



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10
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CICELY HARRIS
Chairperson

ANDREW LASSALLE
District Manager

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, October 11th, 2017, 6:30pm
Hon. Karen Horry, Chair

Meeting began at 6:45 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, Crystal Shipp, Leevert Holmes and Henrietta Lyle

Committee Members Excused: , Maurice Sessoms

Committee Members Absent: Troy Gethers, Kevin Bitterman, Mark Bones, LaShanda Myers and Derrick Graham

Guests in attendance: Louis Bailey (WEACT), Iris Gumbs (Community Member), Linda P. English (Community Member), Kieishsha Y. Garnes (DPR District Manager), Anna Ried (Concerned Community Member), Danny Cabrera (Constituent Liaison & Community Coordinator – Office of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer), Sharon Wilkins (Harlem African American Burial Ground Task Force), Lauren Wolf (NYCEDC), Haja Worley (Project Harmony), Cynthia Worley (Project Harmony), Barbara Graves (Community Member), Lynne Guey (NYCEDC), Rene Calvo (Mandela Garden), Dr. Leonard Jeffries (WADU)

PRESENTATIONS

A. Harlem African American Burial Ground (126th Street Bus Depot) Task Force

The verbal-only presentation was made by Sharon Wilkins -Manhattan Deputy Borough Historian and a member of the Harlem African Burial Ground Task Force (HABGTF), along with Lauren Wolf and Lynne Guey of the NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC). The 126th Street MTA Bus Depot was decommissioned in early 2015. The NYCEDC is overseeing long-term development of the site. The MTA, which still uses the depot for emergencies, approved the excavation of four trenches by an archaeological team from Allee King Rosen & Fleming (AKRF) - an environmental planning and engineering firm under contract to NYCEDC, to conduct a limited excavation. Disarticulated human remains were found in the interior of the Bus Depot. HABGTF advised that the remains were first removed to a temperature-controlled environment at the AKRF site and are currently housed in a Landmarks Preservation

Commission Archaeological Repository. Once the memorial is available the plan is to reinter remains at the site of the African American Burial Ground memorial.

HABGTF, a broad-based group of community stakeholders, comprised of CB 11, The Elmdorf Church, Operation Fight Back, Strive and CIVITAS, anticipates state and national historic designation by 2018. The project will adhere to standards to ensure the fulfillment of site archaeological preservation obligations under a variety of federal, state and local laws and preservation ordinances. The effort is being completed in compliance with City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) and pursuant to the New York State Historic Preservation Act (SHPA) of 1980, as set forth in Section 14.09 of the New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law.

Per the AKRF Phase 1B Archaeological Investigation, fieldwork was initiated on August 16, 2015 and completed by September 26, 2015. Fieldwork consisted of the archaeologically-monitored excavation of four large trenches with an excavator, shovel skimming, and the hand excavation of units and/or shovel test pits in 3 of the trenches.

Removal of the remains also facilitated completion of the Phase 1B Archaeological Survey as further excavation was not possible without removal of the exposed remains. AKRF received verbal approval from the EDC and the Task Force on September 2, 2015 to remove the exposed remains. Per NYC Department of Health requirements, removal of the human remains required a permit to be issued through a registered funeral director. In accordance with regulations, that permit was modified before the packaged remains were transported from the Bus Depot to a secure temporary location at AKRF's offices in NYC.

A group of human bones extending into the west wall was left in place. Exposing and removing these bones would have required undercutting the trench wall and risking a wall collapse and damage to the bones. Before backfilling the trench, the area containing additional bones was covered with a blue plastic tarp and a layer of screened soil.

As additional human skeletal remains are clearly present on the site, it is recommended that additional archaeological fieldwork occur prior to development of the Bus Depot site.

AKRF recommends that the next step in the process should be to determine the horizontal distribution of the human skeletal remains; a Phase 2 Archaeological Evaluation. The Phase 2 Evaluation would be followed by either completion of a data recovery or archaeological monitoring during ground surface disturbing

activities. Any future demolition, removal of subsurface infrastructure, or construction would require preparation of an appropriate protocol in coordination with the consulting parties and the HABGTF.

Outcome: The Committee recommends the issuance of a statement in alignment with CB 11's honorable mission to ensure the reversal of the neglect and desecration of the sacred space known as the African Burial Ground and to honor the lives and contributions of those who were interred there.

DISCUSSIONS

A. COMMUNITY GARDENS PROPOSED RESOLUTION

The Committee reviewed a draft of a proposed resolution to bring remedy to how community gardens are handled with respect to a CB 10 general policy. The Committee recognizes, as does HPD, the critical importance of community input to the success of any local development projects. Area residents know first-hand what their housing needs are, what community facilities and other infrastructure they'd like to see in their neighborhoods.

Outcome: The Committee agreed to table the resolution and further refine the document via google docs. Committee members will work to fine tune the proposed resolution.

B. PARKS AND RECREATION COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENT

The Committee is re-visiting, as its community outreach event, a youth chess tournament to be held in Colonel Young Playground, for the spring 2018. The proposed event will be a collaboration of CB 10, NYC Parks and "Chess in the Schools". Parks has been contacted and will get back to the Committee on feasibility of the collaborative event.

C. BUDGET PRIORITIES

The Committee has been discussing 2019 budget priorities since June of last fiscal year and will have a final version for the October 16th submission date to the District Manager. Committee will continue to fine tune the budget priorities.

D. DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT

The Committee has been discussing 2019 budget priorities since June of last fiscal year and will have a final version for the October 16th submission date to the District Manager. Committee will continue to fine tune the District Needs Statement via google docs.

Voting Items:

- Community Gardens Resolution – Item still being fine tuned. – tabled and no quorum, sentiment of favor will be conveyed to the Executive Committee
- Budget Priorities - – Item still being fine tuned. – tabled and no quorum, sentiment of favor will be conveyed to the Executive Committee
- District Needs Statement - – Item still being fine tuned. – tabled and no quorum, sentiment of favor will be conveyed to the Executive Committee

The Committee **did not have quorum**. Six of the ten standing members were not in attendance. The Committee strongly suggests that members attend to achieve quorum for all future meetings.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

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