

Community Board 12 Parks and Culture Committee – 10/11/2022 (on Zoom)

Present: Elizabeth Lorris Ritter (Chair); Nobles Crawford (Assistant Chair); Daniel Bonilla; Barbara Frazier, Alexis Marnel (public member); Nayma Silver (public member). **Excused:** Sally Fisher; Mansita Diawara. **Absent:** Maria Del Valle; Jumirna Alcober-Ramirez. **Other Board Members:** Steve Simon. **Institutions & Organizations represented:** Jennifer Hoppa, NYC Parks; Catherine Hughes, Morris-Jumel Mansion; Bob Barnett, Harlem River Community Rowing; Cassandre Collazo, RING & Inwood Girl Scouts; Steve Harris & Roxanna Petzold, Inwood Canoe Club; Michael Horwitz, NYRP; Christina Alphonso, Met/Cloisters; Alexander Campos, Hispanic Society Museum & Library; Stephanie, Riverside Parks Conservancy; Alexis Aurigemma & Armando Ramos, Friends of J. Hood Wright Park; Eligio (“Leo”) Reynoso, Washington Heights Tennis Association; Pat Courtney, Volunteers for Isham Park. **Other Attendees:** Masashi Borges-Silva; Nathan Benjamin, Evelyn Garcia, Ciaran Byrne; Evelyn Garcia; Anays <no lastname given>; Jose <no lastname given>; Julia Chu; Nathan Benjamin; M. Ford; and two members of the public attending by phone who did not identify themselves by name.

The meeting was called to order at 6:49pm without a quorum and with apologies for technical issues with the Zoom link. Quorum was called at 7:58pm.

1) Updates & announcements from the Chair:

- Last month’s reso in support of the Fort Washington Park Discovery Playground Comfort Station passed unanimously (34 votes in favor and one not voting due to conflict).
- Ann Loftus Playground is re-opening. Ribbon cutting Thursday 10/13 at 9am.
- West 186th basketball project design project is on tap for November, along with the Dyckman Waterfront reconstruction & Eco Dock following public scoping meetings in March and June, 2022, respectively.
- In-person meetings are expected to resume in November. Per the NYS Open Meeting Law (as amended) there is a hybrid option. Those attending virtually will be counted as present but do not count towards quorum. Since this Committee has 11 member we must have a minimum of SIX people attending IN PERSON in order to achieve quorum. *[Update: due to limited capacity at the CB122M office, presentations will be given over Zoom even if meetings are in-person.]*
- December meeting is tentatively scheduled to be at United Palace, though this may change if the Mayor’s Executive Order which allows for virtual meetings is extended.

2) Brief Programming Updates/Cultural Institutions and Friends of Parks

- **Dave Thom – Inwood Pumpkin Pageant** will return on Tues, Nov 1 (always the night after Halloween!) to Isham Park from 5-8 pm. Composting will be by Grow NYC via NYRP. A great way for anyone and everyone to show off their jack-o-lantern in a grand community display, now in its 8th year!
- **Pat Courtney – Volunteers for Isham Park.** 650 community hours to date including work done by 10+ adults and 2 children. Sept. 28th was the 119th anniversary of the opening of Isham Park. NYC Partnerships for Parks has approved VIP to host its 12th “It’s My Park Day”: this Saturday, October 15th, 9am-noon; meet at the Park Terrace East entrance.

