



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10**  
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**CICELY HARRIS**  
Chairperson

**SHATIC MITCHELL**  
District Manager

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
Wednesday, June 12th, 2019, 6:30pm  
**Hon. Karen Horry, Chair**  
**Hon. Leevert Holmes, Vice Chair**

Meeting began at 6:40 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, Kevin Bitterman, Karen Dixon and Eboni Mason

**Board Members Present:** Greg Baggett, Troy Gethers and Donna Gill

**Committee Members Absent:** Leevert Holmes, and Seitu Jemel Hart

**Guests in attendance:** Robert McLean (Parks), Luther Gale (Harlem Honeys and Bears), Julius Tajiddin (Preserve Harlem's Legacy), Shena Kaufman (Parks), Samuel Cains (Jackie Robinson Park), Velma E. Goldwire (Harlem Honeys and Bears), Vern Ballarb (A. Philip Randolph Square), Zakiyah DeGraffe (Parks and Recreation), Jeannie Ned (Harlem Honeys and Bears), Kim McNeal (Parks), Rasheedah Ali (Harlem Honeys and Bears Swim Team), Lane Addonizio (Central Park Conservancy), Judynell J. Groce (St. Nicholas Park North) and Jean Miller (Harlem Honeys and Bears).

**PRESENTATIONS:**

A. Manhattan Deputy Commissioner William T. Castro - Park Issue Updates  
(The Commissioner was unable to attend meeting - Shena Kaufman - District Manager, reported in his stead):

**Playground Associates for CB 10 Parks:**

- MLK Park will be receiving a Playground Associate for summer 2019

**A. Philip Randolph Square:**

- Parks is currently in talks with DOT regarding the expansion of A. Philip Randolph as a plaza.

**Colonel Charles Young Playground:**

- Parks now has responsibility to restore the field after MTA's completion of repair of underground plumbing. It will take about 3 weeks to restore the field once the restoration is started.

- Parks has expressed that there is no funding available through their agency for funding of Colonel Charles Young Playground. The Community has petitioned NYC Parks since 2014 to initiate the renovation of the ball field to upgrade it to a multi-disciplinary artificially turfed sports field. The project needs to move from the NYC Parks proposed listing to capital projects listing.

#### Renaming of St. Nicholas North to Byrd Classic Park still pending -

- All requested documentation has been received and is currently under review.

#### **B. Women's Suffrage Monument in Central Park - Tabled until September meeting**

##### **C. Central Park Conservancy - Meer-Lasker Pool Renovation Project**

The Conservancy will be hosting a re-envisioning Lasker Pool & Rink Community Update meeting which will include a discussion on the progress of the Conservancy's most transformational project to date. The meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 15th from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. Lunch will be provided. The location will be The Cathedral School of St. John the Divine at 1047 Amsterdam Avenue. The project is designed to better serve the community while reconnecting the surrounding landscapes i.e.; re-joining the North Woods with the Harlem Meer. The Conservancy will share how the design team has incorporated community input since the outset of the community workshops of 2018 and plans to develop the design. The Lasker Pool revamp will be jointly funded by the city and the Central Park Conservancy. The city will contribute \$50 million toward the upgrade, and the Conservancy will contribute \$100 million, which it plans to generate through fundraising—\$25 million have already been raised for this effort. The skating rink is run by President Trump's Trump Organization, but the company's concession expires in 2021, before the newly designed rink will open. In the summer, the same site turns into a public pool, which the city runs itself. The pool and rink are expected to close for construction which will begin in 2020, and take three years. The pool is located in the Northern end of the park at 110th and Malcolm X Boulevard.

