

Waterfront/Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday October 5, 2011 at Broadway Housing 583 Riverside Drive 7th floor
Meeting called to order at 6:36pm

CB 9 members in attendance: Arnold Boatner, Savona Bailey-McClain, Carole Singleton, Brad Taylor
Public attendees: Sereni Li, Michael J. Palma, Terese Flores, Basia Nikouorow

Overviews presented by Boatner regarding Young Urban Forester (Training) Program with Trees NY being held November 16, 23, 30, December 7 and 14. Second overview regarding Million Trees NY which has been requested to come to the October general board meeting and introduce board to it's adopt a tree program.

Discussion items:

- 1) Proposed dog run in Riverside Park. Arnold Boatner passed out copies of article from DNAInfo regarding unclean conditions at dog runs in lower Manhattan that have led to health issues for dogs. Brad Taylor and Savona Bailey-McClain gave an historical overview of efforts to establish a dog run in Riverside Park near 143rd Street. Discussion that followed centered on potential areas to explore other than area at 143rd Street which is generally considered too small and too close to sidewalk. General consensus was that area near 153rd and Broadway was best potential site but currently has inadequate lighting which raises safety concerns. Committee to pursue support for additional lighting in area.
- 2) Terese Flores, area manager of city parks in CB9 informed committee of meeting being held on Friday morning October 7th at 9:30am to address issues raised regarding maintenance of dog run in St. Nicholas Park. Carole Singleton volunteered to attend meeting and report back to committee on results of discussion.
- 3) Carole Singleton raised issue of homeless people living in St. Nicholas Park near new Hamilton Grange Memorial. Terese Flores to investigate what can be done by social service agencies to proactively intervene and help homeless find shelter.
- 4) Need for additional lighting in St. Nicholas, Morningside and Jackie Robinson Parks as a budget request to address safety issues.
- 5) Staffing cutbacks in recent years by Parks department has resulted in decline in park maintenance. Alternative staffing by volunteers ie. WEP workers, prisoners from Rikers Island jail was suggested. Terese Flores to explore additional staffing by volunteers.
- 6) Issue of rat abatement in Montefiore Park raised by Michael La Palma led to discussion and consensus that rat abatement is needed throughout entire CB 9 district.
- 7) Carole Singleton raised issue of sub-standard cleaning of food waste from subways by MTA has resulted in rats leaving subways through grates and investing trash from buildings left in plastic trash bags for pick-up by sanitation department.
- 8) Extensive discussion followed on need to educate building residents on recycling to generate potential revenue by selling trash ie, aluminum cans to recycling firms. Suggested that sanitation department needs to step up enforcement of regulations. Committee was informed of recycling expert who does presentations to community groups Arnold Boatner obtained his name to invite to future committee meeting.
- 9) Need for follow-up on previous budget requests for park improvements mentioned by Brad Taylor.

New Business:

Michael LaPakia and Basia Nikouorow of Montefiore Park Association asked for committee support for initiative to close Hamilton Terrace between 135th and 137th Streets to create a pedestrian park plaza with street furniture. They mentioned involvement of CB9 member La Quita Henry in effort to close street. They mentioned a public meeting being held on issue scheduled for Wednesday October 12th. There was a lengthy discussion that followed regarding the impact of the proposed closure would have on businesses in the impact area. It was recommended that the Transportation Committee should handle this proposal.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15pm.