



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10
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BRIAN A. BENJAMIN
Chairperson

ANDREW LASSALLE
District Manager

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, September 14, 2016, 6:30pm
Hon. Karen Horry, 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, Troy Gethers, Leevert Holmes and Arian Punter

Committee Members Excused: Maurice Sessoms and Derrick Graham

Committee Members Absent: Kevin Bitterman, Mark Bones, Raquel Vazquez and Crystal Shipp

Guests in attendance: Adeyemi Anthony Mahon (Frederick Douglass Academy I), Kfir Ben-Ari (RDV – Harlem), Pearse Canavan (NYPD 32 Pct.), Peter DiViesti (NYPD 32 Pct.), Christian Balbi (NYPD 32 Pct.), William Cardoza (Parks Enforce Patrol), Jonathan Narvaez (NYPD 32 Pct.), Kendo Kinsey (NYPD 32 Pct.), Miguel Ocasio (NYPD 32 Pct.), Rosa Sanchez (RMR Business), Danielle Scott (RMR Business), Abena Smith 32nd Precinct Community Council), Adrienne Felton (NYC Public Advocate's Office) and (Arnyce Foster (Historic Harlem Parks)

PRESENTATIONS

- A. **JACKIE ROBINSON PUBLIC ART PROJECT – Jennifer Lantzas –**
The Project did not appear before the Committee.

Outcome: Committee will reach out to the Project to determine any need to reschedule.

DISCUSSIONS

- A. **CB 10 Park Safety- NYC Parks PEP Officers and NYPD Neighborhood Coordination Officers** –A moment of silence was held to commemorate the memory of Mrs. Odessa Simms who was fatally shot as an innocent by-stander while sitting in Colonel Charles Young Playground on August 16th. In view of this tragic occurrence, Parks and Recreation called for a convening of the NYC Parks Department Community Liaison and Parks Enforcement Patrol (PEP) Officers and the newly formed 32nd Precinct Neighborhood Coordination Officers (NCO) with the Committee to determine solutions to remedy ongoing problems at the park in order to increase safety.

The fatality occurred following an unauthorized massive gathering of hundreds of people in the park for an event with unauthorized amplified sound.

The discussion revolved around how the NYC Parks PEP division and the local area NYPD precincts can communicate more effectively to prevent large unauthorized groups from amassing in any CB10 parks and to generally enforce park regulations. There has also been an ongoing issue with adult ball leagues utilizing the Colonel Charles Young Playground who are not in compliance with park permit regulations. These behaviors create quality of life issues to the Community, including but not limited to: obstructing emergency vehicle access due to double and sometimes triple-parked cars, public urination, noise complaints and littering.

The Parks Department has been requested to investigate the procedures for permit distribution and to preclude youth groups from being excluded.

The PEP division expressed that ideally they would need their staff increased to 25 Patrol officers to be most effective.

Outcome: The Committee will follow-up with the requested response from the Parks Department regarding the permit procedure and adherence to youth first.

B. 2016 Parks and Recreation Community Outreach Event – NYC Parks Resource Fair

Committee Members Leevert Holmes and Kevin Bitterman and Leevert Holmes are still working on aggregating data on local area block associations and other community-based organizations for community outreach. Chair Karen Horry contacted NYC Parks to arrange to schedule resource organizations and NYC Parks agencies.

Outcome: The Committee's goal is to secure plans and logistics for the event for spring 2017..

C. Newsletter FY'16

The FY'16 newsletter has been drafted and will provide a synopsis of the Committee's work for the year. The sentiment of the Committee was to approve the Newsletter. The publication will be ready for distribution to the public at the October general board meeting.

Outcome: The newsletter will be forwarded to the Executive Committee for approval for distribution at the October General Board meeting

D. Resolution for Colonel Charles Young Playground NYC Parks Renovation Project –

**Resolution for Colonel Charles Young Playground NYC Parks
Renovation Project**

WHEREAS Colonel Charles Young Playground is located on West 143rd, West 144th and West 145th Streets along Lenox Avenue/Malcolm X Boulevard to the Harlem River Drive in the Borough of Manhattan in Community Board 10; and

WHEREAS Mrs. Odessa Simms, wife, mother, grandmother and longtime resident of West 142nd Street, was tragically gunned down as an innocent bystander on August 16th, 2016 as she sat enjoying the use of her local park; Colonel Charles Young Playground; and

WHEREAS research by the Citizen's Taskforce on the Use and Security of Central Park found that there was a direct relationship between the level of park use and the perception of security: the larger the number of visitors involved in positive activities, the more likely that anti-social behavior was deterred. The Taskforce linked recreational programs with improved security by suggesting that an emphasis on expanded recreation initiatives will encourage greater use and ultimately create a safer park environment; and

WHEREAS increased programming and effective enforcement of park regulations will promote greater safety and more optimal utilization of the Colonel Charles Young Playground; and

WHEREAS permits for usage of the Colonel Charles Young Playground ball field will be issued by the NYC Parks Department with priority given to athletic activity programs for local area youth; and

WHEREAS the multi-purpose upgrade of the Colonel Charles Young Playground ball field to accommodate football, soccer and lacrosse in addition to softball will provide a local area option for school, youth and little league sports groups for practice so they will not have to incur unnecessary expense or time to travel to remote areas outside of the community; and

WHEREAS the Community met with Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Executive District Attorney Chauncey Parker and NYC Parks Borough Commissioner William Castro and Representatives for Senator Bill Perkins, Assemblyman Keith Wright, and NYC Council Member Inez Dickens on October 8th, 2014 to discuss the upgrade of the Colonel Charles Young Playground; and

WHEREAS the Community met with Manhattan Deputy Borough President Jessica Mates, Executive District Attorney Chauncey Parker and Partnership for Parks to follow-up with discussion to identify funding for renovations of Colonel Charles Young Playground on July 26th, 2016; and

WHEREAS the Community met with Manhattan Deputy Borough President Jessica Mates, Executive District Attorney Chauncey Parker and NYC Parks Manhattan Chief of Staff Steve Simon and Partnership For Parks to follow-up with discussion of a feasibility study and design for renovations of Colonel Charles Young Playground on September 13th, 2016; and

WHEREAS the National Football League (NFL) is in support of the advancement of this community-based initiative to promote the increased level of physical activity among our youth through its NFL PLAY 60 campaign; and

WHEREAS the proposed renovations and park design will upgrade the active play amenities, enhance the environmental qualities of the site and facilitate increased recreational use of the site; and

WHEREAS the existing comfort station will undergo renovations as a component of the project; and

WHEREAS the community-based Friends of the Colonel Charles Young Playground will provide ongoing volunteerism, advocacy, programming and general support of the park; and

WHEREAS improving public parks and open space is integral to livable communities and has a direct impact on the everyday quality of life for our residents, from fighting blight to facilitating physical activity and better health in our neighborhoods; now

THEREFORE be it resolved that Manhattan Community Board 10 supports the City's efforts to upgrade, through renovations and new designs the Colonel Charles Young Playground.

Outcome:

The resolution was vetted in Committee. Due to a lack of quorum, the favorable sentiment is to be conveyed to the Executive Committee for a full Board vote at the October General Meeting.

Voting Item:

A. Resolution for Colonel Charles Young Playground NYC Parks Renovation Project

Outcome: The resolution was vetted in Committee. Due to a lack of quorum, the favorable sentiment is to be conveyed to the Executive Committee for a full Board vote at the October General Meeting.

Announcements

It's My Park Day will be held Saturday, October 15th – Community volunteers are welcomed!!

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

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

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