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## **PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Wednesday, June 8th 2022, 6:30 pm

**Hon. Karen Horry, Chair**

Meeting began at 6:35 pm and was held via Zoom link. The meeting was chaired by Hon. Karen Horry, Committee Chair.

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Chair, Hon. Karen Horry, Hon. Shamier Settle, Hon. Dana Points, Hon. Tahanie Aboushi, Hon. Barbara Nelson and Hon. Derek Perkinson

**Committee Members Excused:** Hon. Verna Diggs.

**Board Members Present:** Hon. Donald Boyce

**District Office:** Jasmin Heatley (Community Associate)

**Guests in attendance:** Steve Simon (Manhattan Chief of Staff - NYC Parks), Benjamin Nicolosi-Endo (Architectural Designer, NYC Parks), Jon Ernstberger (Architectural Director - Citywide Services - Capital Projects, NYC Parks), Leslie Peoples (NYC Parks Director of Landscape Architecture - Manhattan, Capital Projects), Bliss Griffin (Jackie's Home Run - Proposal for Dog Park Presenter), Paul Jeffries (Executive Director & Board Member, CITC New York City Football Club), Prospero Herrera (Senior Manager, Community Development New York City Football Club), Jana LaSorte (Administrator, Harlem Historic Parks - NYC Parks), Abena Smith (Chair, Jackie Robinson Park Conservancy), Catherine Ahn (Uni(wi)fied WiFi), Fabricio Furisassi (Uni(wi)fied WiFi), Marcus Wilson, Heather, Tefone Herring, Valone Brown, Jr., Jackie Robinson Conservancy, Candice Wilson, Charlene Edwards, Brian's iPhone, Rev. Courtnei S.G. Tolbert and Lady Cheryl Graham.

### **I. Presentations**

#### **a. NYC Parks CPI William McCray Playground Renovation Design Plans - Benjamin Nicolosi-Endo**

Parks presented design plans for the William McCray Playground (Community Parks Initiative) renovation. Located on West 138th Street between 5th Ave. and Malcolm X Blvd., in the Borough of Manhattan. NYC Parks presented design plans to our Parks and Recreation Committee on June 8th of 2022. The \$5 million capital project goals include:

- upgrade of the active play capacity for the park and neighborhood

- facilitation of passive use and community events
- enhancement and addition to the environmental amenities of the site
- improvement of access, circulation, and sight lines in the park

The scope of work will include:

- Project Limit
- Park Entrance
- Trash Compactor Existing Tree New Tree
- Steel Picnic Table Type 'A' Bench New Flagpole
- Spray Features
- Play Equipment New Security Light
- Hi-Lo Drinking Fountain w/ Bottle Filler
- Seating Area
- Synthetic Turf Open Play Area
- Plant Bed w/ New Plants
- Basketball Court Junior Sized, 60'-0" X 45'-6"
- Picnic Table Area
- Plant Bed
- Potential Art Wall By Others Game Table Area
- Plant Bed Buffer w/ New Plants
- Drinking Fountain Hi-Lo w/ Bottle Filler
- Trash Compactor
- Existing Plant Bed w/ Existing Trees
- Plant Bed
- Swings, 7'-0"Ht
- 2 Strap, 2 Bucket, 1 Accessible Seat
- Seating Area
- Play Area, Ages 5-12 Spray Shower
- Seating Area
- Play Area, Ages 2-5
- Plant Bed Buffer w/ New Plants
- Trash Enclosures
- Reconstructed Sidewalk w/ New Tree Pits

To promote sustainable practices, the scope of work will also include:

- Increase permeable
- Reduce storm water runoff with bioswales
- Balance cut and fill
- Use recycled content material
- Improve tree health and growing conditions
- Use site appropriate resilient plant material

After careful analysis of the site NYC Parks contractors determined that the subsidence is being caused by an improper infill of rubble and debris from the demolition of a previously existing building. The debris material will be removed and replaced with a soil and concrete fill which will create a solid base on which to build.

NYC Parks held a virtual charette on Jan. 27th, which was very productive, well-attended and generated a robust dialogue. Community concerns and recommendations for the parks' design were garnered for incorporation into renovation plans.

**Outcome:** The Committee is in favor of the project and voted to support the draft of a letter of support to be forwarded to the Executive Committee and to be ratified in September General Board meeting.

**b. “Jackie’s Home Run” - Proposal for Dog Park and Off-leash Hours in Jackie Robinson Park - Bliss Griffin.**

**Outcome:** The presenter arrived late to the meeting and was not prepared to present. The presentation was rescheduled for the September meeting.

