



Donovan Richards
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Anatole Ashraf

Chairperson

Debra Markell Kleinert

District Manager

January 23rd, 2025

Environment, Parks, and Recreation Committee

This meeting was teleconferenced using Zoom

Environment Committee Attendees:

Laura Shepard, Chair
Carlos Castell Croke, Vice Chair
Alexandra Gonzalez
Andie Olivares
Lauren Springer

Environment Committee Absentees:

Nellie Afshar
Danielle Brecker
Jolly Patel
Benjamin Lucas

Community Board 2 Board Members Present:

Dr. Rosamond Gianutsos

Environment Committee Public Members:

Kevin Davis
Alaina Van Slooten

CB2 Public Members Present:

Fanny Chang

Community Board 2 Staff:

Debra Markell Kleinert, District Manager

City of New York Parks and Recreation:

Eric Goetz, NYC Parks
Eric Mattis, NYC Parks
Philip Sparacio, NYC Parks

Guests:

Marc Lavaia
Dori Gamboa
Noel Gamboa
Ben Robinson
Nancy Buck
Vanessa Leung
EJ
Julie Cuminale
Japeth Mennes
Christine Coulombe, President of the Friends of Noonan Park Dog Run

“Serving the Communities of Long Island City, Sunnyside, Woodside, and Maspeth”

Laura Shepard welcomed everyone to the committee meeting.

Eric Goetz, Parks provided an update that Local Park manager Monet Davis and Parks has been unable to find a temporary space for a suitable dog run as Murray Playground Dog Run is inaccessible.

Eric Mattis stated that when Parks identified additional areas of contaminated soil, they sought additional funding to remediate these newly discovered areas. Initially, the contract covered the remediation of the synthetic turf field, dog run, and fenced-off areas. Now, the community garden and open lawn areas are expected to be included in the remediation. Parks is on the cusp of registering these monies, with funding likely to be registered in February.

Once these monies are registered, the consultant will restart the design process because Parks added a lot of square footage to areas that need to be remediated.

However, Parks needs to redesign the stormwater system to remediate the areas because the remediation will encompass more square footage. The redesign of the stormwater system requires that it abides by the Unified Stormwater Rule. Under this rule, whenever more than 20,000 square feet of soil is disturbed, a new stormwater management system must be designed to store as much stormwater runoff as possible before it gets released into the city's combined systems or regular stormwater system.

Eric Mattis stated that the design process for Murray Playground will take approximately one year, followed by a procurement process lasting 10 to 12 months. Construction is expected to begin in spring 2027. Then, the construction could last about a year.

Parks cannot do any remediation at the dog run in the meantime.

Eric Goetz agreed to contact Philip Sparacio's staff to request that the staff walk three-quarters of a mile in every direction around Murray Playground to search for a suitable area that could serve as a dog run. If they identify any areas, they will let the committee members know.

Eric Mattis stated that he recommends that Murray Dog Playground adhere to its design process by using synthetic turf. Eric Mattis stated that a dog run with soil would lead to woodchips migrating substantially and require a significant maintenance fee.

Noel Gamboa provided a presentation on the Little Manila Park Initiative. The Little Manila Park Initiative is about converting an abandoned piece of property owned by the New York State Department of Transportation on the 70th Street Corner and 41st Avenue into a park. The Little Manila association is working with the Woodside Neighborhood Association to clear and improve the lot.

The Little Manila Park Initiative is fundraising to have resources to clear the area, buy equipment, install a new gate, and convert two of the fence panels to a swing-in gate to allow emergency and service vehicles to enter if necessary. The presentation is attached and under the title presentation.

Japeth Mennes, in October, performed a lead test at Windmuller Park and found exposed lead along the park's southern gate. Japeth Mennes and the producer of the lead test kit used an XRF gun to examine lead in Windmuller Park and found lead in other areas, such as the

structure of the frame that the infant swings are on. Philip Sparacio requested that Japeth Mennes meet with him.

Windmuller Playground and the pool area are currently in the design process since they will undergo reconstruction.

EJ stated that he's a cardiac arrest survivor. A bystander rescued EJ, and then FDNY provided professional rescue; CPR lasted a total of 90 minutes. In the survivor community, members try to perform advocacy, such as teaching CPR and placing AED machines in public places so people can reach them. A lot of money has been donated for AED equipment, and EJ would like to know if it's possible to place donated AED machines in city parks such as Windmuller Park, Noonan Playground, and Rainbow Playground.

Philip Sparacio requested that EJ send a proposal about donating AED machines in public places such as parks to Eric Goetz. Phillip Sparacio will discuss this proposal with the Deputy Commissioner for Operations. Additionally, next Tuesday, Phillip Sparacio will ask his counterparts in the City-wide chiefs meeting if they have a similar initiative to the one EJ advocated.

Lauren Shepard stated that Lauren Springer, the Chair of the Health and Human Services Committee, could work with her committee to look at the locations of AED machines in Community Board 2 and share resources on potential CPR training.

Christine Coulombe stated that Noonan Park Dog Run has two tall water fountains that are not found in other parts of the park. Many times, unaccompanied children enter the dog run; they usually run to fill up their water bottles, and dogs chase them, so it's an unsafe situation. Additionally, in many instances, children leave more than one gate open in the dog run, which could lead to dogs running away. Christine Coulombe noted that it would be ideal for Parks to have a water fountain in the children's area so children aren't tempted to come into the dog run, although she noted that there is an existing water fountain between the children's area and basketball courts at Noonan Park.

Parks said they would look into the possibility of covering the water fountain with a bottle filler.

Julie Cuminale stated that in Sunnyside, nonessential helicopters circle the neighborhood every day, night, weekend, and holiday. The constant noise and pollution negatively affect the community's health and well-being. Furthermore, Julie Cuminale noted that helicopter noise at the upper limits at the permitted flying altitude of 2,000 feet is at least 17 DB over what the EPA recommends. Julie Cuminale asserted that the common fuel these helicopters use is aviation gasoline, with around 3 times the amount of lead used in leaded gasoline automobiles. Julie Cuminale is reaching out to all city agencies to get help figuring out what these helicopters are doing, and she wants to know what agencies to contact to limit nonessential helicopter activity in her community.

Phillip Sparacio suggested that Julie Cuminale contact 911 so that their air division could investigate this helicopter activity. Japeth Mennes asked Julie Cuminale if she knew of an organization known as Stop the Chop, which is dedicated to reducing nonessential helicopter flights such as those in Central Park.

The committee considered filing a motion to request that their elected officials support the Stop the Chop Act. However, they decided against filing a motion as they will research the act and legislation that seeks to reduce nonessential helicopter flights.

Laura Shepard summarized the key points from the committee meeting.

Laura Shepard made a motion to adjourn, and Lauren Springer seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Rafael Nava