will be divided in two during your visit to allow for social distancing on trails. All attendees must wear masks and practice social distancing.

Outcome: Flyers to be made for distribution to schools and after school programs - Fishing is also offered - area will be assessed - painting needed - parks will check for security of the area - Program is ready to go - Referral to the Education, Youth & Libraries Committee.

- a. William McCray Park - West 138th Street - Sinkhole Principal Dominic Fanelli - of the St. Mark School of the Evangelist

The sinkhole, in the area of the swings of William McCray Playground (138th Street) - (Park ID M110), warrants immediate attention as it presents an urban geological condition. It is unpredictable, and as such poses imminent danger to the community, in particular, the students of the St. Mark the Evangelist School who utilize the park for recess activities.

The community is in need of an immediate and effective treatment to the sinkhole in order to avert harm to anyone in the community. We would like to know what steps have already been taken and what next steps are being considered.

Principal Dominic Fanelli of the St. Mark Evangelist School (located at 55 West 138th Street), attended the Parks and Recreation meeting and explained the circumstances as they impact on the school. The school currently has 60% in-person learning taking place. The playground is adjacent to the school which has a population of approximately 270, 3-Pre K to 8th Grade students. The school uses the facility for student recess. The sinkhole fills with water that collects and becomes stagnant. This poses a potential health risk as the standing water accumulates debris and germs in addition to the possibility that the high level of snow and rain precipitation this year could result in further erosion of the ground cover as water seeps into the area. Parents will institute a letter writing campaign and will collect petition signatures. Alternate sites will be determined for students of St. Mark Evangelist School recess, as well as alternative playground facilities for the general community.

Outcome: Sinkhole area will be immediately cordoned off by NYC Parks. Letter of Support will be issued by the Committee to substantiate community concern and request for a prompt and efficient response to be forwarded to the EC and General Board. Item will be referred to the Public Safety Committee and the March 17th CB10 District Cabinet Meeting as an emergency item to be addressed.

- a. Jackie Robinson Recreation Center Upgrade to Promote Year-Round Use: Skating Rink and Pool - to be discussed at April/May meeting with stakeholders
- b. CB 10 Park Safety in COVID-19 - All precautionary measures remain in effect.
- c. CB 10 Parks Updates
 - i. Hansborough - Zakiyah DeGraffe - Manager will meet with Sandy Baker, et al, Renovation of pool is a \$22.5 million project - 4th floor fitness-cardio room, -new HVAC system - installation of glass sliding door in lobby - security upgrade - new pool - pool closed prior to pandemic due to constant leakage- currently in design phase (NYC Parks website has to be updated). The facility is currently closed to the general public due to COVID-19 - it is however serving as a DOE Learning Lab Site (See Zakiyah notes) Contact Kim McNeal to request Zakiyah's attendance at the next P&R meeting.
 - ii. Jackie Robinson Park
 1. Concerns regarding dirt bike riding in Jackie Robinson
 2. NYPD 28th Precinct NCOB conducting graffiti clean up campaign. Enforcement has been increased- 30 arrests made in 2020, covert narcotics operations. Community request to increase advocacy for youth Cadet and Explorers programming
 - iii. Fred Johnson Playground to open by summer
 - iv. Harlem Lane Playground groundbreaking eminent

II. Voting

- a. Motion made by Hon. Barbara Nelson and seconded by Hon. Tahanie Aboushi
Motion: To Support Preference For NYC Parks Requests For Bids To Be Given To CB 10 - Based Restaurants and Vending Trucks/Carts Economically Impacted By COVID-19 PANDEMIC In CB 10 Parks
 - i. **Outcome:** Quorum was present : Unanimous to support: 7 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions
(Voice Vote: Hon. Karen Horry - yes, Hon. Kevin Bitterman - yes, Hon. Tahanie Aboushi - yes, Hon. Marcus Wilson - yes, Hon. Terri Wisdom - yes, Hon. Barbara Nelson - yes, Karen Dixon - yes)
- b. Motion made by Hon. Barbara Nelson and seconded by Hon. Tahanie Aboushi
Motion: To Support Temporary Cordoning Off Of Sinkhole In Area of Swings In William McCray Park And Request of Emergency Feasibility Study To Assess And Repair Sinkhole
 - i. **Outcome:** Quorum was present : Unanimous to support: 7 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions

(Voice Vote: (Hon. Karen Horry - yes, Hon. Kevin Bitterman - yes, Hon. Tahanie Aboushi - yes, Hon. Marcus Wilson - yes, Hon. Terri Wisdom - yes, Hon. Barbara Nelson - yes, Karen Dixon - yes)

I. Old Business

a. Exonerated Five Subcommittee

- i. Update: The subcommittee has secured pro-bono developers who will build the website. Subcommittee will meet to discuss website and signage content.

b. Collaboration with Clemson University- Resilient Urban Design - School of Architecture - CB10 Parks - Tactical Urbanism Projects

- i. **Harlem River Park Waterfront Resiliency Study Area (Harlem Drive and West 142nd Street) - Tide Deck -**

II. New Business

- b. **A. Philip Randolph Square** (ACP Boulevard, St Nicholas Ave. and West 117th Street) - would like to discuss issues around sanitation and security

c.

I. Announcements

- a. **The Jacob Javits Center** is looking for people to help administer the vaccine. It pays \$27/hr, but it's pretty menial work and there's lots of OT (12 hour shifts). You also get vaccinated in the first couple of days! If you're interested, send a resume and cover letter to Jared Mendonsa from the Temp Agency: jmendonsa@tempositions.com. 25 people needed for Data Entry starting THIS FRIDAY. Shift: 7PM - 7AM. Pay: \$27/hr + OT paid at time and a half (\$49.50/hr). May potentially shift to daytime shifts at some points.

II. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 9:16 pm.

~ Respectfully submitted by Parks and Recreation Chair, Hon. Karen Horry ~