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THE CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD SIX
211 EAST 43RD STREET, SUITE 1404
NEW YORK, NY 10017

**Manhattan Community Board Six
Parks, Landmarks and Cultural Affairs Committee
January 2, 2019, 7:00 PM
NYU School of Dentistry, 433 1st Avenue, Room 220**

Meeting Minutes

Present: Pamela Vassil (Chair), Mark Thompson (Vice Chair), Martin Barrett, Adam Hartke, Aaron Humphrey, Rajesh Nayar, Gary Papush, Reshma Patel, Kathy Thompson, Dean Stefanides

Excused: Amelia Acosta, Matt Bondy, Gene Santoro, Ronnie White, Samuel Albert

Guests: Chris Noel, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR); Claude L. Winfield, Manhattan Community Board Six Member (CB6); Jack Collins, East End Hockey Association; Jan Armstrong, Stuyvesant Park Neighborhood Association; Lou Sepersky, CB6 Member; Leslie Peoples, DPR; Chris Crowley, DPR; Katherine R. Bridges; DPR; Christopher Kay, Manhattan Community District Six (CD6) Resident; Deb Mendel, CD6 Resident; Wesley Hamilton, DPR; Vitaly Filipchenko, CD6 Resident; Ashley Kuenneke, Partnerships for Parks; Maria Rocha-Buschel, *Town & Village*; Meryl Shapiro, CD6 Resident; Courtesy Bird; CD6 Resident; Karen Keavey, CD6 Resident; J. Heit, CD6 Resident; Steven Diaz, CD6 Resident; Pauline Yablonski, CD6 Resident; Jozsef Paolicelli, CD6 Resident; Linda Yablonski, CD6 Resident; Maritza Osorio, CD6 Resident; Yvette Brown, CD6 Resident; Steve Simon, DPR; Keith Conboy, CD6 Resident; William Doble, CD6 Resident

Call to Order and Adoption of the Agenda/Previous Meeting's Minutes

Chairperson Pam Vassil called meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Dean Stefanides made a motion to adopt agenda; seconded by Aaron Humphrey and passed.

Adam Hartke made a motion to accept the November 8, 2018 minutes; it was seconded by Dean Stefanides and passed.

Committee Business

The Chair asked all committee members to introduce themselves.

Agenda Item #1: Presentation on schematic drawings for Bellevue South Park

Chris Crowley of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) presented a new plan for Bellevue South Park. He described the design plan as being four major areas: the reconstruction of the playground, reconstruction of the basketball court, construction of the dog run, and providing a better surface for walking and wheelchairs. There were questions about lack of inclusion of comments and designs that the working group had conducted. Questions were raised about lighting and safety (at Mt. Carmel Place/26th Street corner), fencing being kept in place that blocked sight lines, small size of the dog run (request for more space), smoking and drugs, and the removal of shrubs for safety. The Parks representative indicated that in general parks require reconstruction every 20 to 30 years.

Steve Simon from DPR spoke of the history of funding for the project. He indicated that when Council Member Rosie Mendez established the funding it was for the items they presented. Questions included the following:

Question: Could an all-weather fountain be installed? Answer: This is currently being tested elsewhere.

Question: Why was the goal of removing fencing not met? Answer: Fencing is required.

Question: Can daytime lights be installed in shaded areas? Answer: Lights are a New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) issue.

Question: Can the dog run be expanded? Answer: DPR will review.

Question: Can a community garden be created? Answer: DPR will review.

Question: Can fenced in areas be made into a usable Zen garden rather than fenced in planters? Answer: DPR will review.

Question: Can a Little Free Library be installed? Answer: It would have to go through DPR channels.

The chair, Pam Vassil asked the group to meet together (scheduled for 1/5/19 and come up with list of wants, then meet with Steve Simon (who agreed) before the next committee meeting, then return for a follow up presentation and possible resolution on the plans.

Mark Thompson suggested that the issue of lighting will be discussed at CB6's District Service Cabinet Meeting.

More details on these schematic drawings will be included on the CB6 website once they become available.

Agenda Item #2: Discussion on new locations for Little Free Libraries

Kathy Thompson discussed the need for more Little Free Library locations, stewardship, locating them in public spaces and on office buildings and in plazas, at houses of

worship, and at coops and condos. She indicated that there was interest in naming the library location in Stuyvesant Square Park after Todd Bol, the founder of the Little Free Library idea. She indicated that the site had a full contingent of books, mainly for children. The committee applauded Ms. Thompson for her efforts in establishing the Little Free Library. She will be moving to Malaysia soon.

Agenda Item #3: Report from the Department of Parks and Recreation

Wesley Hamilton of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) reported on the Parks inspection program and how local ratings have improved (the ratings being based on overall park conditions as well as cleanliness). He indicated that parks in Manhattan Community District Six had a 95.3 rating for overall park conditions, which is up 7% from the prior year, as well as a 97.7 rating on cleanliness. He also mentioned that Sutton Place Park should open late spring/early summer while Glick Park (East River Esplanade Park) and the Con Ed Pier have no update and no delays. He will check on the status of Albano Park (it appears to be in procurement). Ralph Bunche Park is a long-time item on the budget priorities; especially with regards to the discussion of bluestone (Wesley will revisit the bluestone issue).

Agenda Item #4: Report on a meeting about St. Vartan Park

Reshma Patel gave a report on the St Vartan meeting of 11/28/18. She passed out a summary of the report from the meeting (which will be included as an addendum to these minutes), which includes new surface, a track, cobblestone replacement, changing lights, adding fitness equipment, and adding recycling bins (the bins will be added to District Service Cabinet meeting agenda).

Kathy Thompson asked why DOT is in charge of lights in parks. Steve Simon answered that DOT handles streetlights and that other lights became connected to that system.

Chair's Report

Pamela Vassil reported that once we get the response back from Budget she would ask committee members to research a few of the items each and then report to the committee as a whole. Ms. Vassil discussed minutes-taking and writing resolutions.

The chair wished everyone a happy new year.

Old/New Business

There was no old/new business.

Adjournment

Kathy Thompson moved and Adam Hartke seconded meeting adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Minutes Submitted by: Mark Thompson and Martin Barrett