- **Martin Collins — Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance** (read by Liz Ritter) NoMAA received over 2,700 tags for #TheGramUptown, a social media-sourced photography exhibition, featuring the best Uptown photographers on IG & highlighting the beauty, history & vibrancy of Uptown Manhattan produced by The Uptown Collective & NoMAA. The exhibition with over 50 artists will open Thursday, November 3rd at NoMAA Gallery @4140 and will be on display through January 2023. Follow NoMAA on IG @nomaanyc or see our website www.nomaanyc.org/ for more. Need Studio Space? NoMAA has it, see www.nomaanyc.org/nomaa-studios-4140/ for information. Sign-up to receive NoMAA newsletter, become a member, calendar your own events & more at www.nomaanyc.org/.
- **Alexander Campos — Hispanic Society:** Current Exhibition, American Travelers: A Watercolor Journey Through Spain, Portugal, and Mexico, closed Sunday October 16th. Museum will be closed for the rest of the season for renovations and will re-open January 2023
- **Cassandre Collazo - Girl Scouts troupe 3205 & Riverside/Inwood Neighborhood Garden (RING)** Planning a youth planting and would like to schedule a planting day as they have over 1000 tulip bulbs! Jennifer will work with the Girl Scouts offline to arrange a place and time. They will be planting some daffodils at the 9/11 memorial garden at the RING. RING has partnered with Literacy, Inc. for a reading group, which includes PS5 & PS/IS152, at the RING on Thursdays at 10:30am.
- **Alexis Aurigemma and Armando Ramos: Friends of Jay Hood Wright Park:** The Haven Ramp: over the past 2 years have held a monthly clean up that leads to Ft. Washington Park and the Little Red Lighthouse. Removed over 500 bags of trash and debris. State Senator Jackson and C/M De La Rosa have walked the path to discuss safety concerns and other issues including lighting and sanitation. Happy to cross promote. Liz thanked them for their volunteerism and asked Paola to connect them with Ebenezer and other agencies (DOT, NYPD, Sanitation) to bring awareness to the issues. Jennifer stated that it has been on Ebenezer's radar for 2 years – it is complicated with jurisdictions between Parks and NY Port Authority, etc. Ms. Aurigemma stated that the sink hole is a big concern and that the structural integrity of that land is sound because there is a highway on top of it. Jennifer is working with various agencies to take care of sink hole issues and to reach out to DOT directly for advice. Go to city dot via 311 and put in request for highway inspection.
- **Stephanie Caban — Riverside Park conservancy:** Covers area from 120th to 181st street. Was at last weekend's Little Red Lighthouse Festival – they let in 200 people into the lighthouse for tours. She will be in attendance regularly at PCA Committee meetings and will implement a survey for summer on the Hudson series next year. Gave contact info: stephanie@riversideparknyc.org.
- **Michael Horowitz — New York Restoration Project'** is the Uptown Parks Public Programming coordinator. NYRP: Fall Fest on 10/31, Halloween, from 2-5 p.m. In Sherman Creek Park with puppets, magic, candy, and pumpkin painting! MHorowitz@nyrp.org and will be in touch more regularly
- **Roxanna Petzold — Inwood Canoe Club:** ICC's on-the-water public programs began winding down in September, following the end of their weekly Open House paddling programs. However, we're looking forward to coming up with on-land programs for the colder months of the year and brainstorming partnerships for the 2023 paddling season. If you or your organization would like to get in touch with suggestions, you can contact inwoodcanoe@gmail.com.
 - Our next community program will be a shoreline cleanup with guests from Word Up Community Book Shop and Uptown Movement on October 29.

