



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10
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Chairperson

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**PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMITTEE MINUTES**
Wednesday, June 14th, 2017, 6:30pm
Hon. Karen Horry, Chair

Meeting began at 6:30 pm and was held in the 4th Floor Conference room. The meeting was chaired by Hon. Karen Horry, Chair.

Committee Members in attendance: Chair Karen Horry, Troy Gethers, Crystal

Shipp, Derrick Graham and Leevert Holmes

Committee Members Excused: Maurice Sessoms and

Committee Members Absent: Arian Punter, Mark Bones and Kevin Bitterman
Henrietta Lyle

Guests in attendance: Kieishsha Garnes (District Manager CB 10- NYC Parks), Jane

Vega (resident), Brian Serzan (Co-Principal – Democracy Prep), Annette E. Alvarez (resident), Don Williams (resident) and Cindy Worley (JDWM Garden)

PRESENTATIONS A. “UNDER OUR UMBRELLAS, INC. COMMUNITY FARMERS MARKET” – Marlow White

Did not appear.

DISCUSSIONS A. LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Letters of Support are requested for the (1) Mandela Garden jurisdiction change from HPD to Parks, (2) St. Nicholas North Playground name change to Byrd’s Classics Park, (3) Joseph Daniel Wilson Memorial Garden preservation , (4)

Central Park reconstruction and renovation projects for 67th Street Billy Johnson

Playground, 108th Street Bernard Playground and Belvedere Castels, respectively. A statement letter is also recommended regarding the 126th Street Depot ULURP with respect to the disposition of the African American Burial Ground.

Outcome: The drafted letters were reviewed by the Committee and will be presented to the Executive Committee, as a quorum was not present.

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Update: The Executive Committee reviewed the drafted letters of support and requested that the letters be circulated via e-mail (along with supporting documentation) for commentary by the full board. After commentary, the letters of support for the Central Park projects and the Joseph Daniel Wilson Memorial Garden were approved and generated.

B. 2019 DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT – BUDGET PRIORITIES C. COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENT

Scheduled for Saturday, June 24th from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Colonel Charles Young Playground, located at 143rd Street between Malcolm X Boulevard and 5th Avenue.

Update: The Resource Fair was held in collaboration with the Jackie Robinson Conservancy whose Playground Associates tabled and provided arts and craft activities for the youth. The CB 10 Committee members provided an informational brochure, outreach; speaking one-on-one with community residents. Refreshments were also distributed.

A distributed survey yielded the following data: (1) 57.1% strongly agreed that park/recreation facilities programs in CB 10 help to make the community safer, (2) 49% agree that park/recreation facilities programs in CB 10 are accessible to people with disabilities, (3) 54% strongly agree that it is important to maintain and support established and thriving CB 10 community gardens, (4) 46% strongly agree that park/recreation facilities programs in CB 10 help to foster the health and well-being of adults (including older adults), (5) 40% strongly agreed Park/recreation facilities programs in CB 10 help to strengthen the sense of community in the neighborhood and (6) 46% strongly agreed Park/recreation facilities programs in CB 10 increase the quality of life in my community and volunteering to help in these facilities is important.

D. COMMUNITY GARDENS UPDATE

A forum hosted jointly by the Parks & Recreation and Housing Committees was held in the State Office Building on June 5th. The Mandela Garden is seeking a letter of support of jurisdiction change from HPD to Parks. The active and flourishing 3 year old garden is located at 265 West 126^h Street and covers 6693 square feet in area.

The garden was slated by HPD in January for development by Lemor Realty, a MWBE. The proposed development is designed to include 29 units of affordable housing, a restaurant and space for a tech company. The project is currently preULURP.

The Mandela Garden is in full bloom and is replete with a full schedule of summer events. NYCCGC recommends that the issue of community gardens be explored in terms of overall policy.

The 30 year old JOSEPH DANIEL WILSON MEMORIAL GARDEN, which is under threat of disruption, is seeking preservation through eminent domain or some alternate mechanism.

The established garden is a community mainstay and was founded in 1985 on vacant unkempt lots on West 122nd Street between 7th and 8th Avenues. The 0.15 acre garden spans Manhattan Block 1928, lots 22, 23, 121 and 122. The lots alternate as follows; 22 (public), 121 (private), 23 (public) and 122 (private). The titular owner of lots 121 and 122 is seeking reclamation for the purpose of sale or development. This action would destroy the existing garden.

