

March 8, 2004

Commissioner Adrian Benepe
NYC Department of Parks and Recreation
The Arsenal
830 5th Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Re: Hell's Kitchen Park

Dear Commissioner Benepe:

We are very excited to see plans drawn and nearly ready for Hell's Kitchen Park. Thank you for keeping us informed, and allowing Claire Dudley to come to our Waterfront and Parks Committee and present her work. We have enjoyed working with her.

We have virtually no criticisms and few comments, for that matter. All in all, we agree with Claire's plans to basically level the place, open it up visually and spatially, make a grander entrance and redevelop three play areas for children. We also welcome her plans for the basketball courts and, having been convinced that teenage girls will be drawn in this way, the volleyball courts.

We heard from some local residents, and understand that their concerns seemed fixable at your end. We also support these requests as follows:

- Replace the chain link fence at the back of the park with perhaps a smaller gauge, unclimbable, chain link and remove the razor wire. Neighbors have watched kids climbing over in order to retrieve soccer balls, etc.
- Move the shed away from the back wall to discourage climbing.
- Orient the basketball hoops so there are two half courts facing south, rather than one full court facing east/west.

We also request that you add a new large bulletin board next to the 10th Avenue entrance, as well as smaller ones on the 47th and 48th Street sides. These have been very useful to the block association in advertising events, and of course for Parks Department events as well

Nearly all agreed at our meeting that the center of the circular entrance way was not the best location for the bathroom. We would hate to have a monolithic stall mar this lovely park feature. In a few moments of brain-storming, the committee preferred the location Claire suggested

nearer the north-west corner of the park outside the tot-lot. We would forgo the picnic tables in favor of this location for the bathroom. However, we are not wed to it, just unsupportive of the proposed location dead center.

Finally, we hear through Ms. Dudley that the cost of the bathroom is \$750,000 even after you've done all the infrastructure! We would like to see what we can do to find the funds for this before your renovation is complete. Perhaps we can discuss a more accurate estimate, so we can pursue this.

Again, thank you for keeping us in the loop. We can't wait to see this park reborn.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff

Chair

Manhattan Community Board No. 4



John Doswell

Co-Chair

Waterfront & Parks Committee

Pam Frederick

Co-Chair

Waterfront & Parks Committee

cc: Mayor Michael Bloomberg
Borough President C. Virginia Fields
Local Elected Officials
West 47th/48th Street Block Association