- This season also saw the post-COVID return of a series of racing and social invitationals between ICC, Yonkers Paddling & Rowing Club, and Sebago Canoe Club.
- This past Saturday, the Club celebrated the close of our 120th season with the traditional Officer's Dinner and race, where we formally welcomed the 14 new members who became ICC turtles last month.
- We held our annual elections and welcomed 2 new members to the 5-person board.
- After six years of service, Commodore Steve Harris stepped down from his post and Julie McCoy was voted in as our new Commodore. Julie has been a member of ICC for more than a decade. She is a certified paddle sports instructor and holds numerous awards from North American and British paddle sports authorities. We're looking forward to opening the next chapter in ICC's history under her leadership.
- Uptown Paddling, ICC's non-profit affiliate, held its first Paddle Camp for young members of the community, organized by Cat Rock Ventures, an outdoor-oriented recreational program. Ten teenagers participated in a multi-session program designed to build kayaking technical skills and confidence on-the-water.
- We're grateful to the office of Councilmember Carmen De La Rosa for providing discretionary grant funding for Uptown Paddling's community outreach.
- We're also looking for community partners for single sessions of the Paddle Camp project in 2023. Contact uptownpaddling@gmail.com
- As always, keep up with the club at inwoodcanoenyc.org!
- **Alexis Marnel — Classical Theatre of Harlem** Twelfth Night, our 10th annual Uptown Shakespeare in the Park production held in July at The Richard Rodgers Amphitheatre in Marcus Garvey Park, was a NY Times Critics Pick. We welcomed 28k visitors over its 3-1/2 week run.
- **Kirin Byrne & Eligio ("Leo") Reynoso — Washington Heights Tennis Project.** Has been administering this program for over 20 years Currently, they cannot access their equipment at the Inwood Hill Park tennis courts and therefore have not been able to provide their Saturday programming, which is free to the public. This is a particular hardship as this is the time when they evaluate students for scholarships. Jennifer Hoppa advised that Parks does not provide storage for nonprofits or other groups, but such groups can enter into a container agreement so they can store equipment. It is an open and transparent process that is the same for all organizations and groups. Parks did provide access for days that were scheduled for permits and to please contact her to help with this – she will reach out to the recreation division and update Leo. Leo responded that Saturday October 14th will be the 5th week of missed programming. He has been having trouble submitting forms. Jennifer Hoppa stated she will follow up and suggested they get a job box. Liz confirmed that WHTP is a great group providing a valuable service and should of course live forward with a container agreement for the protection of and access to their equipment. She invited one of the children who plays with the program to speak about their experience, but by that time the child was no longer in the Zoom.
- **Catherine Hughes — Morris-Jumel Mansion** Liz welcomed Ms. Hughes to her new role as Executive Director. She gave a brief update on the Exterior Capital project. Probes are being done to analyze the wood and what damage has been done over time. Hoping to have a report in a few weeks that will spell out exactly what the work really will be and when it will be. Projected to have a start date next year. Signage is up that this will be happening to make people aware.

3) **Jennifer Hoppa/Northern Manhattan Parks Administrator Report:**

- Thursday 10/13 9 am Ann Loftus Playground Renovation ribbon cutting. Christening the new water feature before they get winterized. The Parks and Culture committee was vital to the creation of the water features
- Fall movie festival in Highbridge Pool Deck every Friday in October from 7-9 p.m.

Inwood Hill Park events:

- Hawk Watch Saturday 10/22 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Payson Park House
- Gather around the Campfire Sunday 10/30 5-6 p.m. on Seaman and Isham at Inwood Hill Park: Join the Urban Park Rangers for an evening of campfire stories, songs, and more!

Fort Tryon Park events:

- Broadway Berm Beautification Day Saturday 10/22 10am–1pm. Join the Fort Tryon Park Trust and NYC Parks to dig in the dirt in Fort Tryon Park! Meet at the Broadway Greeting Garden at the Arden Street/Broadway entrance
- Insect Art with Jessica Maffia Saturday 10/29 10:30am-11:30am.
- Autumn Mushroom Walk with Expert Mycologist Paul Sadowski Saturday 10/29 11am-1pm.
- Bagels and Bulbs, Sunday 10/30 9am – 11am. Bring the kids and join the Fort Tryon Park Trust and NYC Parks for Bagels and Bulbs! Help our Friends Committee plant bulbs in Fort Tryon's Javits Playground! We'll be working in the Fort Washington Avenue perimeter beds; tilling the soil and planting a variety of bulbs to beautify our community's playground.

Jennifer Hoppa addressed the recent crimes along fort Washington bike path. There have been a series of incidents. Please take care when using the upper and lower greenways. NYPD is doing scooter patrol – checking to make sure no one is going on scooters. They did arrest the person who committed the sexual assault. If you see something say something.

Capital updates:

- Pathway at fort Tryon Park is partially complete. Inwood trails have been updated with a safe walking surface. Bennett Avenue rock face work is still ongoing and is quite beautiful! This will be made safer so there are no more rock slides. Street parking had to be taken but is necessary for the completion of the work for the safety of the area.
- Retaining walls will be started at 181st street section is being renovated. Greenway won't close it will just be a detour not closed down. There will be associated lane closures northbound 10 -2 and overnight. Detour signage will put up around the neighborhood
- Monsignor Kett continues to advance. Dyckman water front next month. Gorman Park starts construction in May (3 months). Bennet Park is under review construction to start spring 2023/tufted nylon
- Highbridge Park/Dyckman Rest – Dog run/playground renovation Spring 2023.

