



The City of New York

Queens Community Board 11

Serving the Communities of Auburndale, Bayside, Douglaston, Hollis Hills
Little Neck and Oakland Gardens

Michael Budabin, Chair / Joseph Marziliano, District Manager

TO: All Board Members
FROM: Paul DiBenedetto, Parks Committee Chair
DATE: February 24, 2021

On Tuesday, February 23, 2021, the CB11 Parks Committee held a Zoom teleconference meeting to discuss various issues related to parks in the CB11 area.

Present

Paul DiBenedetto, Committee Chair
Michael Budabin, Board Chair
Christine Haider, 1st Vice Chair
Victor Dadras, 2nd Vice Chair
Henry Euler, 3rd Vice Chair
Laura James, Committee Member
Lourdes December, Committee Member
Robert Liatto, Committee Member

Eileen Miller, Committee Member
Christina Scherer, Committee Member
Carin Bail, Committee Member
Albert Galatan, Committee Member
Michael Golia, Committee Member
Lander Bravo, Committee Member
Carmen Collado, Committee Member
John Kelly, Committee Member

CB11 Staff

Joseph Marziliano, District Manager
Jane Bentivenga, Community Coordinator

Other

Jessica Burke, President, Friends of Crocheron Park and John Golden Park
Rebecca Gellos, Douglaston LDC

Mr. DiBenedetto called the meeting to order.

Mr. Marziliano introduced Ms. Burke, President, Friends of Crocheron and John Golden Parks. Ms. Burke reviewed things that they have done in partnership with NYC Parks such as clean-ups and litter removal in high traffic areas. They are also doing some planting and mulching. She advised that their website is www.crocheronpark.org. They operate as a 501-3c. A link for donations can be found on their page. Funds are raised through “ioby”: in your backyard. They can also be found on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. Mr. Budabin asked what determines their non-for-profit status to be able to work with NYC Parks and other organizations. Matt Symons has been instrumental in aiding with contacts, manpower, informational booklets as well as ecosystem and flora information.

Ms. December spoke about the similar things that the Friends of Alley Pond Park do, and money raised through “ioby”. She also spoke of Mr. Symons being a great friend to the entire park system.

At this point, Mr. Marziliano raised the follow-up issue of getting a farmer’s market in Crocheron Park. Mr. DiBenedetto stated he knows of an organic farm share program from Jamesport, NY. Ms. James added that she has had contact with them. Mr. DiBenedetto stated that Matt Symons from NYC Parks has advised him that the application is quite straight forward. He will follow-up with the farm share.

Mr. DiBenedetto asked for updates regarding parks that members have visited. Mr. Euler stated that he went to Potamogeton Pond (aka Pea Pond) which is in the vicinity of the Grand Central Parkway, 86 Avenue and 218 Street in Hollis Hills. He stated this is a kettle pond. Unfortunately, the water supply diminished when the Grand Central Parkway was widened. The soil also became compacted in the 1970s when there were many people in the area; erosion then started on the sides of the kettle pond. Planting was done by local volunteers to mitigate the erosion problem. The sign and bench look to be in good shape. However, dumping in the area can be a problem. Human interference should be kept to a minimum.

Mr. Bravo spoke about Glenwood Landing at 39 Avenue and Glenwood Street. He stated this area is one of the smallest parks in the NYC Parks system. He believes it was created to overlook the LIRR. He stated that there are NYC Parks trucks at this site almost every day. There are no guardrails on the 39 Road side of the park. Friends of Westmoreland Civic Association and the Douglaston Garden Club have been planting and taking care of it. There is a very old stone wall that needs pointing. There is only one light. Additional lighting needs to be installed; it is extremely dark. Enhanced traffic markings should be installed around the area as well. Mr. DiBenedetto suggested making a partnership with NYC Parks, and having the Westmoreland Civic Association be involved. Mr. Bravo said he has been advised to go through the participatory budgeting process, but so far, that has not been successful. Mr. DiBenedetto also recommended residents take the tree pruner certification course for residents. A person can register at www.treesny.org.

Ms. December and Mr. Liatto agreed to be liaisons for Alley Pond Park. Mr. Marziliano said he would like to see as many programs as possible in our parks. Mr. Budabin said we should advocate for the “smaller” things as well. Ms. Collado would like to liaise for Crocheron Park. Mr. Budabin will work with her. Mr. Budabin pointed out that the lighting is very poor on the path in Crocheron Park. Ms. James said she will take Udall’s Cove, Mrs. Miller volunteered for Dermody Square. Mr. Galatan volunteered for our portion of Vanderbilt Motor Parkway. Ms. Scherer will cover Oakland Lake with Mr. DiBenedetto who will focus on Oakland Ravine. Mr. Dadras, along with Rebecca Gellos, Douglaston LDC, will look after Catherine Turner Park Richardson. Ms. Gellos said that funds for professional maintenance at this park are an issue. Residents have been paying for it themselves. There are a few benches, however, more seating, lighting and tables are needed. She and Mr. Bravo would like to see more programs offered. Ms. James suggested signage regarding trails could be installed in the area. Mr. Golia will work on Catherine Turner Richardson Park as well. Mr. Dadras will work on Glenwood Landing with Mr. Bravo also and said the Little Neck-Douglaston Historical Society is also interested in helping with Glenwood Landing.

Mr. Budabin pointed out that Matt Symons of NYC Parks is a great resource and CB11 should inquire about an organizational concept with him. Parks liaisons should submit their findings in writing to the Board prior to the next meeting, and Mr. Symons should be asked to attend.

Mr. Kelly spoke about Peck Park. He stated that the connection to Kissena Park needs to be improved. This should be a priority. The connection at 164 Street and Underhill Avenue (which is not in our Board) is abysmal. An area of green space just to the west border needs attention. On the north, there is a Class 2 and Class 3 bike lane that needs work. Some of the intersections that run along the park are quite dangerous and need Dept. of Transportation enhancements/improvements. Most of the playground is in reasonable shape although one piece of equipment needs to be repaired. On the eastern side of the park, the bridge over the Long Island Expressway needs cleanup and some work. This park also has a lot of dogs off leash. Signage and dog owner information is needed. Mrs. Haider added that there are five ballfields, a playground and a basketball court. The basketball court floods whenever it rains heavily. Clay is needed for the ballfields every year. Mrs. Haider stressed that these fields are to be made for baseball, not another sport. Mrs. Haider and Mr. Kelly both suggested that some plantings and lights be added to green space west of Utopia Parkway at Kissena Corridor. Mr. Marziliano stated it needs to be made ADA compliant. That request can be made of and done with operational funds. Mr. Kelly added that "way finding" signs and arrows should be installed, and more mapping of parks be made available to the public. Ms. James agreed. Ms. Burke added that this type of thing can be done through Partnership For Parks.

Mr. DiBenedetto stated there are more parks that need to be addressed. They will be discussed at a future meeting. He asked that any suggestions be emailed to the CB11 office; please copy him. Mr. Budabin agreed and asked everyone to send their findings and suggestions to the CB11 office as soon as possible so that we can get the information to Mr. Symons at the Parks Department.

Respectfully submitted 2/24/2021