



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

Richard R. Lewis, Chairperson
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

October 7, 2019

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

Re: Resolution supporting the Proposed Boathouse Design at Sherman Creek.

Dear Commissioner Silver:

Please be advised that Community Board 12, Manhattan, passed a resolution with 39 votes in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstentions, 0 not voting, at its Tuesday, September 24, 2019 General Meeting, supporting the proposed design plan presented by RowNY at the September 10, 2019 Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee meeting, with the addition of some public storage facility for kayaks, canoes, etc.; and urging the Public Design Commission to approve the proposed design if it includes the addition of such storage and urging the Councilmember and other elected officials to fund any budget gap to enable the construction of the boathouse and public storage facility; and encouraging RowNY to continue to expand and improve its outreach to middle schools and high schools to increase awareness of its programming in the community

Whereas: RowNY has been providing athletic and educational programming around crew and fitness as well as afterschool help for middle- and high-school children (i.e., grades 7-12) throughout New York City in the area of Community District 12, Manhattan since 2012, which are free to 80% of the children served as well as to those served with cognitive and/or physical disabilities; and

Whereas: 100% of RowNY student participants complete high school on time, and the overwhelming majority (96%) go on to college, half of them on partial or full academic or rowing scholarships; and

Whereas: The participants of RowNY's program at Sherman Creek's Peter J. Sharp Boathouse come from all over the City, but the majority (60%) live in Community District 12 and the surrounding northern Manhattan neighborhoods of Harlem and Marble Hill; and

Whereas: The current Peter J. Sharp Boathouse is not viable for prolonged use due to inherent design flaws and inability to float from silting at that location; and

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Whereas: Community Board 12, Manhattan (CB12M) on September 26, 2017 unanimously (39 votes) approved RowNY's conceptual plan for a new boathouse and educational pavilion at Sherman Creek Park; and

Whereas: RowNY has engaged in a vigorous community outreach process including contact with more than 50 community organizations, partnering with five local schools for PhysEd classes in, and holding eight Boathouse Council meetings to gather community feedback for the boathouse project; and

Whereas: RowNY made a presentation to the CB12M Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee on September 10, 2019 regarding the proposed design of new boathouse; and

Whereas: The proposed program would be a sole source concession with NYC Parks requiring review by and approval of the Franchise & Concession Review Committee (FCRC), and the boathouse design is subject to review by and approval of the NYC Public Design Commission; and

Whereas: The proposed boathouse includes both classroom and practice/exercise space and will be designed for flexibility to enable community use for meetings and events in the evenings, will be fully and universally accessible, and will double the programming capacity including for seniors and for para/adaptive rowing; and

Whereas: There will be public access to the dock like the dock at the Muscota Marsh, i.e., public permitted use, though latched for public safety; and

Whereas: There is a need for public storage facilities for human-powered watercraft (e.g., kayaks, canoes, etc.) along our waterfront, and RowNY is in conversation with NYC Parks around storage racks for such craft somewhere on the property proximate to the proposed boathouse; and

Whereas: All the committed funding for the proposed project is private (e.g., individual donations and foundation support) but the project is not yet fully-funded; now therefore, be it

Resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan

- supports FCRC approval of this sole source concession;
- supports the proposed design plan presented by RowNY at the September 10, 2019 Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee meeting, with the addition of some public storage facility for kayaks, canoes, etc.;
- urges the Public Design Commission to approve the proposed design if it includes the addition of such storage;
- urges the Councilmember and other elected officials to fund any budget gap to enable the construction of the boathouse and public storage facility; and be it further

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Resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan encourages RowNY to continue to expand and improve its outreach to local middle schools and high schools to increase awareness of its programming in the community.

Sincerely,



Richard R. Lewis
Chairperson

cc: Hon. William Castro, Borough Commissioner NYC Parks
Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
Hon. Public Advocate
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressman
Hon. Sarah Carroll, Commissioner NYC LPC
Ms. Jennifer Hoppa, Northern Manhattan Parks
Administrator

Hon. Robert Jackson, State Senator
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly Member
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member
Hon. Signe Nielsen, Commissioner NYC PDC
Mr. Steve Simon, Chief of Staff Manhattan
Borough Commissioner