



Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

530 West 166th St. 6th Floor, New York, NY 10032

Phone: (212) 568-8500, Fax: (212) 740-8197

Website: www.nyc.gov/mcb12

Eleazar Bueno, Chairperson
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

October 6, 2022

Hon. Susan M. Donoghue, Commissioner
NYC Department of Parks & Recreation
830 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10065

Re: Resolution Supporting Construction of a Comfort Station in Ft. Washington Park at the Discovery Playground.

Dear Commissioner Donoghue:

At the General Meeting on Wednesday, September 28th, 2022, Community Board 12, Manhattan, passed the following resolution with a vote of 34 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 1 not voting, due to conflict, supporting the proposed design, and recommending that the water fountain includes a trough at the base for dogs, that the exterior tiling relies on a muted color palette that references the surrounding natural and built landscape, and calling on our local elected officials to fund the NYC Parks Department to construct a similar facility at Inwood Hill Park's Dyckman Ballfields.

Whereas: Public restrooms are an unassailable good in sadly short supply within Community District 12, Manhattan and a top capital priority for Community Board 12, Manhattan (CB12M) throughout the district, particularly near Ft. Washington Park's Discovery Playground; and

Whereas: CB12M requested that a comfort station be included at this location when the Playground was renovated but there are no existing sewer lines in the vicinity and there were insufficient funds to build a comfort station and the necessary sewage connection; and

Whereas: In 2021 then-Councilmember Mark Levine (7th District) allocated \$3.5 million for a comfort station in Fort Washington Park near the Discovery Playground; and

Whereas: Representatives of the NYC Parks Department made a presentation on September 13, 2022, to the CB12M Parks & Cultural Affairs (PCA) Committee for which this agenda item was well publicized and which meeting was attended by more than 100 people including more than 70 members of the public and representatives of more than 20 community organizations and institutions as well as a quorum of the Committee and additional CB12M Members; and

Whereas: The comfort station will:

- be fabricated offsite using a new prototype modular construction which is both faster and less expensive to build and can be installed more quickly and with less disruption than traditional construction.

- utilize an underlying sewage holding tank that doesn't require connection to an existing sewage line.
- be situated outside but within the sightline of the Discovery Playground, in the northeast corner of the current picnic area and proximate as well to the volleyball courts south of the picnic area and the ballfields to the north.
- be outside of the jurisdiction of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation; and

Whereas: The comfort station's design features include:

- a green roof with plantings that are both attractive as well as functional for water recapture.
- a rain garden south of the modular unit for run-off and water recapture.
- a bi-level, ADA-compliant water fountain, and bottle filler.
- an ADA-compliant toilet stall, two non-ADA toilet stalls, two ADA sinks, and a wall-mounted baby changing table in the women's room and an ADA-compliant toilet stall, two urinals, two ADA sinks, and a wall-mounted baby changing table in the men's room and a mechanical room, which will provide room for M&O staff and supplies, in between.
- porous asphalt around in the surrounding area.
- tiled exterior with a vertical striping pattern in colors yet to be determined; and

Whereas: Periodic emptying of the underlying sewage holding tank will be more frequent in the high-use summer season and less frequent in the low-use winter months, with the local Parks Department staff monitoring usage and communicating this information to Borough staff to ensure an adequate schedule by an appropriate contractor; and

Whereas: The siting and construction of the comfort station may necessitate the removal of up to four trees, which would be replaced by a greater number of trees to be determined by the established policy if any trees must be removed; and

Whereas: The area's current base flood elevation is 16' and the proposed project will be at an elevation of 21'; and

Whereas: The project is expected to complete the design phase by April 2023, and to take 9 months for procurement and 12 months for construction, with an anticipated completion date of the fourth quarter of 2024; and

Whereas: Inwood Hill Park's Dyckman Ballfields also desperately need bathrooms which also exceeded the funding allocation for a recently approved project to renovate the soccer fields at the northern end, three-quarters of a mile north of the nearest sewage lines at Dyckman Street; now, therefore, be it

Resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan supports the proposed design and recommends that:

- the water fountain includes a trough at the base for dogs.
- the exterior tiling relies on a muted color palette that references the surrounding natural and built landscape; and be it further

Hon. Susan M. Donoghue, Commissioner

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Resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls on our local elected officials to fund and the NYC Parks Department to construct a similar facility at Inwood Hill Park's Dyckman Ballfields.

Sincerely,



Eleazar Bueno
Chairperson

cc: Hon. Anthony Perez, Borough Commissioner NYC
Parks
Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate
Hon. Brad Lander, Comptroller
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressman

Hon. Robert Jackson, State Senator
Hon. Cordell Cleare, State Senator
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member
Hon. Manny De Los Santos, Assembly Member
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Council Member
Hon. Shaun Abreu, Council Member
Ms. Jennifer Hoppa, Parks Administrator