



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10**  
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**HENRIETTA LYLE**  
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District Manager

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
Wednesday, September 9th, 2015, 6:30pm  
**Hon. Karen Horry, Chair**

Meeting began at 6:40 pm and was held in the Manhattan CB10 conference room. The meeting was chaired by Hon. Karen Horry, Chair.

**Committee Members in attendance:** Chair Karen Horry, Kevin Bitterman and Derrick Graham.

**Committee Members Excused:** Maurice Sessoms

**Committee Members Absent:** Lupe Moreno, Troy Gethers, Dabney Montgomery and Barbara Nelson.

**Guests in attendance:** Shamell Martin (Partnership for Parks), Kieishsha Y. Garnes (NYC Parks), Beth Bingham (New Yorkers for Parks), Lucy Robson (New Yorkers for Parks), Rokhaya Saar (Hunter College School of Journalism) and Gabriella (CB 10 District Office Intern).

**PRESENTATION**

- A. **Open Space Index – Partnership for Parks – Beth Bingham and Lucy Robson** – The Open Space Index (OSI) is a set of 15 specific open space and sustainability standards designed to provide residents, community groups and public officials with data about the strengths and weaknesses of local open space conditions. Communities can use the OSI to assess and prioritize their open space needs, identify environmental sustainability opportunities and organize and build advocacy campaigns. Public officials can use the OSI to more effectively target capital spending on park and other open space improvements. New Yorkers for Parks, an independent not-for-profit organization operating city-wide to bring equity to park users, will conduct the research assessment and compilation of data. The project will require a budget provided by a designated funding source. OSIs have already been completed for City Council Districts 4 and 5, Mott Haven and East Harlem.

The OSI criteria are as follows:

### **Active and Passive Open Space**

Active Open Space & Facilities – 1 acre of Active Open Sapce/ 1,000 Residents

- Play Areas – 1 Play Area/ 1,250 children
- Athletic Fields – 1.5 Fields/ 10,000 residents
- Courts – 5 Courts/ 10,000 residents
- Recreation Centers – 1 Recreation Center/ 20,000 residents

Passive Open Space – 1.5 acres of Passive Open Space/ 1,000 residents

- Community Gardens – 1 Community Garden/ 10,000 residents

Total Acres of Open Space – 2.5 acres of Open Space/ 1,000 residents

### **Access and Distance to Parks**

Walking Distance to a Pocket Park (Less than 1 acre) – 100% of residents are within a 5 minute walk (1/4 mile)

Walking Distance to a Neighborhood Park (1-20 acres ) - 100% of residents are within a 5 minute walk (1/4 mile)

Walking Distance to a Large Park (Greater than 20 acres) - 100% of residents are within a 10 minute walk (1/2 mile)

### **Environmental Sustainability**

Urban Tree Canopy Cover – Neighborhood-specific goals established by the U.S. Forest Service

Permeable Surfacing within Parks – 70% of surfacing permeable

### **Park Maintenance**

Parks Rated “Acceptable” Overall – 85% of inspections “acceptable”

Parks Rated “Acceptable” on Cleanliness – 90% of inspections “acceptable”

**Outcome:** The Committee sentiment was in favor of the project and (1) is in agreement that the OSI would be a useful planning tool to inform the Parks and Recreation Committee and Community Board recommendations with respect to District Needs and Budget Priorities and (2) is interested in exploring the feasibility of such an undertaking which will require pairing an identified local area organization that has an objective that would be benefitted by such a study and is willing to commit to the necessary funding. New Yorkers for Parks will send the Committee a preliminary estimate detailing the scope of work and overall projected costs for the defined boundaries of CB 10.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

A. **Current State of CB 10 Parks and Playgrounds** - Partnerships For Parks reports that the progression of the two Capital Improvement Projects; St. Nicholas Playground North and Martin Luther King, Jr. Playground, underway in CB 10, can be tracked via the Parks Department online Capital Tracker for Manhattan. It's My Park Day is scheduled for October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Applications are currently available for Partnership For Parks grants. Colonel Young Playground bathroom services have been restored. The Committee will follow-up on the current status of the reinstallation of the Courtney Calendar Park bathroom. The Committee will continue to monitor community concerns with respect to the homeless population and any associated aberrant behavior that is disruptive to park usage. The need for greater community participation around programming, maintenance and park ownership in CB 10 was discussed. Park benches have been replaced in A. Philip Randolph Square. Committee Member Kevin Bitterman advised that The North Star Neighborhood Association is seeking information on resources for tree maintenance and replacement of dead trees. The Million Trees Program as well as NYC Parks was recommended. In addition, Committee Member Derrick Graham advised that contractors who replace trees post-removal of existing trees in an area as a result of construction, have a two year obligation to maintain the health of the new trees and that the policy is not always honored.

**Outcome:** Committee will take park updates under advisement as we consider community parks and recreation issues in alignment with the committee's mission. Parks and Recreation will advocate for the improvement of CB 10's parks and recreational facilities through promoting the engagement of community residents, elected officials, non-profit organizations, and government agencies.

B. **Committee Goals and Objectives for Parks and Recreation Committee for FY 2016** – To promote (1) greater community awareness of opportunities around park stewardship and associated benefits to the community, (2) active and ongoing community-based volunteerism, (3) and provide ongoing support for community gardens, (4) develop a comprehensive list of "Friends of Parks" in CB 10 and (5) advocate for the production of an Open Space Index.

**Outcome:** The Committee will accomplish these goals through enhanced community outreach via community events and ongoing advocacy.

**C. DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT** – The District Needs segment for Parks and Recreation statement was submitted in July. The Committee will use the additional time to tweak the statement and incorporate the need for an Open Space Index.

**Outcome:** The Committee constructed the District Needs Statement based upon community issues heard and vetted in Committee. The Committee will continue to seek incorporation of community input.

**D. PARKS AND RECREATION EVENT - FY 2016** – The Committee discussed sponsorship of a district-wide chess tournament involving the Chess-in-the-Schools Program.

**Outcome:** The Committee will reach out to the Chess-in-the-Schools Program as an initial step in planning.

**E. BUDGET PRIORITIES** – The Committee is continuing to review and compare capital and expense submissions for the Parks and Recreation Committee that were either rejected or accepted in the Register of Community Board Budget Requests For the Preliminary Budget Fiscal Year 2016. The Committee is also providing updates indicating newly developed needs as per community input and issues arising in Committee.

The Committee welcomes new Members; Kevin Bitterman and Maurice Sessoms. The Committee looks forward to their shared expertise and commitment.

The Committee did not have quorum. Five of the now eight standing members were absent including one excused member. The Committee strongly suggests that members attend to achieve quorum for all future meetings.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.