Q: Nobles Crawford: Did we review a new Bennett Park design with grass in the middle? A: It is tufted nylon synthetic due to high volume of usage. No grass can grow in that area. This is the project CB12M reviewed and approved following public input. Q: is this first phase? A: no; all one scope. Comfort station will be a separate project

Barbara Frazier asked if landscaping area in the corner that some neighbors had been requested be turned into a dog run is part of the redesign? A: no; the project is just the tufted nylon in the center and the plantings around it. Barbara asked if the Gorman Park work is just going to be on the steps; A: no it's only on the retaining walls to secure them and make the park safe. The Phas II renovation of the Broadway portion of the park has not been funded yet. Barbara asked a question about the status of person who was arrested in connection with the sexual assaults in Fort Washington Park; both Liz & and Nobles reminded Barbara that while this incident happened in a park, enforcement and prosecution is a public safety matter outside of the purview of this Committee.

Capital & Expense Budget Priorities

Parks has the most requests for the capital expenditures. Parks is the only agency that does not have a capital budget. The projects only get funded when and if the elected officials with budget authority (primarily City Council, and to a lesser extent the Borough President and for certain projects the State or Congressional representatives) make those allocations.

Pat Courtney spoke about Isham Park's stone staircases, which are important fixtures within the park and provide key pedestrian connections to NYC transportation services and greater Inwood, are still in need of Capital Funding even though CB12M Parks Committee ranked this as its top priority in 2019. VIP respectfully asks that the CB12M Parks Committee rank this very needed project #1 again since it has not yet received Capital Funding.

Alex Campos spoke of the need for funding for continued work and infrastructure and accessibility upgrades at the Hispanic Society. The Museum appreciated CB12M's support to date. Already many upgrades have taken place or are in process, including the installation of a lift from the lower to the upper terrace, but so much more needs to be done on these aging buildings, constructed in a time when accessibility was not a consideration.

A spirited discussion was had regarding all projects. Danny Bonilla advocated for cameras around the parks for safety. It was agreed that cameras only work if the agency that has installed them has the capacity to monitor and maintain them, and to store the data. Again, while this is in a park, this project is more under the purview of the Public Safety Committee. That Committee is meeting on Thursday ti do it's rankings; Liz advised Danny to attend there, and also reached out to the acting Chair of that Committee to provide context so he would be prepared for this request..

Steve Simon stated McKenna Square is another park in the District desperately in need of renovation. The current design is outdated and doesn't provide much respite or green in an area of the District that is further from major parks resources than other residential areas. The last estimate was 5 million dollars and it would be more now. Jennifer Hoppa reiterated the importance this project.

Liz Ritter then asked if there are any items from our capital budget list that we want to remove? Steve Simon stated that the shoreline project should be moved to "Continuing Support" as it has been funded.

All remaining capital and expense items were reviewed and discussed to clarify any questions as to what each project or program entailed. Nobles will put the excel spreadsheet into Survey Monkey so Committee members can rank them easily. See below for aggregated ranking.

As there was no new business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:23pm.

Nobles Crawford motioned to adjourn at 9:26 p.m. Danny Bonilla second the motion and meeting was adjourned.