OUTCOME: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer's office will arrange for a meeting to discuss the Mandela Garden situation and in the interim will research other available parcels. The Borough President is supporting the Joseph Daniel Wilson Memorial Garden and has allocated \$300,000 towards purchase costs in addition to continuing to explore possible avenues of relief to the matter of the garden's preservation.

E. NEWSLETTER FY 2017

Committee will prepare for presentation at September full Board meeting.

F. African American Burial Ground

In partnership with New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, the Harlem African Burial Ground Task Force, and the East 126th Street Bus Depot Task Force, New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) launched a community-based planning process for the redevelopment of the former East 126th Street MTA Bus Depot. The project proposes to honor the history of the site and meet the needs of the community through a new memorial and mixed-use, mixed-income development.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is currently in the process of vacating the bus depot and returning the site to the City. Acknowledging the immense historical significance of the site, the City has begun its work in partnership with the speaker of the New York City council's office, elected officials, and community stakeholders to develop a transformative mixed-use project at the site, centered on a new Harlem African Burial Ground memorial and cultural center to honor the significance of the site and its descendant community.

Archaeological Findings

In the early 2000s, an intensive documentary study found the potential for a historic cemetery in the vicinity of the East 126th Street Bus Depot site, requiring archaeological monitoring for proposed construction. MTA completed a Phase 1A archaeological assessment in 2011, and NYCEDC commissioned a Phase 1B archaeological assessment in 2015.

The former MTA bus depot in East Harlem was once the site of an African burial ground dating back to the seventeenth century. The 126th Street Harlem African Burial Ground Memorial and Mixed-Use Project proposes to preserve this essential piece of Harlem and New York City history. At the heart of the project is the creation of a living memorial and cultural center to acknowledge the historical significance of the site.

The African Burial Ground Task Force discussed the goals for the site. After many meetings, it was determined that the future of the site should have the following goals:

- Develop a living memorial and cultural center to honor and commemorate the significant social, economic, and cultural history of the cemetery and its descendant community
- Create a mixed-use, mixed-income development program
- Enhance site connectivity to the neighborhood
- Realize a financially feasible program to support project uses
- Maximize job creation

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW PROCEDURE (ULURP) 2017 - FALL 2017:
On February 21, 2017, the project entered the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). Prior to this, the project underwent an environmental review with a public scoping meeting. The ULURP clock runs for approximately 7 months. Required reviews include the following timeline:

Community Board 11 - 60 days

Borough President 30 days

City Planning Commission -60 days

City Council 60 days

The project will select a development team to redevelop the site and meet the public goals established by the Task Forces, community, and elected officials.

“A historic resources assessment is required if there is the potential to affect either archaeological or architectural resources. Impacts on historic resources are considered on those sites directly affected by the proposed project and in the area surrounding the project site.

The project site does not encompass any designed historic architectural resources. However, the Proposed Project would result in in-ground disturbance on the project site, and therefore has the potential to affect archaeological resources present on the site. 2Because the project site is known to contain significant historic and cultural archaeological resources, measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse impacts on historic and cultural resources will be developed in consultation with New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and others as appropriate, such as the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (PPRHP) and the Harlem African Burial Ground Task Force. Therefore, an assessment of archaeological resources will be provided in the DGEIS, as described in the Draft of Scope of Work.” – per the Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS)- 126th Street Bys Depot CEQR NO. 16DME011M - 19 August 2016.

Outcome: Committee sentiment is in favor of advising the CB 10 community of the progress of the project and issuing a position statement after speaking with CB 11 and the Task Force with respect to the disposition of the remains and the proposed memorial center.

New Business

Two local area residents living in proximity to Howard Bennett playground lodged a complaint with the committee regarding inappropriate use of the park by local school students. The schools; Democracy Prep and John B. Russworm – PS 194, involved were contacted and provided representation at the meeting. The Parks Department is aware of the situation and has been actively engaged in trying to resolve the matter. All parties involved have agreed to collaborate to bring the situation under control.

The two residents involved were advised that it is illegal to place their personal locks on the park's tennis court and that they should remove them immediately.

Outcome: The Parks and Recreation committee will continue to monitor the progress of the resolution to the problem and will revisit as an agenda item at the September meeting

Announcements

The Committee **did not have quorum**. Five of the ten standing members were not in attendance. The Committee strongly suggests that members attend to achieve quorum for all future meetings.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:12 pm.

~Respectfully submitted by Parks and Recreation Chair, Karen Horry~