



CICELY HARRIS
Chairperson

SHATIC MITCHELL
District Manager

CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10
215 West 125th Street, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10027
T: 212-749-3105 F: 212-662-4215

PARKS AND RECREATION

Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 13th, 2021, 6:30 pm
Hon. Karen Horry, Chair

Meeting began at 6:30 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. Terri Wisdom, Hon. Derek Perkinson, Hon. Dr. Maurice Franklin, Hon. Shamier Settle, Hon. Verna Diggs, Hon. Marcus Wilson, Hon. Tahanie Aboushi

Committee Members Absent: Hon. Kevin Bitterman,

Board Members Present: Hon. Donna Gill, Hon. Stephanie Palmer, Hon. Kimberly McLaurin, Hon. Daniel Paterson and Hon. Shawn Brannon

District Office: District Manager Shatic Mitchell, Jasmin Heatley (Community Assistant)

Guests in attendance: Jana LaSorte (Administrator of Harlem Historic Parks), Zakiya DeGraffe (Director, Hansborough Rec. Center NYC Parks), Karina Smith, Sonya Simmons (President, Jackie Robinson Park Conservancy), Julius Key (Malcolm X Improvement Association), Rashon Wells (Entertainers Rucker Park), Dana Mondesire, Michael Davidson, John Hession, Tefone Herring, Gregory Baggett, K. Samuels, jlph11, Walter Gilroy, Eric Davidson, John Hession and Diane Herrigan Hubbard.

We welcome and look forward to working with newly appointed NYC Parks Commissioner Gabrielle Fialkoff. We also welcome Committee Member Verna Diggs as Committee Vice Chair who will chair meetings and be responsible for meeting minutes in the event of my absence.

- Committee Chair Karen Horry

I. Discussions

a. CB 10 Park Safety in COVID -19

- i. Park employees who have not been vaccinated must be tested every week in order to retain employment. All Park workers must wear masks - vaccinated park visitors can opt not to wear masks if not in a crowded area. All other precautions remain in place. As of May 19, New York State has implemented the CDC's Interim Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People. Face coverings are still required to enter any municipal building, including bathrooms, regardless of vaccination status.

b. CB 10 Parks - Updates

- i. Newly appointed District 9 Manager David Williams was not present due to a family emergency, but will be in attendance at the November meeting. Community is concerned about parks, garbage pick-ups and the need for greater sanitation. Parks have had more usage due to increased outdoor activity because of COVID-19. It was recommended that more Parks Friends Groups be promoted to assist with clean-ups. There are also NYC Parks staff shortages.

- ii. **Rucker Park** celebrated the opening of the newly renovated Greg Marius Court at Holcombe Rucker Park on Saturday, October 9th, 2021 at 1:00 p.m., The event was attended by NBA Legends Julius Irving - Dr. Jay, Joe Hammond, StreetBall Legends Pee Wee Kirkland The renovation was generously funded by the National Basketball Players Association (NBPA). The world-famous court now features a new playing surface featuring a mural by Harlem native and rapper A\$AP Ferg, a state-of-the-art scoreboard, new custom basketball hoops and new bleachers. NYC Parks' Marketing & Development Office is identifying funding to upgrade the Rucker playground and little ball field. The National Basketball Players Association (NBPA) held an official ribbon cutting ceremony and grassroots basketball event on Saturday, October 9th to celebrate the completed renovation and reopening of NYC Park's Greg Marius Court at Holcombe Rucker Park in New York City's Harlem neighborhood. Funded by the NBPA, the renovation of the legendary court included the repair and leveling of the court's pavement, the replacement of the bleachers and the addition of team benches to both sides of the court which will be added later on this month, the repainting of the basketball court, custom made backboards and baskets provided by Spalding and a new state-of-the-art scoreboard. NBPA Executive Director Michele Roberts and NYC Parks Commissioner Gabrielle Fialkoff officially reopened the park with a ribbon cutting ceremony and press conference. Former professional player and current Australian National Basketball League (NBL) announcer, Corey "Homicide" Williams, emceed the event which included remarks from Rucker Park legend and NBA Hall of Famer Julius "Dr. J" Erving, Bob McCullough, Gus Wells, A\$AP Ferg, Set Free Richardson, Fat Joe, Chris Rucker (the grandson of

Holcombe Rucker), Cheryl, Stacey and Cordell Marius, family members of the late Greg Marius for whom the court is named. Also in attendance at the event were former players and streetball legends Connie Hawkins, Fred Crawford, Nate “Tiny” Archibald, Tom Hoover, Pee Wee Kirkland, Smush Parker, Adrian “A Butta” Walton, Khalid Reeves, Joe “The Destroyer” Hammond, Jamar “The Pharmacist” Davis, Jim Couch, Shane “The Dribbling Machine” Woney, and Tim Gittens Jr. among others. The event was also attended by Congressman Adriano Espaillat, Council Member Mark Levine, and representatives of State Attorney General Letitia James, Comptroller Scott Stringer, and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer. The Community has voiced a need for the upgrade of the ball field, playground and handball court in the park. The Committee will follow-up on a previous request made to NYC Parks to identify funding resources to implement the upgrades. Residents would like to know the reason for the locked gate to the court at this time. It may be due to the pending installation of \$150,000 in bleachers that are on back-order. CB 10 will request an answer from NYC Parks.

