



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10
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PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, April 11th, 2018, 6:30pm
Hon. Karen Horry, Chair
Hon. Leevert Holmes Vice Chair

Meeting began at 6:35 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, Troy Gethers and Crystal Shipp

Committee Members Absent: Henrietta Lyle, Leevert Holmes, Mark Bones, Derrick Graham and Maurice Sessoms

Guests in attendance: Fred Sims (Harlem Little League), George Bloor..... (Parks), Jon Ernsberger (Parks), Marie Littlejohn, Ryme Kaikhouda (Orentreich Foundation for the Advancement of Science, Inc.), Nonie (Rusim Orentreich Foundation for the Advancement of Science, Inc.), Judynell Groce (St. Nicholas - 131st Street), Steven Abel (Friends of Bill Bojangles Playground), Delores Bryant (Harlem Council of Elders) and Steve Simon (NYC Parks)

PRESENTATIONS:

A. Capital Project to Renovate Bill “Bojangles” Robinson Playground

This Community Parks Initiative (CPI) project will completely reconstruct Bill “Bojangles” Robinson Playground located on 150th Street Between Frederick Douglass Boulevard and Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd. in Manhattan.

Design Intent

This project will make improvements to the seating area, playground and basketball court as well as restore the existing mural, plaque and low stone retaining wall that commemorate Bill Robinson. Note that the mural and associated plaque are registered together as an official city monument. The play dimensions of the basketball court will be increased as required to accommodate the community’s youth basketball programming needs. The basketball court will also receive new backstops, asphalt pavement, color sealcoat and metal bleachers for spectator seating. The playground will receive new play equipment, benches and safety surfacing over new asphalt pavement. The seating area will receive new benches, game tables, a bottle-filler with hi/low drinking fountain basins, and concrete pavers. It will also feature dance step graphics on the ground which encourage park visitors to attempt and appreciate one of Bill Robinsons famous

tap dance sequences, the “Crossover Step”. You can see a demonstration video of this dance sequence on at youtu.be/eP5ysFIN3hM. Fencing has been minimized and the seating area near the mural will remain open at all times in keeping with the Parks Without Borders initiative. All areas of the park meet or exceed ADA requirements for accessibility.

Sustainable Design Features

- Increased permeability and native vegetation
- Additional shade trees and improved conditions for existing shade trees
- High-albedo surfaces
- Use of recycled content materials
- Energy efficient light fixtures

A public charrette was held on October 25th, 2017 which included the collaboration of New York City Parks Department architects, designers, engineers and the local community. The schematic design for this project has been approved internally at Parks and is now going through review by the community board and external regulatory agencies for comment and approval. The projected completion date for the design phase is October 2018. The average time for procurement is 9 months. The procurement timeline for this specific contract will be established at the conclusion of the design phase. The average time for construction is 12-18 months. The construction timeline for this specific contract will be established at the conclusion of the procurement phase. The total Mayoral funding is estimated to be between \$1 million and \$3 million.

Outcome: The sentiment of the Committee is to draft a resolution in support of the proposed renovations to Bill “Bojangles” Robinson Playground. The draft will be reviewed by Committee and presented to the Executive Committee for a full Board vote.

B. Harlem Little League - tabled until further notice

II. DISCUSSIONS

A. Seneca Village Resolution

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 and 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 of predominately African Americans, Irish, German immigrants, and 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. Members of the Seneca Village Project and the Central Park Conservancy made presentations at the March Committee meeting.

Outcome: The Committee will revisit the issue in June to assess the progress of the Central Park Conservancy's evaluation of the proposed commemorative formats as suggested by the community, i.e; Garden with a technologically interactive component emphasizing the village footprint, history and culture, with a tie-in to the artifacts collected by the Seneca Village project. The sentiment of the committee is to draft a resolution to express the community's position to address the need for a physical commemoration of the historical Seneca Village in Central Park. The draft will be reviewed by Committee and presented to the Executive Committee for a full Board vote.

- B. 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.
- C. Community Outreach - Chess Event will be scheduled for May or June

III. Old Business

- a. Updates
 - i. Mandela Garden Resolution-full Board vote at April General Board Meeting for ULURP for the site: 27 in favor, 0 No, 0 Abstentions
 - ii. Central Park Reconstruction Projects - community Boards 11, 5, 7, 9 and 8 were contacted. Boards are supporting the projects with either full Board resolutions or letters of support. CB 10 Resolution on the project will reflect that the Playground projects incorporate play equipment with features that engage mobility and/ or sensory-challenged children.
 - iii. African Burial Ground Letter - HABGTF advised that the site has received official designation as an historic site and that government guidelines will be adhered to in order to ensure that gravesite remains will be respectfully removed before any construction begins.

IV. Announcements: *"It's My Park Day"* is scheduled for Saturday, May 19th

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 9:10 pm.

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