

Landmarks Preservation & Parks Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday February 3th, 2016 at Broadway Housing, 135th Street and Riverside Drive
Meeting called to attention at 6:40pm

CB9 Landmarks & Parks Committee Members in attendance:

Joel Mentor (Chair), Michael Wells, Daniel Marks Cohen, Jonathan Thomas

Meeting opened with a discussion around continued support, and requested capital funding for 119th Street Gatehouse. Representative Diana Howard from the Manhattan BP's office confirmed that they are aware of the budget requests for the project. Next steps for our committee include setting up a public forum for community input and suggestions. Our committee also plans to issue a reso or letter of continued support for the renovation of the Gatehouse.

6:47 – Meeting called to order. Motions were made to adopt minutes from prior meeting, and current agenda.

36 Hamilton Terrace

Following last month's presentation of proposed renovations, and the board's declining to offer support the project until an open discussion is held. Representatives from Bluarch (Architect for the project) did not attend the meeting. Kathryn Willie Suggs was in attendance, and reinstated concerns over the extent of the planned renovations, which include a roof deck, and the installation of an elevator. Ms. Suggs also pointed out structural issues at neighboring buildings as a result of extensive and out of context construction done in the past. Although the Landmarks Preservation Commission can proceed with a hearing without a letter of support from the board, members of the public can attend and voice their concerns.

Parks and Landmarks Committee is planning a spring event for the community. Suggestions from Member Cohen included a walking tour, highlighting current landmarks and historic districts. The tour would end with a beautification activity at a local park. Mr. Robert McClean from the Parks Department noted that they would offer support as needed. We will formulate a plan and submit our requests. Member Wells and Thomas will identify possible park sites for the event.

Our committee will continue to work with Save Harlem Now, and other organizations to fulfill the landmark needs outlined in the 197A plan. Members will be provided with that portion of the plan for future discussions, and are encouraged to propose new sites. It was also suggested by members that the Committee revisits the idea to landmark the Yuengling Brewery complex. This will be discussed with the board chair for consideration.

Old Business

Uptown Inner City League has requested our support to be allowed to continue their program at Annunciation Playground. Following a joint meeting with the Borough Commissioner, the school's Principal, the program's administrator and other stakeholders it was agreed that changes would take effect to address past issues. Mr. McClean is expecting a list of items from program organizers for review and approval by DPR.

New Business

St. Nicholas Park – Maintenance concerns were raised by park goers, as well as landscaping needs. Mr. McClean has asked for the details of the request so that they can be addressed. Member Thomas is assigned to that park, and will follow up.

Member Cohen brought up issues observed at "The People's Park" at 111th Street and Amsterdam (NW corner). The site requires signage to designate it as a public space.

Sidewalks and pavers around the northern end of the General Grant monument are in need of repair. There is a current plan to address reconstruction around that area.

Areas around Sakura Park also have maintenance needs.

Member Wells raised issues regarding trees at Sheltering Arms Playground, as well as some defective play equipment, and floor mats that need to be reset or replaced. Mr. McClean will look into the issues as noted.

Water is pooling around the areas of Riverbank Playground at 142nd Street and Riverside Drive.

Concerns were raised over full size vehicular traffic within Riverbank State Park. We will call for the state police to transition to using bicycles or electric vehicles for their patrols.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40pm

Submitted by Joel Mentor