



Donovan Richards  
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## Community Board No. 2

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Anatole Ashraf  
Chairperson

Debra Markell Kleinert  
District Manager

May 22, 2025

### Environment, Parks, and Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes

*This meeting was teleconferenced using Zoom*

#### **Committee Member Attendees:**

Carlos Castell Croke, Chair  
Alexandra Gonzalez  
Lauren Springer  
Alaina Van Slooten

#### **Committee Member Absentees:**

Nellie Afshar  
Benjamin Lucas  
Andie Olivares

#### **Community Board Attendees:**

Corey Hannigan

#### **Environment, Parks, and Recreation Committee Public Member Attendees:**

Kevin Davis

#### **Guest:**

#### **Community Board 2 Staff:**

Debra Markell Kleinert

Carlos Castell Croke, Chair Environment Committee, welcomed everyone to the Environment, Parks, and Recreation Committee meeting.

The committee discussed a flooding tracker that was developed to monitor flooding within Queens Community Board 2's (CB2) district. The following points were shared:

- Carlos Castell Croke created a flooding tracker using a Google Form. The CB2 office shared the tracker with members of the committee.

- The flooding tracker does not have a set closing date, but the committee chair expects it to close sometime in the summer.
- Alaina Van Slooten mentioned that during a public meeting for the One LIC Rezoning, Congressmember Nydia Velázquez's office distributed a flyer for a Flood Solutions Fair scheduled for June 2025. She suggested that a printout with information about the flooding tracker be circulated at the fair, as many attendees will be CB2 residents concerned about flooding.
- The committee chair suggested reaching out to elected officials who represent areas within CB2 to include a link to the flooding tracker Google Form in their respective newsletters.

Carlos Castell Croke explained the origins of a walkthrough offered by Eric Goetz of NYC Parks and provided the following updates:

- In a previous committee meeting, Eric Goetz offered to do a walkthrough of some of the parks in CB2 with Carlos Castell Croke.
- The committee chair noted that he would like committee members to join the walkthrough. He said he would follow up with Parks and shared that he believes a day during a summer weekend would be a great time to conduct the walkthrough.
- Carlos Castell Croke, said he would send out a poll to gauge when committee members will be able to attend the walkthrough.
- He mentioned that he wants to walk to parks in all the neighborhoods within CB2.
- The committee chair said that the walkthrough presents an opportunity to discuss construction activity in local parks, ongoing issues, and upcoming reconstruction projects.
- He added that he would like to hear from Parks about how the committee could be helpful. For example, if a park requires additional capital funding, the committee or board may be able to advocate for more resources to ensure the park can operate at full capacity.

Kevin Davis shared that capital projects often take a long time, and if Parks has upcoming work on its radar in the next few years, it would be helpful to know what's being upgraded so the committee can have more context about those projects and already understand the spaces and their needs.

Alexandra Gonzalez said that the Environment, Parks, and Recreation Committee may want to connect with Karesia Batan, Chair of the Arts and Cultural Affairs Committee, since arts and culture are not typically included in public park spaces. She added that it may be worth identifying locations within CB2 parks that could serve as opportunities for public art spaces. Carlos Castell Croke said he is open to holding a future joint with the Arts and Cultural Affairs Committee.

Carlos Castell Croke introduced Corey Hannigan, a community board member who is a member of the Transportation Committee.

Corey Hannigan shared the following points:

- There is no public lawn space in South Sunnyside.
- While some recent park redesigns have added dog runs and new seating space, none have included open lawn space.
- He noted that there is an ongoing capital project at Torsney Playground and that the project page on the DPRS website states the stakeholder feedback period is closed. He asked whether the committee had requested open lawn space during the design phase and whether it is now too late to make that request for consideration.
- The committee chair responded that the design for Torsney Playground is complete and that the Community Board sent a letter in support of the design after a presentation on the proposed redesign. He added that he could still raise the importance of open lawn space and ask Parks if it could be considered without delaying the project.
- Corey Hannigan expressed interest in accessing the Torsney Playground redesign presentation shared in a previous committee meeting. Carlos Castell Croke noted that he could request the presentation from Parks if it's not online.

Corey Hannigan watched a livestream of a City Planning presentation in which Parks discussed the proposed Walk to the Park Site Selection and Acquisition Program. He shared the following points:

- The proposal would give Parks acquisition authority to obtain a batch of non-residential sites suitable for park development through a streamlined process.
- While the presentation focused on Brooklyn Community Board 5 and Queens Community Board 3, a total of 19 community boards would be eligible for the program, including CB2.
- He suggested inviting Parks to provide a presentation to discuss the program.
- He spoke about a triangular shaped DOT lot in Blissville, Queens, which DOT is trying to sell. He noted that the Transportation Committee, is concerned that the slated buyer may pave over the space, which has mature trees. Corey Hannigan noted that the site may meet the criteria for acquisition under the proposed program.
- He suggested inviting Parks to provide a presentation on the program; Carlos Castell Croke said he would ask if Parks could present. The committee chair added that it would be great to talk to Parks before the walkthrough about sites that could be acquired or whether there are lots Parks might be able to use.
- Corey Hannigan noted that he was unsure whether Parks is proposing for the program to exist, or if the program already exists and Parks wants to use the

authority the program grants it within the two community boards the presentation focused on.

There was a discussion on the temporary dog run, that the community wanted as Murray Dog Run undergoes renovation. The following points were shared:

- Carlos Castell Croke, said that Parks suggested a few feasible locations for the temporary dog run. He added that the Environment, Parks, and Recreation Committee asked them to review the options in order of proximity to Murray Dog Run but that Parks has not provided an update yet.

Carlos Castell Croke thanked the committee members for their contributions to the ONE LIC Rezoning Process and their continued engagement.

A motion to adjourn was made by Carlos Castell Croke and seconded by Lauren Springer.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Rafael Nava