



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

CICELY HARRIS
Chairperson

ANDREW LASSALLE
District Manager

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, May 9th, 2018, 6:30pm

Hon. Karen Horry, Chair

Hon. Leever Holmes Vice Chair

Meeting began at 6:40 pm and was held in the 4th Floor Conference room. The meeting was chaired by Hon. Karen Horry, Chair.

Committee Members in Attendance: Chair Karen Horry, Leever Holmes and Crystal Shipp

Committee Members Absent: Henrietta Lyle, Troy Gethers, Mark Bones, Derrick Graham and Maurice Sessoms

Guest Committee Members in Attendance: Safiya Mann

Guests in attendance: Marie Littlejohn (Friends of ACP, Jr. Mall), Kenneth Williams (NYC Parks Green Thumb), Randy Henry, Tim McChristian (Boys and Girls Club - Madison Square), Cynthia Copeland (Institute for the Exploration of Seneca Village), Terrence Mathis, Shirelle Moore, Dr. Leonard Jeffries, Daniel Paterson (The 142nd Street Block Association) and Eloise Paterson.

PRESENTATIONS:

A. NYC Parks GreenThumb

Kenneth Williams, Senior Outreach Coordinator presented an overview of the Parks Department's gardening program mission, function and operations. The 40 year old program has over 20,000 members and is the largest community garden project in the nation. GreenThumb licenses spaces to community groups that reflect the culture and needs of the community and who meet basic license requirements. The program provides property management assistance in order to maintain community gardens and farms. Gardens must be maintained in good state and must be accessible 20 hours per week to the community. There are 32 community gardens in Community Board 10. CB 10 and East Harlem make up the largest cluster of community gardens in the city. Residents are encouraged to visit a garden and introduce themselves and get involved.

GreenThumb provides gardening supplies and promotes annual initiatives in celebration of gardeners and what they have done throughout the growing season, such as the Annual Harvest Festival. Workshops are provided on a seasonal basis - information is provided on website.

GreenThumb cannot advocate for community gardens that under threat of closure due to housing development, but can assist in suggesting possible relocations.

Outcome: Parks and Recreation Committee will make referral to housing Committee to address the issue of having incoming developers contribute to Community Board 10 parks and gardens.

B. Boys and Girls Club - 155th and Bradhurst Avenue---

The Madison Boys and Girls Club (Madison) is a new construction located at 155th and Bradhurst. The site, named the Pinkerton Clubhouse in Harlem, will be Madison's largest and most advanced facility to date. Madison currently serves over 5,000 members between the ages of 6 and 18 at four Clubhouses located in Brooklyn and the Bronx. The Pinkerton Clubhouse is expected to open its doors to the Central Harlem community on Wednesday, September 5th, also the first day of school for New York City Public School students.

The organization services 4 million youth nationwide providing hot meals and healthy snacks in addition to training for healthy lifestyles and community responsibility. The Pinkerton Clubhouse is in the vicinity of the Polo Ground Houses, Rangel Houses, Harlem River Houses, etc. and will make available, critically needed after school care in a state-of-the-art, safe and secure environment. The focus of the programming is to enhance youth through improvement in three significant areas; academic success (Explorers Academy, Juniors Academy, Project Graduate programs), good character and citizenship (Youth of the Year, Torch Club and Keystone Club programs) and healthy lifestyles (Triple Play, SMART Girls and Passport to Manhood). Madison has a demonstrated track record of success evidenced by data generated from the aforementioned programs. The \$90 million capital project includes \$45 million for construction, a \$30 million endowment for ongoing operations with remaining funds for renovation of existing clubs. The 45,000 square foot site will accommodate a 35,000 square foot club house inclusive of a kitchen, Teen Center, Music Center, Gym, Dance Studio, Movie Screening Studio, Digital Artist Lab and Technology Center with 3-D printers, STEM lab, computer lab, a rock climbing wall and a secured rooftop area for ball play and other outdoor activities. The site will utilize the remaining 10,000 square feet for the Madison headquarters which will be relocated from its current midtown location.

The organization launched an initial job fair in March and will host one again on June 2nd for 62 diverse jobs available to be filled. The hiring process will include an extensive background check and vetting of potential candidates. Applications must be completed online. The information about the Fair was provided to the District Office. Madison will also be partnering with local area organizations such as the Schomburg and the Mama I Want To Sing Foundation.

Youth membership is \$5 per year and scholarships are available. There is a seven (7) week Summer Program (\$150 for Members, \$300 for non-Members) that will be offered as part of the annual programming. Special needs students will be accommodated.

Madison will be recruiting Board Members from the local area. The organization expressed a commitment to contributing to the community and is willing to partner with Jackie Robinson Park to make improvements to the pool and amenities in Rucker Park. Use by seniors groups is also being considered.

Outcome: Letter of Support requested for planned grand opening street festival. The committee will also make a referral to the Transportation/Historic Landmarks and Preservation Committee to advise on Madison's need to secure on-site street parking for staff and street lighting opportunities for the area.

II. DISCUSSIONS

A. Village Resolution - Seneca Village Project

The Seneca Village Project is dedicated to the study of a 19th-century African-American and Irish-immigrant community that was located in the current Central Park in New York City. The goal of the Seneca Village Project is to conduct further research on the site and to commemorate it in an educational context. The Seneca Village Project includes several integrated components: archaeological and archival research and education. Seneca Village existed from 1825 through 1857. It was located between 82nd and 89th Streets and Seventh and Eighth Avenues. Today, this area is part of Central Park. Seneca Village was Manhattan's first significant community of African American property owners. By the 1840s, it had become a multi-ethnic community African Americans, Irish, and German immigrants, and perhaps a few Native Americans. In 1855, the New York State Census reported approximately 264 individuals living in the village. There were three churches, as well as a school and several cemeteries. Within two years, Seneca Village would be razed and its identity erased by the creation of Central Park.

The group discussed possibilities for a commemorative project that will be respectful of the context of Central Park and in line with the current aesthetics of Central Park and garnering support to bring any finalized concept to fruition.

Outcome: Central Park Conservancy will return in June to continue the discussion around developing a proposal to commemorate Seneca Village in Central Park.

B. Preliminary District Needs and Budget Priorities - Tabled

C. NYC Parks Departmental Policy Concerning Removal of Dead Trees and the Planting of New Ones - Tabled

D. Community Outreach - Chess Event – Tabled

III. Old Business

a. Updates

- i. Capital Project to Renovate Bill “Bojangles” Robinson Playground - passed by full Board: 28 in favor, 1 opposed and 0 abstentions
- ii. Seneca Village Resolution - passed by full Board: 29 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions
- iii. CB 10 - Recreation Centers Survey CB 10 Recreation Centers Survey- The Committee developed questions to be used to poll local area recreational facilities to ascertain whether CB 10 can support in promoting community usage.
- iv. African Burial Ground - no further update at this time

The Committee **did not have quorum**, five of the eight standing members were not in attendance, no items were voted on. The Committee strongly suggests that members attend to achieve quorum for all future meetings.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 pm.

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