

**Community Board 12, Manhattan Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee**  
**April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

**Committee members present:** Elizabeth Lorriss-Ritter, Chair; Osi Kaminer, Asst. Chair; Mitchell Glenn; Barbara Frazier; Richard Lewis. **Board Member present:** Arlene Schulman. **Public Member absent:** Natalie Espino (excused). **Other Attendees:** Sandra Garcia-Betancourt, Sugar Hill Museum of Art & Storytelling; John Dureba & Sara Fisher, Friends of Inwood Hill Park; Joel Yoffie; Carina Rivera, City Harvest; Laird Kelly & Steve Nevris, Inwood Canoe Club; Denise Meagher & Robert Burke, Hudson River Community Sailing; Ellen Macnow & Jennifer Hoppa, NYC Department of Parks & Recreation; Betsy Haggerty; Obed Fulcar, Friends of Sherman Creek.

**1. The Chair called the meeting at 7:15pm with announcements & updates:**

- Last month's reso regarding the Javits Playground design concept passed overwhelmingly (24 votes in favor, none opposed, 3 abstentions).
- The Department of Cultural Affairs has a new capacity-building grant, \$138,750 for a 16-month period. There will be one award for each of four boroughs (all but Staten Island; the Manhattan neighborhood selected to receive a grant is Washington Heights/Inwood (i.e., CD12). There is a broad-based effort underway to work with various institutions, organizations, artists, initiatives, and concerned individuals to get as much participation and input as possible.
- The Borough President offer grants for capital funding improvements. CBs may apply or coordinate an application through a CBO. This is a great opportunity to fund prioritized items which didn't get funded through the regular budget process, or for desired projects which didn't get funded through Participatory Budgeting. The deadline has passed for this cycle but we will keep it in mind for next year.
- Sen. Espaillat's Office has organized a walking tour on April 10<sup>th</sup> of Inwood locations and buildings that may qualify for landmark designation.
- Former CB12 member and uptown arts and civic enthusiast Martin Collins will be honored on Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup> by Up Theater Company.
- Due to conflicts with other committees which need to move to earlier in the calendar, PCA Committee meetings may be moved to the 2<sup>nd</sup> (rather than 1<sup>st</sup>) Tuesday, beginning with the June meeting. TBD.
- The matter of a toddler playground built and maintained by HPD and in need of some TLC is referred to the Housing Committee as it is outside the purview of Parks.

**2. Sugar Hill Children's Museum of Art & Storytelling (Sandra Garcia-Betancourt)**  
**7:30pm**

The museum provides a platform for children, parents, teachers and artists to tell, write or paint their own story. The museum is targeted to children aged 3-8 years, though older children and young adults are welcome. There are art classes, story telling and performances for children, with adult and family programing in the evenings being added soon. The programs are all based on the principle of social justice and learning the story of the community where they live. Almost half the children attending the museum are from Washington Heights. The museum has many programs for and with local schools. Admission for children <10 is free; adults are \$7. Annual membership is \$50. The museum offers free admission to all once a month. The museum is located at 898 St Nicholas Ave. @ W. 155<sup>th</sup> St., 212-335-0004, [info@sugarhillmuseum.org](mailto:info@sugarhillmuseum.org).

Ms. Garcia-Betancourt also introduced Ana Ofelia Rodrigues of the Broadway Housing Galleries, who described the Rio I, II & II Galleries, showing a variety of local artists and featuring many art shows. She offered to host the June PCA meeting at Rio III, located on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of the Sugar Hill Museum. In addition, she spoke about the Saturday Greenmarket near W. 155<sup>th</sup> St., and talked about an upcoming event in June on Highbridge Park's Sugar Hill Luminaries Lawn.

### **3. High Bridge Water Tower capital project (Ellen Macnow, DPR) 7:55pm**

In 2009, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) conducted emergency repairs of the water tower's roof after some panels blew off. At that time inspection revealed additional issues (i.e., windows blown out during Sandy, residual damage from a fire in 1985). The Tower has been closed to the public since then. CB12 has continued to rank the repair of the Tower and restoration of carillon (bells, which were damaged in the fire, replaced, and then stolen) as a high priority. DPR proposes a partial restoration and to reopen the Tower to the public with new windows & window-guards, stone repair, roof, handrails, flooring & lighting. This work represents Phase 1, work on the exterior. A concern was raised about the height of the proposed window-guards; it was suggested to benchmark against existing historic installations. There were also concerns regarding the style of light fixtures and the color of the lights (i.e., bulbs) themselves. DPR anticipates putting the project out to bid this fall, with construction scheduled for Spring 2017. Application to the Landmark Preservation Commission was just submitted for more extensive and permanent repairs. There are additional plans for a second phase, which would include interior finishing work and potentially re-installing the carillon and more attractive and decorative light fixtures in line with the style of the water tower. The Committee asked DPR to look into the possibility of including the carillon restoration as part of the Phase I; DPR is eager to do this if there is sufficient funding. A resolution passed unanimously (5 Committee members in favor, 1 Board member in favor) in support of the proposed project; the public voted 7 in favor, none opposed, 2 abstentions. (See attached.)

