

August 12, 2004

Commissioner Adrian Benepe  
Department of Parks & Recreation  
The Arsenal  
Central Park  
New York, NY 10021

Manhattan Borough Cmsr. William Castro  
Department of Parks & Recreation  
Arsenal West  
16 West 61<sup>st</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10023

**Re: Renovations to Clement Clark Moore Park**

Dear Commissioners Benepe and Castro,

Members of Manhattan Community Board No. 4's Waterfront and Parks Committee have joined a series of meetings organized by Councilwoman Christine Quinn recently to discuss Clement Clark Moore Park in Chelsea. The councilwoman brought several community members together in the park initially, including your new district manager, Christian Paro. Also in attendance were several members of the West 400 Block Association, the group that has cared for the park and dedicated many funds over the years to its maintenance.

Our meetings took place not because the park is in dire condition by any means, but because such a well-used and well-designed park should be properly maintained and improved where it can be.

Together we have compiled a "wish-list" of goals for the park, which we organized in the three categories below. Already we have discussed many of the issues with Christian Paro, our district manager, who has responded to most of our concerns in terms of plantings and maintenance. He has already set up a meeting with the volunteer gardener who does much of the work in the park and your horticultural staff, and has received this list of maintenance issues as well.

Our request to you at this point is to tell us which of the larger, capital items below could be covered using your requirements contracts in the near future. Anything that is too large a project would then become part of our mission: to earmark funds to make some capital improvements to the park.

To follow is the list:

## **PLANTINGS**

It is our hope that the department can create a “master plan” for the plantings in the park in concert with Karen Fausch, who maintains the plants there now on behalf of the Block Association, and who secured the grant to install the irrigation system recently. Karen has also done the most recent plantings along the northern perimeter of the park. Christian has already arranged for this meeting.

Within the master plan, we hope that attention could be given to the following:

- Replace the “pricker” bushes on the east end of the northern perimeter bed with some sort of evergreen shrubs
- Plant southern perimeter bed, along the chain-link fence closest to entrance, with another evergreen, such as the English yews nearby or vines
- Add low fencing around the front U-bed to prevent children from trampling plants
- Add a new tree to the empty pit in open western area
- Irrigate eastern perimeter
- Discuss the option for the Parks Department to assume maintenance of the irrigation system.

## **MAINTENANCE**

- Paint metal railings
- Paint metal parts of benches
- Strip paint from wood on benches in back
- Paint or rehab lampposts
- Strip paint from water fountain so it is back to the concrete, like other parks
- Add latch to gate at swing area
- Properly repair bricks around tree pit closest to spray area (It was repaired with cement)
- Add sign at northern perimeter gate that park entrance is on the western side
- Replace two swings with big-kid swings

## **CAPITAL PROJECTS**

- Rehab spray fountain
  - Preserve seals – but strip to cement
  - Resurface bottom with cast cement or something appropriate for play area
  - Rehab drain (which is always clogged)

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- Reuse ramp area near east entrance on northern perimeter. This gate is never open, and the area could be used for more children's play. We discussed a set of big-kid swings, or possibly two child-sized picnic tables, similar to the one at Bleecker Playground, though we came to no definite conclusion.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns. We look forward to discussing them with you further – please contact us if we can meet with a member of your staff to go over the list.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff

Chair

Manhattan Community Board No. 4



John Doswell

Co-Chair

Waterfront & Parks Committee

Pam Frederick

Co-Chair

Waterfront & Parks Committee

This letter was passed at Manhattan Community Board No. 4's August 11, 2004 full board meeting.

cc: Hon. Michael Bloomberg, Mayor  
Hon. C. Virginia Fields, Manhattan Borough President  
Local elected officials