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RESOLUTION RENOVATION OF THE NORTH MEADOW CENTER IN CENTRAL PARK

WHEREAS This project is to renovate the North Meadow Center, located on the north side of the 97th Street Transverse Road, at the southern edge of the North Meadow in Central Park. The facility houses park operations and program staff along with public restrooms, and includes outdoor recreation courts and operational space; and

WHEREAS In the 1860s, as part of Central Park's original construction, a complex of maintenance facilities for the operation of the Park was located on the transverse road at 86th Street. Maintenance yards were added in 1900 (the 79th Street Yard) and 1910 (at the North Meadow). The North Meadow yard included a stone storage shed and stable, a refuse incinerator, and manure pits; and

WHEREAS In 1935, under Parks Commissioner Robert Moses, outdoor recreation facilities were developed at the North Meadow, and the structure renovated to incorporate public restrooms and program space, in addition to storage for park operations. It was at this time that the existing brick façade and windows were added on the south side of the building, and boiler rooms were added to make it a heated space. At the same time, borough-wide maintenance functions were consolidated in the 86th Street Shops, while maintenance functions for Central Park were squeezed into corners of comfort stations, concession buildings, and the zoo; and

WHEREAS In the early 1980s, a radio command post and night security operation was established in the North Meadow facility, along with headquarters for the newly-created Urban Park Rangers and Parks Enforcement Patrol (PEP). At the same time, the newly-founded Central Park Conservancy (CPC) began a decades-long effort to restore the deteriorated Park; and

WHEREAS As the Park was restored, the need for operations space to support its maintenance increased. In the late 1990s, the Conservancy renovated and expanded the 79th Street Yard as the Park's primary operations facility. Presently, park operations staff responsible for landscape management are distributed between two main facilities: the 79 St. Yard and the North Meadow facility; the latter also houses CPC staff who run the recreation programs at that facility; and

WHEREAS Beginning in the 2010's the Conservancy's maintenance operation has been converted to a park operations fleet with an emphasis on smaller vehicles (replacing full-size trucks and packers with utility carts) to move staff and materials and collect trash from within landscapes more efficiently and with less disruption of park use; and

WHEREAS The Conservancy began replacing retired gas carts with electric-powered carts and converted the remaining utility carts to an entirely green fleet of electric carts in 2016; and

WHEREAS the project scope of work includes renovation of public facilities, including recreation courts and restrooms, park operations space and site work to support park operations; and

WHEREAS The site includes twelve handball courts, three junior level basketball courts, and one full size basketball court in an area that, until recently, was primarily used for vehicle parking except when cleared for tournaments/special events; and

WHEREAS An unmarked paved area adjacent to the handball courts, originally designated as horseshoe courts in the 1930s, is in poor condition. Pickleball, an increasingly popular activity in recent years, is often played on several of the handball courts; and

WHEREAS The proposed improvements include refurbished handball walls and repainted handball courts, including some painted for alternative use for pickleball (in consultation with the community that uses the courts). The unmarked asphalt area will be repaved and painted with two pickleball courts. The basketball courts will be repaved and repainted. Benches and chess and checkers tables will be replaced, and new bike racks and drinking fountains with bottle fillers installed. The public restrooms and recreation staff space will be relocated from the distant corners of the building to the central breezeway, where they will be more readily accessible to all users of the recreation courts and the adjacent ballfields, as well as the multipurpose room; and

WHEREAS The building houses park-based staff (operations and public programs), public restrooms, and a general-purpose room used for staff and volunteer training and community meetings and events. A comprehensive restoration / renovation is required to address the condition of building envelope and interior and reconfigure the interior space to better support park operations and public use; and

WHEREAS Currently this is the site of park operations activity—including electric cart charging and storage—on the west side of the building. Additionally, various utility structures and appurtenances are located on both the east and west sides of the building; and

WHEREAS The proposed improvements include formalization of space on either side of the building as charging stations for an expanded fleet of electric vehicles. Site and landscape improvements will serve to define, contain, and screen the operational activity; and

WHEREAS Central Park Conservancy presented design plans for the North Meadow Center renovation project to the Parks and Recreation Committee, to garner community feedback on the proposed plans, on May 11th 2022; and

WHEREAS The North Meadow Center renovation project has a budget of \$20,000,000 and is fully funded; and

WHEREAS The Central Park Conservancy and New York City Parks anticipate that construction on the North Meadow project will begin in September 2022 and be completed in 2023 or 2024 (twelve to eighteen months following the start date); and

WHEREAS Central Park Conservancy will be meeting with other surrounding Boards to Central Park;

WHEREAS on May 11th, 2022 the Parks and Recreation Committee had quorum and **voted unanimously to support the project with 8 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals**; and

WHEREAS on May 25th, 2022 the Executive Committee had quorum and **voted unanimously yes, with 0 no, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals**; and

WHEREAS on June 1st, 2022 the General Board had quorum and **voted 38 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals** to support the project ; and

THEREFORE NOW be it resolved that Manhattan Community Board 10 supports the joint efforts of New York City Parks and Central Park Conservancy to upgrade the North Meadow Center through new designs and reconstruction.