- iii. **The Colonel Charles Young Playground** - the first of the three-phase renovation project will be completed and includes the refurbishment of three basketball courts along the Harlem River Drive side of the park, installation of a mini-soccer pitch and renovation of the 145th Street basketball court. The Malcolm X Improvement Association will forward a rendering of a mural that the organization developed as a result of a Partnership for Parks grant. The mural is suggested for the 145th bridge wall on the northern periphery of the park.
- iv. **Harlem River Park** - NYC Parks Urban Rangers are providing nature study workshops to local area schools and youth organizations at the 142nd Street site.
- v. **Jackie Robinson Park** - The park is once again starting up events and participated in the NYC Homecoming week; hosting the premiere of Blood Brothers: Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali at the amphitheater on August 18th. There was an attendance of about 400 people. The park participated in the city CleanUp Corps which was very effective and had great results; especially helpful in view of staff shortages. Donated backboards for the basketball courts to be installed. The Park is looking for residents who are interested in gardening. The hazardous mud slick that occurs after truck deliveries still needs to be cemented over to avoid slips and falls. Historic Harlem Parks has been advised and will address with NYC Parks. The mud slick developed after completion of the recent “Parks Without Borders” renovations on the park. **Jackie Robinson Park Conservancy** is looking for new Board members. Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month. Applicants will be provided a walk-through of the park.

- vi. Fred Samuels** - The Malcolm X Community Improvement association will be planting daffodil bulbs in the park on Saturday, October 16th from 10 am to 2 pm. The park is located on Malcolm X Boulevard between 139th and 140th Streets.
- vii. Colonel Charles Young Triangle** - A community request for bench replacement, improved lighting and tree planting for the plaza was voiced. Committee will make a recommendation to NYC Parks to honor the request. A safety concern was also raised with respect to cars coming onto the sidewalk and colliding into the plaza when making the turn onto Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd. from the 155th Street viaduct. The Transportation, Landmarks and Historic Preservation will be advised that safety measures are needed; perhaps the installation of traffic bollards.
- viii. Hansborough Recreation Center** - Re-opening as of September 13th. Face masks, ID and proof of vaccination are required to enter the facility. Registration is currently taking place. Free memberships are being offered (through December 31st 2021) to NYC residents 12 and over who are vaccinated - current memberships for 11 and younger remain in place - even though vaccinations are not available for this age group. No NYC Parks indoor pools open at this time. Visit NYC Parks: <https://www.nycgovparks.org/> for updates. Guidelines being developed for safe swimming indoors. Honeys and Bears, Harlem's world renowned synchronized swimming group have been in communication with Hansborough Management to discuss pool updates and transportation to alternative pool sites during the interim of the pool re-opening.
- ix. Wifi in CB 10 Parks** - Free WI-Fi access in CB10 parks would help to bridge the digital divide which exists here. Internet access would provide great benefit with respect to disaster relief. This could easily be used as a means to spread information about where to volunteer or get help, what streets and highways may be closed, and what supplies are needed. We need free, secure and reliable Wi-Fi service in CB10 parks and playgrounds that provides sufficient bandwidth to accommodate the park traffic.
- x. Park Enforcement Patrol (PEP) Officers.** There is an urgent need for Park Enforcement Patrol (PEP) Officers for Manhattan CB10. Currently, officers are disproportionately distributed throughout the parks of the five boroughs and CB10 is one of the high shortage areas. Enforcement would potentially have impacts resulting in a decreased need for maintenance as related to problematic activity; such as dogs off leashes, illegal barbecuing non-compliant team sports organizations and illegal non-permitted events. We need the Department of Parks and Recreation to assign a minimum of 25 PEP Officers dedicated to CB10 parks.

xi. It's My Park Day - Saturday, October 16th - Colonel Charles Young Playground 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, 132nd Street Block Association Park located at 230 W. 132nd Street from 9:30 am - 1:30 pm. at 137th Street and Malcolm X Blvd 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. Join us for our monthly clean up along Malcolm X Blvd -- cleaning tree beds in the medians and along the sidewalk, weeding and maintaining existing plants, and planting fall bulbs for spring blooms. It's My Park at Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Malls Saturday, November 6, 2021 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. Join thousands of New Yorkers who come together each year to volunteer and celebrate their neighborhood parks and public spaces through It's My Park. The It's My Park projects below are open to the public and walk-ons are welcome. If you would like to volunteer with a large group (10+ people), please [submit a request](#) to Partnerships for Parks. It's My Park is presented by [Partnerships for Parks](#), a joint program of NYC Parks and the [City Parks Foundation](#).

c. District Needs Statement - Committee Members have been asked to review the District Needs Statement for 2020 and provide comments and or suggestions on or before Saturday, October 16th.

