

**Community Board 12 Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee Meeting  
December 1, 2015 (CB12 Offices, 530 W. 166<sup>th</sup> St.)**

**Committee Members Present:** Elizabeth Lorris Ritter, Chair; Osi Kaminer, Assistant Chair; Barbara Frazier; Mitchell Glenn; Richard Lewis. **Excused:** Juan Mejía. **Public Member:** Natalie Espino. **Other Board members:** Mary Anderson, Richard Allman, Shahabuddeen Ally. **Others in Attendance:** Paul Kittas; Trish Anderson, Inwood Canoe Club; Joel Yoffie, Jennifer Hoppa, NYC Parks; Sara Fisher, Friends of Inwood Hill Park; Shakira Pettory, New York Restoration Project; RosaAnn Hermann; Lucy Robson, NY4P; Rosalba Naranjo; Mirta Jiménez & Martha Pabon, Union Comunal / Audubon Playground; Raulito Martínez.

Liz Ritter called the meeting to order at 7:08pm with welcoming/introductory remarks and announcements of upcoming events, and opened the floor to additional announcements of upcoming events.

**Presentation: Lucy Robson from New Yorkers for Parks** New Yorkers for Parks is a 100-year-old non profit parks advocacy and research group. Ms. Robson presented District Profiles Reports for NYC Council districts 7 and 10. (District Profiles are compiled by NYC Council District, not by Community Board, because that is how funding is allotted.) The profile shows a map of the District, with largest parks ranked by size; the reverse contains data on various indices compared to city-wide statistics for the same metrics. Data measured include:

- Parks & Playgrounds that are "visitable" (i.e., excluding Greenstreets)
- Residents living within a 5-minute walk of a park (even if it's in an adjacent District)
- Inspection, maintenance and cleanliness data, which clearly demonstrate the need for more maintenance funding

Ms. Robson highlighted that District 10 has significantly high number of parks volunteer groups than the citywide average.

For more information: NY4P "How's Your Park" planning session on Jan. 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 (includes dinner) at the Patagonia Community Room, 72 Green St. 10012. Osi asked if they could have a meeting uptown; several people suggested probably 2 per borough would be needed.

Richard Lewis asked about data on ADA accessibility and comfort stations, and equipment safety issues. Ms. Robson indicated that this information can be among the items included in next year's report. Liz offered possible sources for info on disabled distribution near parks Lucy pointed to their park report cards for equipment condition in each park as well as other info not in the district profile.

**NYC Parks Update: Jennifer Hoppa** Ms. Hoppa clarified previous questions on why concession revenues do not go to communities or to the Parks Department directly, but go into the City's revenue budget generally. It was also pointed out that the Parks Department doesn't have its own capital budget, and that its operating budget exceeds the revenue it generates.

Parks and Capital highlights:

- The Inwood Nature Center renovation has now been fully funded. Because the project includes a design process, scoping, public review, public hearing, contract

procurement/registration and the construction itself, the estimated timeframe is two-and-a-half to three years.

- Stairs in Highbridge Park at Laurel Hill Terrace (behind Yeshiva University) were deemed unsafe and have been, eliminating entrance to High Bridge for 10 blocks. The estimated cost of repairs \$982k. The Committee recommended giving this project a high priority in the next budget cycle.
- Morris-Jumel Mansion's perimeter sidewalk project is almost complete

Ms. Hoppa announced the new "Parks Without Borders" initiative, to make parks more open, welcoming, and beautiful by focusing on improving entrances, edges, and park-adjacent spaces. As part of OneNYC, Mayor de Blasio has dedicated \$50 million to the program. Visit <http://www.nycgovparks.org/planning-and-building/planning/parks-without-borders> for more information on the program, and to make suggestions on new projects.

Also gave information about the upcoming InwoodNYC parks and streets workshop on Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> at IS52. (For more information visit [parks.nyc.gov](http://parks.nyc.gov).)

**Update: on Safety Issues in parks** Shah Ally, Chair of CB12's Public Safety Committee discussed recent public safety concerns. Last 28 days reporting rash of parks crimes. There was a pattern of a groups of teens (14- to 20-year-olds) profiling and targeting elderly and other vulnerable residents. There were also a couple of high-profile muggings/assaults in broad daylight. Although these crimes are disturbing, it is important to note that arrests have been made in all cases. There was discussion about the need for additional police, PEP officers, lighting, etc. Parks/Cultural Affairs and Public Safety Committees will continue to work together on safety issues in parks, including jointly prioritizing capital and expense items that affect both Committees, as was done this year for the FY'17 rankings. Members were also encouraged to attend the Public Safety Committee, and the 33<sup>rd</sup> / 34<sup>th</sup> Pct. Community Council meetings.

**CB12 Wish list** Osi recapped November PCA committee meeting workshop on concessions and services priorities. There was a lengthy discussion on the relative merits of having one resolution dealing with all of the various needs/wants for our local parks, or separate reso going to the different divisions in Parks that handle general operations/expense programming, capital, and concessions (which are also under the purview of Mayor's Office of Contracting Services, and the Council's Franchise Concession Review Committee). Ultimately it was decided to draft a single reso, with separate "resolved" clauses specific to each agency/division, to provide both context, and to ensure that the different (but related) components were communicated to the appropriate agency/division. As this is not time-sensitive, a draft will be discussed at the January meeting.

Respectfully submitted: Natalie Espino  
Edited by Elizabeth Lorris Ritter