### **4. May 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Meeting with Public Safety Committee 8:20pm**

The Committee compiled list of questions in preparation for the May joint meeting with the Public Safety Committee that address safety issues in the parks in our district. The list of questions will be forward to the representatives of government agencies (DPR, PEP, NYPD, FDNY, DA) and elected officials so that they are better able to address the community's specific concerns at the meeting. (See attached. Note: these are prepared jointly by both Committees, and to save paper are only attached to one set of minutes.)

### **5. DPR Capital / Programming Updates, Announcements (Jennifer Hoppa) 8:55pm**

- Time Out New York voted Inwood Hill Park one of the top ten NYC parks to visit .
- OnlyInYourState included Forth Tryon Park as one of 30 most underrated but beautiful sites to visit in NYS. The park also got featured in CurbedNY and WNYC report as one of the best garden destinations.

- As part of DPR efforts to diversify the programmatic offerings in Uptown's Parks, and fueled by some of the suggestions in CB12's January resolution on programming and concessions, DPR is working with the Partnership Development Office to continue to broaden the type of programming in our parks.
- NY Road Runner will start Saturdays run in Inwood Hill Park. This will help activate the park, but ideally will also help people find new running partners for their smaller group runs in the forest during the week.
- Bike New York will have afterschool free learn-to-ride program in Dyckman Fields section of Inwood Hill Park.
- C/M Rodriguez provided discretionary funding for Anne Loftus Playground for programming on Friday afternoons.
- Green Neighborhood Program is doing two months of restoration work in Inwood Hill Park please; register in advance.
- NYCares have regular volunteer days in Inwood Hill and Fort Tryon Parks; please register in advance.
- Highbridge Kids Festival of Art will take place at the end of April.
- Urban Wildlife Festival in Inwood Hill Park will take place at the end of April
- DPR will present their schematic design for Javits Playground at the Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee June meeting. A sound study was conducted and concluded that moving the basketball court will reduce the sound emitting from the court by 10 decibels.
- Scoping session for the Inwood Hill Park Nature Center will take place in June.
- Moris-Jumel Mansion perimeter sidewalk and fencing has been completed.
- Dyckman Farmhouse \$700K roof restoration was funded; procurement for design will be advancing.
- Inwood Hill Park retaining wall work between Payson Ave. and W. 207<sup>th</sup> street has been completed.

#### **6. Friends of Inwood Hill Park & Recycle Day (John Dureba & Sarah Fisher) 9:10pm**

Recycling Day, a collaboration between Friends of Inwood Hill Park and DPR will take place on Saturday of Earth Day weekend. Last year the group collected 100 bags of trash and recycle about a third of it. This year the goal is to collect 200 bags, and recycle half of it. This is a big outreach event for spring-cleaning. Trash pickup will take place throughout Inwood Hill Park on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Starbucks, Tryon Pub, and Tonnie's Minis volunteered to help clean the southern section of the park in the morning. Other volunteers will clean the interior section of the park at mid-day, and the Spuyten Duyvil beach area by day's end.

Friends of Inwood Hill Park will work on areas of park reforestation in collaboration with DPR's Green Neighborhood program, and for this Earth Day plans to plant 380 trees. The planting is a family event; the kids' height will be measured and marked on the trees they plant and every year from here on when they come back on Earth Day they will compare their height and the growth of the trees they planted. The group also plans a "Moon Walk" in Inwood Hill Park on Friday evening, April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

#### **7. Hudson River Community Sailing (Robert Burke) 9:25pm**

The Hudson River Community Sailing (HRCS) is a non-profit organization that develops leadership and academic success in underserved NYC youth through sailing education, and provides maritime education and recreation to the community at large. They operate programs out of the Pier 66 boathouse in Chelsea (at W. 26<sup>th</sup> St.) and in Inwood at the Dyckman Street Marina. The HRCS has 14 boats and financed through donations, foundation support, fundraising events, and grants. HRCS offers different programs for youth and academic programs for credit. They work with nine high schools and offer summer camp in their Chelsea location; beginning this summer some of these programs will be offered at the Dyckman Street location.

Total of three free sailing days will be available throughout the season. Adult membership is \$500 for the May-October season, with sails Thursdays through Sundays. This rate is significantly lower than the cost at the Chelsea location. HRCS offers a variety of sailing options, at member and non-member rates, with discounts for seniors, and a lower rate from the Inwood location. For more information call (212) 924-1920, email [info@hudsonsailing.org](mailto:info@hudsonsailing.org) or visit [www.hudsonsailing.org](http://www.hudsonsailing.org).

Members of the Committee and of the public suggested that HRCS:

- Offer an evening free sailing event, in addition to the weekend events. HRCS agreed to do this if the funds were available.
- Ask for participants' ZIP codes when they register for the free community events, and limit participation to those residents of 10032, 10033, 10040, and 10034.

The meeting adjourned at 9:52pm.

Respectfully submitted by Osi Kaminer; edited by Elizabeth Lorris Ritter