**Outcome:** The Community is encouraged to attend and the event flyer will be e-blasted by the Community Board.

##### **D. Hansborough Honeys and Bears**

The Honeys and Bears is Manhattan's only synchronized swimming group for adults ages 50 and older and one of Harlem's treasures. The team started in 1979 with a dozen members, and it has grown, by word of mouth, to include more than 300 men and women ranging in age from 55 to 94. The group is presently being challenged, because despite their perseverance in traveling to East 54th Street, a significant distance to maintain their group practice and cohesion, it is proving to be very taxing. The Honeys and Bears are asking for a letter of support from both Parks and the Community Board to ascertain use of the pools at Columbia University and City College, which are closer in proximity.

The Hansborough Recreation Center Pool has been closed since Sunday, May 12th, 2019. As part of an ongoing renovation project the pool has been drained to perform an extensive

inspection of the pool basin which was discovered to have a crack. The assessment is being conducted as a result of a crack discovered in the pool basin that has been visible for some time and has been monitored to determine its impact. Recently, water loss had accelerated to a point where further investigation was warranted. Youth programming (including Swim Team) hours will be effected. Alternate training locations and times were shared with participants during the week of May 20th. Adult programming is similarly impacted. General and lap swim participants are encouraged to visit similar program times at other NYC Parks' indoor pool locations. The Honeys and Bears programming was provided with alternate swim times at other NYC Parks indoor pool locations beginning the week of May 20th. Hansborough Management and facility staff can provide members with additional information on alternative sites, classes and Lap Swim hours. Additional questions can be answered by staff at (212) 234-9601. NYC Park's website can be accessed for any changes or updates to the schedule.

The re-opening timeline will be made public as soon as it becomes available. Access to the rest of the center will not be impacted due to the work. Patrons with indoor pool needs, are encouraged to use NYC Parks' other indoor pools in Manhattan and the Bronx. The three nearest NYC Parks facilities with indoor pools are Recreation Center 54, located at 348 East 54th Street in Manhattan, Gertrude Ederle Recreation Center, located at 232 West 60th Street in Manhattan, and St. Mary's Recreation Center, located at 450 St. Ann's Avenue in the Bronx.

**Outcome:** Committee members voted unanimously to provide the letters of support.

#### **E. Julius Tajiddin - A. Philip Randolph Square**

Julius Tajiddin is proposing the staging of a performance entitled "Songs of My Father - a Lost Chapter in Rhythm and Blues Rediscovered". A. Philip Randolph Square, located at 117th Street between Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd. and St. Nicholas Avenue, is the suggested site. The solo performance featuring Mr. Tajiddin would serve to provide entertaining and educational programming to promote greater positive utilization of the park. The play conveys an "oral summary of the life and music of Julius' father, Julius Dixon, as told by his son Julius Tajiddin". Mr. Dixon, a song writer and Harlem music industry legend was the creator of the famed 1950's song "Lollipop", among other major hits. In addition, the performance will also include live performances from the New Amsterdam Music Association (NAMA).

It is proposed that the park benches be temporarily removed for the performance and wooden planks be placed on top of the existing cobblestone to provide circular seating. Lighting and installation of portable bleachers for additional seating are also recommended.

**Outcome:** This item was not voted on. The Committee has requested that pending documentation to substantiate community support for the proposed project be submitted in the form of letters of support from local area tenant associations, block associations, churches, mosques, schools and resident petitions, elected officials and other stakeholders.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

### **A. Colonel Charles Young Playground - tabled**

## **B. FDNY Smokehouse Community Event - Colonel Charles Young Playground**

The proposed event would be a direct response to the tragic and horrific May 8th fire on 142nd Street and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd. that took the lives of the Pollidore family.

The Committee will request a presentation by the FDNY Fire Safety Education Program which will include the Smokehouse. The fire prevention program is designed to eliminate residential fire deaths in New York City. Fire deaths have dropped steadily during the past decades and studies have shown that there is a direct link to strong public education programs. The goal of FDNY instructors is to continually educate the public with critical lifesaving strategies that focus on fire prevention, with a special focus on the City's most vulnerable populations and at-risk communities. The Fire Safety Education Unit is specially trained to conduct public education and community outreach. The site of the proposed event will be Colonel Young Playground which is proximal to the site of the tragic fire. The Committee will collaborate with the FDNY and Parks to bring the event to fruition.

