



Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

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Eleazar Bueno, Chairperson
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

December 1, 2020

Hon. Mitchell J. Silver
Commissioner of NYC Department of Parks & Recreation
830 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10065

Re: Resolution supporting a Retaining Wall Reconstruction Project in Amelia Gorman Park.

Dear Commissioner Silver:

Please be advised that Community Board 12, Manhattan, passed a resolution with 38 votes in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, 1 not voting, at its Tuesday, November 24, 2020, General Meeting, supporting the proposed retaining wall reconstruction project in Amelia Gorman Park and recommending that the New York City Public Design Commission approve the design and urge the City Council, Borough President, and Mayor to allocate funds for a Phase II project to complete work beyond the scope of this Project, including additional attention to the retaining walls & stairs and re-landscaping the lower portion of Amelia Gorman Park.

Whereas: Amelia Gorman Park is located on two levels between W. 189th & W. 190th Streets: an upper plaza along Wadsworth Terrace atop a retaining wall built in the 1930s and a winding path descending through the landscaped area to Broadway; and

Whereas: There was a partial collapse of the retaining wall cladding in March 2017, resulting in closing the lower part of the park to the public due to the danger from using the undermined walkway and the possibility of an additional collapse of the retaining wall; and

Whereas: The partially denuded slope has caused erosion and soil run-off, which has clogged drainage structures, and the closed frontage along Broadway is overgrown, and Parks periodically clears it as staffing allows; and

Whereas: The lower park closure has resulted in the loss of both an area of pleasant respite and a vital pedestrian thoroughfare, and has allowed a periodic flourishing of overgrowth; and

Whereas: The NYC Parks Department presented on 11/10/2020 to Community Board 12, Manhattan's Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee a plan to reconstruct and stabilize the collapsed stone façade and add scuppers for drainage to alleviate water seepage into the stone façade as part of a Mayoral-funded citywide retaining wall reconstruction project; and

Whereas: Any trees removed will be replaced per NYC Parks guidelines; and

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Whereas: This Project is considered a replacement in kind, is budgeted at \$760,000, and is expected to be completed by July 2021; and

Whereas: The proposed repairs will extend the useful life of the retaining wall by an estimated 25-30 years but will focus only on the parts of the wall in most dire need of attention, and the Project's overgrowth mitigation will improve sightlines and help somewhat with erosion control but falls far short of a much-needed complete re-landscaping; a Phase II project for additional attention to the retaining walls & stairs and the lower park would still be required, now, therefore, be it

Resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan supports the proposed retaining wall reconstruction project in Amelia Gorman Park and recommends that the New York City Public Design Commission approved the design should it come before them for review; and be it further

Resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan urges the City Council, Borough President, and Mayor to allocate funds for a Phase II project to complete work beyond this Project's scope, including additional attention to the retaining walls & stairs and re-landscaping the lower portion of Amelia Gorman Park.

Sincerely,



Eleazar Bueno
Chairperson

cc: Hon. William Castro, Borough Commissioner NYC Parks
Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressman
Ms. Jennifer Hoppa, Northern Manhattan Parks Administrator

Hon. Robert Jackson, State Senator
Hon. Brian Benjamin, State Senator
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly Member
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member
Hon. Lorraine Grillo, DDC Commissioner
Hon. Signe Nielsen, Commissioner NYC PDC

W. J. P.