**c. Uni(wi)fied WiFi - Fabricio Furisassi & Catherine Ahn**

Uni(wi)fied WiFi is offering high-quality, high-speed, low-cost Internet service and has previously presented to the Economic Development & Technology Committee (Eco Dev). Eco Dev is planning a public forum which Parks & Recreation will be collaborating on. The organization requested a letter of support. The Committee finds merit in the proposed project, however will defer to Eco Dev and recommend that a joint letter be issued based upon the outcome of the pending forum.

Harlem free wi-fi is currently focused on NYCHA residents. CB10 pre-war buildings also have low-income residents who are need of stable and free or low-cost Internet.

**Outcome:** In consideration of the Committee’s collaboration with the Economic Development & Technology Committee in an upcoming public forum on the topic which would include this Committee’s weigh in on aspects of wifi in CB 10 parks, the Committee opted to give a joint letter with Eco Dev and possibly Transportation, Landmarks and Historic Preservation.

**II. Voting - Voting by Voice Vote**

- i. Motion made by Hon. Barbara Nelson and seconded by Hon. Tahanie Aboushi. **Motion: To Supply A Letter of Support to the NYC Parks CPI William McCray Playground Renovation Design Plans With Two Amendments: Remove Next to Last Paragraph and Add Explanation of Subsidence per Report Submitted to NYC Parks**  
**Vote:** Quorum was present : Unanimous to support: 6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals (Voice Vote: Hon. Tahanie Aboushi - yes, Hon.

Barbara Nelson - yes, Hon. Karen Horry - yes, Hon. Dana Points - yes, Hon. Shamier Settle- yes and Hon. Derek Perkinson - yes).

**Outcome: Motion Passed**

**II. Discussions**

**a. Brigadier General Charles Young (BGCY) Annual Soccer Festival - Mini Soccer Pitch. City In The Community (CITC) New York City Football Club (NYCFC)**

The first annual event in BGCY is scheduled for July 1st and will incorporate celebration of Juneteenth. Committee recommendations include: African Dance & Drums - CB 10 P&R tabling with give-aways and distribution of Committee and Board information. CB 10 will also support in outreach to local schools and youth organizations in addition to notification to the Community via E-blast event. Donation of NYCFC tickets to individuals with extraordinary accomplishments for the year by NYCFC was suggested. NYC Parks will advise if there are any permit conflicts. CITC NYCFC is offering free summer programming. NYC Parks Recreation Division will be asked to support. CITC NYCFC will partner with a Little Free Library installation in BGCY to promote reading power. The selections will include books by authors of color. NYC Parks will be consulted for guidance.

The New York City Soccer Initiative launched the first-ever Community Cup Across NYC Mini-Pitches. The New York City Soccer Initiative (NYCSI) partners -- Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, reigning Major League Soccer (MLS) Champions New York City Football Club (NYCFC), the U.S. Soccer Foundation, Adidas, and Etihad Airways -- launched the NYCSI Community Cup, a celebratory 5v5 tournament that will bring together youth from all five boroughs to compete on the 50 blue mini-pitches that have been constructed by the partners all across the City over the last five years. The free tournament will take place over two weekends, starting with coaching and skills-building clinics on Saturday, June 4th. The second weekend will commence the 5v5 matches, starting on Saturday, June 11. The tournament will culminate in a knockout stage at 11am on Sunday, June 12th at Flushing Meadows Corona Park to determine the champions of the first-ever NYCSI Community Cup. The Community Cup will also offer programming throughout both weekends, including free coaching and refereeing and skill clinics with the goal of promoting participation and inclusivity on NYCSI's mini-pitches. NYCSI Community Cup is being delivered by City in the Community (CITC) – the foundation supported by NYCFC – and its partners. CITC will recruit and serve over 200 kids from across the city and form 25 teams that will represent their 25 communities. Additionally, CITC Young Leaders and volunteers from the community will help staff and support the events and programming throughout both weekends.

**Outcome:** CB 10 Committee will prepare an event brochure Andrew members will volunteer to table the event.

**b. Jackie Robinson Park Ball-field Condition**

Work is needed to repair the flooding. The Committee will request that the issue be addressed in the FY'24 District Needs Statement. Harlem Historic Parks Administration is aware of the concerns and will correct the erosion that is coming down from the field to mitigate flooding and drainage problems. The base-ball field floods after heavy rains, this is compounded by leaves being blown into the park by maintenance which clogs the drain.

**Outcome:** Committee will include in FY'24 District Needs Statement.

**c. Department of City Planning Water Front Comprehensive Plan Update**  
**<https://www.waterfrontplan.nyc/waterfront-public-access>**

NYC Parks was not able to send representation to discuss matter as it relates to Harlem River Park.

