

CB12M Parks & Cultural Affair Committee  
February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016  
Minutes

**Committee members Present:** Osi Kaminer, Asst. Chair, Barbara Frazier, Mitch Glenn, Richard Lewis. **Committee Members Absent:** Elizabeth Lorris-Ritter, Chair (excused), **Public Member:** Natalie Espino.

**Guests:** Danny Mercado (DPR), Obed Fulcar (Friends of Sherman Creek Conservancy) Sara A. Fisher (Friends of Inwood Hill Park), Joel Yoffie, Julius Gonzales

The meeting was called to order at 7:16pm

1. Update from Friends of Sherman Creek Conservancy– Obed Fulcar

Friends of Sherman Creek was founded in 2005 by Bilingual Special Education teacher Obed Fulcar as part of the first Partnership's Academy Cohort of Parks Advocacy Groups to provide middle school students from Washington Heights and Inwood opportunities for community service and to create ownership of their local parks (Sherman Creek and Highbridge) -- all volunteer -- community-based grassroots organization made up of students, parents and teachers.

The Conservancy's mission is to advocate for the restoration, preservation, and conservation of the wetlands and mudflats of Sherman Creek on the Harlem River, as well as public access to the waterfront, and to promote environmental education to the youth of Washington Heights and Inwood.

The Conservancy organizes volunteer events for cleaning and planting bulbs (700 planted last year alone) and organizes a summer BBQ for local kids. Since 2013 the International School for Art has been working on the oyster garden and planted 300 oysters in one cage. This year an additional oyster cage was planted. The plan is to plant one billion oysters in the Harlem Strait.

The Conservancy is looking for space to build a shed for the Boca Chica boat, boat building materials, water-monitoring equipment and to operate their educational programming from. With the MTA building a flood wall on the river the storage space provided by James Cataldi will be lost and a new shed is needed. In addition, per the Conservancy, there is historic lumber under the MTA pier that maybe lost due to the construction of the floodwall.

At the January General Meeting CB12 passed a resolution that calls for educational

programming for our residents from a variety of sources, which would include but not limited to Friends of Sherman Creek Conservancy. The organization is looking to start a boating summer camp (similar to Rocking the Boat in the Bronx) this year and will need a base point to operate from.

## 2. Capital/program update & announcements from DPR – Danny Mercado

- January snowstorm was larger than anticipated; some snow removal equipment failed and our 60 miles of parks paths were cleared at a very slow rate. Bike paths were cleared only after the perimeters of the parks were cleared. DSNY sent additional help and 20 people were hired to clear the snow in our district.
- Currently there are only 3 Parks officers from 96<sup>th</sup> street to 218<sup>th</sup> street. Because this is a low paying job many officers leave for better paying positions but are not replaced.
- Solar lighting was discussed as a way to reduce maintenance costs as solar lighting operates independently from other lights and is not depending on electricity. There was a request to look into solar lighting in parks in more detail.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58pm