II. Voting:

a. Voting by Voice Vote

i. Motion made by Hon. Barbara Nelson and seconded by Hon. Dr. Maurice Franklin. (Hon. Tahanie Aboushi was not present for the vote)

Motion: To Support Letter Of Recommendation For Additional Upgrades to the Colonel Charles Young Playground Renovations

Outcome: Quorum was present : Unanimous to support: 8 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals (Voice Vote: Hon. Karen Horry - yes, Hon. Terri Wisdom - yes, Hon. Barbara Nelson - yes, Hon. Verna Diggs - yes, Hon. Dr. Maurice Franklin - yes, Hon. Derek Perkinson - yes, Hon. Marcus Wilson - yes, Hon. Shamier Settle - yes **Motion Passed**)

b. Old Business

i. **Firefighter Lt. Michael Davidson Mural** - Mr. Hession, cousin to Lt. Davidson, is proposing a mural on the handball wall inside of the Renaissance Playground (located at 144th Street) to honor Lt. Davidson, who lost his life fighting a fire on 149th and St. Nicholas Avenue. Cited four times for bravery, served the community as a member of the FDNY for fifteen years, and was stationed here in Harlem on 143rd Street, Engine 69, Ladder 28. Lt. Mr. Hession will return in either November or December to provide substantiation of community support through petition signatures and letters of support from local area community-based organizations, i.e. tenant and block associations and businesses to substantiate community support. Mr. Hession, who presented at the April 2021 Parks and Recreation meeting requires additional time.

- ii. **Holcombe Rucker Park Greg Marius Basketball Court Ribbon Cutting** was held on Saturday, October 9th
- iii. **Exonerated Five Subcommittee** - The Task Force is in the process of scheduling a third meeting as well as a standing monthly meeting date
- iv. **Request to Rename Langston Hughes Playground Basketball Court to William Atmore Byrd Classic Basketball Court** - still pending
- v. **Seneca Village** -Central Park Conservancy (CPC) is still developing their suggestions for a permanent commemoration and will return in November with updates. The “CBS This Morning” Seneca Village feature has not aired as yet, CPC will let us know the date. The program has over 8 million viewers and will bring great visibility to the story of Seneca Village. The Metropolitan Museum of Art Exhibit: “Before Yesterday We Could Fly: An Afrofuturist Period Room” will open on November 5th and run for two years. The exhibit is a fabrication of a domestic space that assembles furnishings and objects to create an experience of authenticity for Seneca Village. Acknowledging that injustice, the exhibition asks: What if this community had the opportunity to grow and thrive? Powered by Afrofuturism (the inspirational, creative mode that centers Black imagination and self-determination) - the exhibition transforms a 19th-century domestic interior into a speculative future home for Seneca Village residents whose time was so unjustly cut short.

III. **New Business**

- a. Committee will explore the development of a CB 10 Parks Strategic Plan
- b. Wi-fi in CB 10 Parks

IV. **Announcements**

- a. **The Colonel Charles Young Playground** newly renovated 145th Street basketball court ribbon cutting and press conference will be held on November 12th. This event will mark the completion of the first phase of the three-phase Park renovation.
- b. **Metropolitan Museum of Art “Before Yesterday We Could Fly: An Afrofuturist Period Room” Opening November 5th.** In accordance with New York City mandate, all visitors age 12 and older must be vaccinated against COVID-19. Masks are required for all visitors. <https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2021/afrofuturist-period-room>
- c. **Free! Halloween on the Harlem Meer: Ghoulish Crafts and Spooky Entertainment**

Charles A. Dana Discovery Center
October 26, 2021, from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

- d. <https://www.centralparknyc.org/activities/events/ghoulish-crafts-and-spooky-entertainment>
- e. **NYC Parks Urban Rangers programming at the East River Esplanade** (Harlem River Park) at 142nd Street - youth programs can request The Natural Classroom school application for the Fall at <https://www.nycgovparks.org/programs/rangers/natural-classroom/apply>
- f. **The Harlem Renaissance - Preservation Spatial Encounter & Anti-Racism** is now available: <https://www.filepicker.io/api/file/cYL99bQSOkK2qEqmuAYl>
- g. **Autumn Tree Walks in Central Park for information visit:** https://app.e.centralparknyc.org/e/er?utm_campaign=Event-2021-10-Main-Offer-Autumn%20Tree%20Walk%20Tours&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Eloqua&s=989596683&lid=646&elqTrackId=5FAB033F97CD6212ABC85E1CEFD50FB9&elq=0b5f12d8fe534e72b45fc2ad6b08d126&elqaid=1034&elqat=1
- h. **Jackie Robinson Park Recreation Center is offering free one year memberships to individuals aged 12 and up who have been vaccinated against COVID-19. Proof of vaccination is required at registration, which ends December 31st.**

II. Adjournment - Motion made to adjourn by Hon. Dr. Maurice Franklin and seconded by Hon. Derek Perkinson **Meeting was adjourned at 8:34 pm.**

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