**Outcome:** The Committee voted unanimously to support the youth oriented event. Local area schools will be contacted. The proposed dates are Monday, June 24th or Thursday, June 27th from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm (including set up and breakdown for the FDNY Mobile Fire Safety Experience Trailer aka "Smokehouse". Brochures and Refreshments will be provided; chips, water and juice. The designated site is the Colonel Charles Young Playground located from 143rd to 145th Streets between Malcolm X Blvd. and the Harlem River Drive.

## **I. Old Business**

### **a. Updates:**

- i. Seneca Village Task Force - Central Park Conservancy will be installing 16 digital and interactive signs throughout the foot print of the historic village, which was razed in 1857 to make way for Central Park. The signs will be posted during this summer. A launching activity will be planned for this coming fall. The planning meeting will be held June 27th with the members of the Task Force.
- ii. Harlem African Burial Ground - update is pending regarding the buried human remains, to date remains are still on-site and are pending respectful relocation - info can be reviewed in Mayoral document CEQR No. 16DME011M -
- iii. Parks - Playground Associates requested for Colonel Charles Young Playground, Courtney Callendar Playground and Fred Samuels Playground were discussed. Parks informed that Fred Samuels currently has safety issues and would not be considered at this time. Courtney Callendar was disqualified because it does not have a comfort station. It was also advised that Councilman Perkins' office be contacted to assist with funding for a playground associate for Colonel Charles Young Playground as Parks reportedly does not have a funding line for this park.
- iv. Byrd Classic Park Renaming - Deputy Commissioner Castro's office has received additional supporting documentation and is presently reviewing the request and will provide a determination by June

- v. Nelson Mandela Garden - The Gardners are awaiting a June 17th court hearing to obtain a restraining order to stop the housing development.
- vi. Joseph Daniel Wilson Memorial Garden - pending purchase transaction by the City which is expected to take place on or before fall 2019.
- vii. A. Philip Randolph Square - (The Alliance)

People Make Parks (PMP) is a joint project of Hester Street Collaborative (HSC) and Partnerships for Parks (PFP) to help communities participate in the design of their parks. When citizens engage with government and weigh in on park design, government builds better parks, and the public continues to enjoy and care for places they helped make.

PMP supports collaboration in park design between invested communities and the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation (NYC Parks), encouraging a diversity of participants to lead in the creation of meaningful places. A. Philip Randolph Square Neighborhood Alliance has partnered with Design Wild, a non-profit organization, to develop a suite of small participatory actions and exercises designed to gather input from a diverse cross-section of the community. A letter of support to facilitate a visioning plan for A. Philip Randolph Square is being requested. Members of the Alliance received the requisite training to lead participatory activities and develop priorities for the Square in the community interest. The Alliance entered into a contract with PMP program to produce a Visioning Report by October 2019. The Alliance intends to use the visioning plan as a tool to drive advocacy for public and private investment for the proposed capital project. - Pending receipt of requested support substantiating documents - Chair will take request to EC for determination.

## II. Old Business

### III. Voting Items:

- a. Hansborough Honeys and Bears Letter of Support 4 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions
- b. Julius Tajiddin - A. Philip Randolph Square Performance Letter of Support - tabled pending supporting documentation
- c. Colonel Charles Young Playground Ball Field Renovation - tabled pending further information from Parks on move from proposed project status to capital project
- d. FDNY Smokehouse Community Event - Colonel Charles Young Playground 4 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions

## IV. New Business

### V. Announcements - Parks provided a copy of the Playground Associate Job Posting

The Committee **did have quorum**, **four** of the now six standing members were in attendance. No items were voted on. The Committee strongly suggests that members attend to achieve quorum for all future meetings.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:41 pm.  
~Respectfully submitted by Parks and Recreation Chair, Karen Horry~