**Outcome:** Committee will schedule for the fall.

**d. Hansborough Recreation Center**

Project is still on last schedule - no work to be done this current year. Updated schedule will be provided by NYC Parks.

**Outcome:** Committee will schedule for update follow-up in September

**e. CB 10 Parks - Updates - Steve Simon (Manhattan Chief of Staff - NYC Parks and Jana LaSorte, Administrator, Harlem Historic Parks**

- i. The Brigadier General Charles Young Playground** - The main basketball court has been completed. The scheduled Tri-State Classic Tournament will not be impacted. Attendees noted that the bleacher capacity was smaller.
- i. Rucker Park** - no update at this time.
- ii. Harlem River Park** - No update at this time.
- iii. William McCray Playground** - NYC Parks presented design plans - requested a Letter of Support to move project to Design Commission to advance project in capital process.
- iv. Jackie Robinson Park** - Jana LaSorte will provide listing for June events. Volunteers will weed and plant on 6/9. Clearing up on Edgecombe - residents are encouraged to take photos of garbage dumpings - Sanitation and Police will be advised. Illegal bandshell activity reported. Amplified sound is prohibited after 8 pm. Second and Fourth weekends of the month designated as quiet to promote noise reduction. Promotion of ticketed events in park illegal. Friends of Jackie Robinson received grant to patrol to notify illegal activity groups starting second week in July through October. Metropolitan Opera to perform June 23. Alvin Ailey performance also scheduled.

- v. **Renaissance Playground** - The site is designated as an upcoming NYC Community Parks Initiative (CPI) capital project.
- vi. **Courtney Callendar Playground** - Basketball court being re-surfaced.
- vii. **Brigadier General Charles Young Triangle** - update pending regarding bollard installation
- viii. **Hansborough Recreation Center (HRC)** - no change in revised scheduling, as per CB10 recommendation, to date
- ix. **A. Philip Randolph Square** - No update at this time.
- x. **Frederick Johnson Playground** - No update at this time.
- xi. **Fred Samuel Playground** - Comfort station project will start on June 20th, 2022 through a mayoral construction plan and will run for 18 months.
- xii. **Harlem Lane Playground** - no update at this time.
- xiii. **Howard Bennett Playground** - No update at this time.
- xiv. **Martin Luther King Playground** - No update at this time.
- xv. **Langston Hughes Playground** - no update at this time.
- xvi. **St. Nicholas Playground South** - No update at this time.
- xvii. **Hancock Square** - no update at this time.
- xviii. **Lafayette Square** - no update at this time.
- xix. **ACP Malls** - no update at this time.
- xx. **Tot Lot** - no update at this time.
- xxi. **Dorrance Brook Square** - no update at this time.

## I. Old Business

- a. Exonerated Five Subcommittee - Parks still revising plaque content - preparation is targeted for completion for installation for the 20th anniversary.
- b. Senior Celebration Community Outreach Event Collaboration with Senior Task Force - Event cancelled - Task Force Committee Chair no longer serving as a Board Member.
- c. William Atmore Byrd Classic Basketball Court Rename Request - still pending
- d. CB 10 Master Plan - Letter of Request was submitted to Borough President Mark Levine's office - response still pending.
- e. CB 10 WiFi Forum & CB10 Parks - discussion pending with Economic Development & Technology Committee Chair

**II. New Business** - “Jackie’s Home Run” - Proposal for Dog Park and Off-leash Hours in Jackie Robinson Park rescheduled for September agenda. Number of dogs in neighborhood has tripled. The Group has a Letter of Support from Council-Member Kristin Richardson Jordan.

**III. Announcements**

- a. **First Annual Soccer Tourney Festival - Brigadier General Charles Young Playground Mini Soccer Pitch West 143rd Street - Friday, July 1st, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm**
- b. **Disco Ball Bandshell Live Dance- Jackie Robinson Park Bandshell - Friday, June 10, 2022, 5:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.**
- c. **Free shredding Event - Al Taylor & Cordelle Cleare - 2569 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd. - June 18th**
- d. **The Metropolitan Opera Summer Recital featuring Amani Cole-Felder, Cierra Byrd and Vladyslav Buialskyi - Jackie Robinson Park Bandshell - Thursday, June 23, 2022, 7:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.**

**IV. Adjournment** - Motion made to adjourn unanimously by common consent.

**Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.**

*~ Respectfully submitted by Parks and Recreation Chair, Hon. Karen Horry ~*