



CITY OF NEW YORK MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10

215 West 125th Street, 4th Floor New York, NY 10027

T: 212-749-3105 F: 212-662-4215

Website: <https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb10/>

Hon. Marquis A. Harrison
Chairperson

Shatic Mitchell
District Manager

May 3, 2023

Susan Donoghue
Commissioner
New York City Department of Parks & Recreation
830 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10065

Re: Letter of Support to Maintain the 119th Street Block Association Garden and Its Transference from HPD to NYC Parks

Dear Commissioner Donoghue:

Manhattan Community Board 10 is writing this letter to strongly recommend that the 119th Street Block Association Garden be remain in operation and transferred from HPD to NYC Parks. The Garden is located at 19-21 West 119th Street (Block 1718 and Lot 29) and 13 West 119th Street (Block 1718 Lot 31). The sites are located on 119th Street between 5th Avenue and Malcolm X Boulevard. The 119th Street Block Association Garden would like to begin the licensing process which has been pending.

A NYC Revocable License Agreement was issued in 2013 and a Green Thumb Garden Registration for 2011-2015 for the original garden at 19 West 119th Street. In 2014 the garden had successfully completed their first year in the 13 West 119th Street (Block 1718 Lot 31) site having resigned a NYC Revocable License Agreement for 2014 as well as a GreenThumb Garden Registration Form. In 2014 the Garden made a request to extend the garden to include the adjacent HPD lot located at 21 West 119th Street.

The 19 West 119th Street 950 sq. ft. garden had been active since its inception in 1998, up until its padlocking and closure without advance notice on March 1, 2023. A second padlock was placed on the garden on March 13th at which time all of the on-site chickens were removed to an animal shelter. The gardeners have repeatedly reached out to HPD Commissioner, Adolfo Carrión Jr., but have not received a response to date in their efforts to reinstate their stewardship of the garden site.

The 119th Street Block Association met with our Parks and Recreation Committee on April 12th, 2023, to present their concerns. The group expressed that a transference of the city-owned property from HPD to NYC Parks would ensure that the garden would not come under threat of being closed to accommodate development. They are also requesting that the garden be removed from the HPD potential development list.

Councilwoman 9th District Kristin Richardson Jordan provided a letter of support. The group has submitted 90 signatures on their hard copy petition in support of their reinstatement, in addition to 288 digital signatures on their online petition

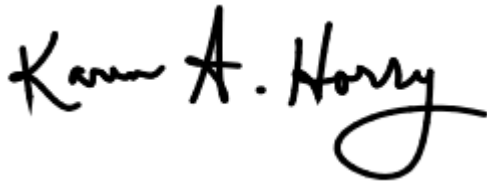
(https://www.change.org/p/save-the-community-garden-at-19-west-119th-street?recruiter=679985198&recruited_by_id=30a9ce10-ef47-11e6-adbf-a5ff05331d33&utm_source=share_petition&utm_campaign=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink&utm_content=cl_sharecopy_35838603_en-US%3A8).

<https://nyccgc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/GreenThumb-License-Agreement-2019-002.pdf>

The garden is a vital community asset which not only provides food but is a healthy inner-city enclave for neighbors coalescing around the art of gardening despite age, race, gender, socioeconomics, recent and generational residents. It is a community at its best.

Again, it is the strong recommendation of Manhattan CB10 that the 119th Street Block Association Garden be re-opened and allowed to remain active and be transferred from HPD to NYC Parks.

Sincerely,



Hon. Karen Horry
Chairperson
Parks and Recreation Committee
Manhattan Community Board 10



Hon. Marquis A. Harrison
Chairperson
Manhattan Community Board 10

cc: Hon. Mark Levine, President, Borough of Manhattan (City of New York)
Hon. Kristin Richardson Jordan, Councilwoman, (NYC Council District 9)
Hon. Anthony Perez, Commissioner, Borough of Manhattan (NYC Department of Parks & Recreation)
Hon. Adolfo Carrión Jr., Commissioner, (NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development)
Steve Simon, Chief of Staff (NYC Department of Parks and Recreation)
Cynthia Guerra, (NYC Parks Green Thumb)
Rachel Daykin, (West 119th Street Block Association)