See Capital and Expense Rankings on the next page

Capital Affair Committee	PCA	Board	FY'23
Add ADA-compliant bathroom in Javits Playground	1		29
Renovate Payson Playground & make it accessible; make needed repairs to park house structure & roof and make building fully accessible	2		36
Hispanic Society renovations: roof, interior, terrace, adjacent sidewalks, & ADA compliance	3		22
Repair badly degraded staircases & retaining walls in Isham Park	4		34
Inwood Hill, Highbridge, and Fort Tryon Parks: reconstruct 60+ miles of park pathways & paving	5		17
Reconstruction of the Little Red Lighthouse (foundation, wrought iron fence, electrical upgrades, ADA access, etc.; est \$6.35mm)	6		25
Add ADA-compliant bathroom in Dyckman Ballfields	7		40
Gorman Park: Phase II (to repair & restore the lower park)	8		35
Renovate eastern (Broadway) perimeter playground in Ft. Tryon Park's Anne Loftus Playground and add sensory playground	9		31
Add ADA-compliant bathroom in Highbridge Park by ballfields & Water Tower	10		44
Repair & reconstruct Ft. Tryon Park's Linden Terrace	11		42
Raoul Wallenberg Playground & Basketball Court Reconstruction (Amsterdam btw. W 188/190)	12		45
J. Hood Wright overlook and viewing platform: ADA accessibility	13		43
More family picnic / BBQ areas throughout CD12 Parks to meet increasing community demand	14		39
Renovate McKenna Square Park	14		--
Lighthouse Link (FW Park Greenway)	16		38
Asbestos abatement and restoration of "Building D" in Ft. Tryon Park for security presence	17		57
Renovate/repair sidewalk pavers on west side of Cabrini Blvd. (W.190 St. - Mgt. Corbin Circle) adjacent to Ft. Washington & Ft. Tryon Parks	18		56
Ft. Washington Park Inspiration Point Portico: repair steps; ADA accessibility	19		52
Highbridge Rec Center weatherization (fix windows to retain heat/cooling)	20		55
Inwood Hill Park: Ballfields 3 & 5	21		59
Community Garden: prepare land, make accessible & soil mitigation	22		54
Inwood Hill Park Nature Center: add a "learning landscape"	23		60
Renovate / repair Inwood Hill Park Nature Center following hurricane Sandy	CS	CS	CS
Full renovation of Fort Washington branch library	CS	CS	CS
Morris-Jumel Mansion exterior envelope & barrier-free ADA-compliant access	CS	CS	CS
Renovate/rehabilitate Msgr. Kett Playground (204 btw. 10th & Nagle)	CS	CS	CS
Dyckman Farmhouse: roof repairs	CS	CS	CS
Add ADA-compliant bathroom in FW Park Discovery Playground	CS	CS	CS
Basketball at W. 186th St. lot	CS	CS	CS
Dyckman Rest: add new playground and dog run, and reconfigure seating area	CS	CS	CS
Repair drainage, regrade, and renovate soccer field Inwood Hill Park (at Dyckman ballfields)	CS	CS	CS
Reconstruct HHP bike path (W.179 to Dyckman Streets)	CS	CS	CS
Installation of synthetic turf lawn in Bennett Park	CS	CS	CS
Dyckman Waterfront restoration & Eco-dock	CS	CS	CS
Harlem River walkway/esplanade	CS	CS	CS

EXPENSE RANKINGS:

al Affairs Committee	PCA	Board	FY23
Increase Parks Dept. funding to support additional programming throughout CD12 parks, playgrounds, courts: fund additional Playground Associates, Maintenance/Operations Workers, Gardeners, Forestry, & GreenThumb staff, Urban Park Rangers, Parks Enforcement Patrol, and to provide recreational, waterfront, afterschool, environmental/conservation and cultural programming for kids, teens, adults, seniors, and the formerly incarcerated or institutionalized. (DPR)	1		11
Native American / African Burial Grounds (Tenth Ave. & W. 212th St.): develop a memorial with directional & interpretive signage	2		24
Staff a center/facility for evening & afterschool recreational/educational activities for at-risk youth	3		28
Enhance park safety through design interventions, e.g., better lighting: increase funding with preference for solar lighting in CD12 parks, including greenway	4		27
Increase DCLA funding by at least \$1mm to increase support for arts programming and individual artists within CD12M (DCLA)	5		35
Outdoor learning initiatives in parks, community gardens, and other green spaces	6		42
Add recycling collection and more trash receptacles in parks	7		29
Add funding to Partnerships for Parks & City Parks Foundation to support friends-of-parks groups.	8		55
Repair sinkholes in Ft. Washington Park pathways from Haven Ave.	9		--
Increased use of goats as a better, more eco-sensitive alternative to pesticides for removal of invasive species	10		40

“Respectfully submitted: Alexis Marnel & Elizabeth Lorris Ritter “.