



**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

Shahabuddeen A. Ally, Esq., Chairperson
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

October 1, 2018

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

Re: Resolution supporting HVAC Renovation of the Landmarked Highbridge Park Recreation Center.

Dear Commissioner Silver:

Please be advised that Community Board 12, Manhattan, unanimously passed (37 votes in favor,) at its Tuesday, September 25, 2018 General Meeting, the following resolution supporting the proposed design and urging the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission to approve the design, and requesting that the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management designate the Highbridge Recreation Center as an official Cooling Center.

Whereas: The Highbridge Recreation Center ("Rec Center") was built in 1936 as a three-season recreation center and a changing area for the pool during the summer, and does not have air conditioning; and

Whereas: A "SPLASH House" with changing areas was built on the pool deck in 2012 so that the Rec Center could be used during the summer months for recreational programming; and


Whereas: The Highbridge Rec Center is prohibitively hot during the summer months, and having air conditioning would vastly improve the user experience of the thousands of community residents who use the facility each summer, and also would improve the working conditions for Parks Department staff during the warmer months; and

Whereas: The Highbridge Rec Center is used for afterschool programming and can be quite uncomfortable from June to September; and

Whereas: The New York City Department of Parks & Recreation ("Parks") has proposed to replace two gas-fired steam boilers and add two hot water heaters, as well as to make exterior modifications including the installation of one rooftop air conditioning unit, one makeup air conditioning unit, and six VRF condenser units; and

- Whereas:** The Highbridge Rec Center is a landmarked building; and
- Whereas:** The typical street view obscures the proposed roof units, which would be largely unnoticed by passersby and only barely visible from most vantage points; and
- Whereas:** The HVAC units do not have a material impact on the historical nature of the view and structure, and any such impact is vastly outweighed by the tremendous benefits for user comfort; and
- Whereas:** The project, which was presented to Community Board 12, Manhattan's Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee on September 9, 2018, is nearing design completion and is proposed to be completed within FY '20 at a total cost of \$3 million (\$2.8 million from the Mayor and \$200k from Councilmember Rodriguez); and
- Whereas:** The project was unanimously approved by the Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee and the 15 members of the public in attendance, and would have been referred to the full Board for consideration at its September 25th meeting, but the project is calendared for consideration by the Landmarks Preservation Commission at its September 18th meeting; and
- Whereas:** The Community Board Executive Committee, which met on September 17th, is empowered by the Board's bylaws to speak for the Board on time-sensitive matters; now, therefore, be it
- Resolved:** Community Board 12, Manhattan supports the proposed design; and be it further
- Resolved:** Community Board 12, Manhattan urges the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission to approve the design so that the project may be put out to bid and proceed towards construction and implementation without delay; and be it further
- Resolved:** Community Board 12, Manhattan requests that the Mayor's Office and the Office of Emergency management designate the Highbridge Recreation Center as an official cooling center once the HVAC system is installed to provide a vital community service during times of dire need.

Sincerely,



Shahruddin A. Ally, Esq.
Chairperson

cc: Hon. Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair LPC
Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
Hon. Letitia James, Public Advocate
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressman

Hon. Marisol Alcantara, State Senator
Hon. Herman D. Farrell, Jr., Assembly Member
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member