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## COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

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### PARKS & WATERFRONT COMMITTEE

April 7, 2021

The Parks & Waterfront Committee of Community Board #2, Manhattan, held its monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 6, 2021 at 6:30 via Zoom conferencing.

The meeting covered one topic: update on in process, required repairs of the Tony Daplito Recreation Center building.

**Board Members Present:** Rich Caccappolo (Chair); Susanna Aaron (Vice Chair); Coral Dawson; Jeannine Kiely; Matthew Metzger; Shirley Secunda; Kristin Shea; Georgia Silvera Seamans

**Public Members Present:** Nancy Brous; Elizabeth Gilmore; Sharon Woolums

**Other Board Members Present:**

**Board Members Absent with Notice:**

**Public Members Absent with Notice:**

In total, approximately 20 people attended the meeting including community members.

**There were no resolutions created from this meeting**

### MINUTES

#### Presentation about the critical repairs of the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center:

Mr. Jorge Prado, Director of Architecture for the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR), presented status report on construction plans and required repairs of the building. Other DPR employees, including Manhattan Chief of Staff, Steve Simon, contributed.

Current budget for initially anticipated repairs was set at \$7 million, but scope and timing of needed work are very much in question, which will alter the final required budget.

First pass of probing the walls found structural deficiencies; a second pass is now being done.

The outdoor pool, which was closed for the 2020 pool season, will remain closed in 2021 because necessary work was not completed last season, and the western façade of the building is deemed unstable and potentially unsafe.

Additional scope of work necessary to stabilize the west façade will be determined during second round of structural probes over the summer 2021. Outdoor pool cannot open until the façade is stabilized and all pool repairs are executed.

Renovation work is being done on the first floor and again the scope may be expanded based on what structural damage is found on the western side of the building. It is expected that the lobbies and locker rooms will remain open, but work will likely require intermittent closure of the indoor pool.

Similarly, on the second floor, work to requires open up the wall and ceiling to replace steel and provide weather protection will require partial gym and mezzanine closure for the duration of the project. The weight room may have to be closed depending on the work required.

In addition, sections of the accessible outdoor roof will need to be cordoned off as work is performed to replace the stairs and the roof membrane and rebuild the parapet. These closures may require intermittent interruption of access to certain areas (including the computer room) and public programming done in them.

In short, timing, duration and revised budget for repair work are unclear because the Department of Parks and Recreation will not know the full scope of until probes are completed and expected extensive structural deficiencies are revealed. The building will remain open, but these definite and potential closures are needed. We pledged to communicate this status to the community.

It's important to note that the building is not landmarked but it is in the landmark district, which means any planned changes to the building require approval by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Repair efforts must match the design, replicate the detailing, match the colors, etc., as much as possible. Our committee requested a monthly update to notify the community of the status of works and necessary closures. We suggested it be provided in the form of an online posting or an emailed newsletter for those who subscribe. DPR promised to look into it.

It is not anticipated that the sidewalk on Clarkson St. or on Varick St. will need to be closed or blocked off at any time since the building work is being done on the west side and, potentially, north side of the building - neither of which border the sidewalks.

Other topics that were brought up during the meeting as follow-ups to previous discussions or potential subjects for future meetings included:

- DeSalvio Playground: after a very long wait, scaffolding erected by the developer of the adjacent building was taken down and taken out of the park, and fence around the jungle gym was removed, and the remaining plywood cover built over the climbing wall has been painted, but the cover needs to be removed, as does graffiti on other walls. In addition, the jungle gym needs to be cleaned and the surface around it needs to be cleaned, repaired and/or replaced as it was damaged by the scaffolding that covered it (please see map and photo).



- Vesuvio Playground: DPR painted the handball wall (please see photos),



- Flooding at LaGuardia St Garden: the replacement of the fences at the northern sections of the gardens were appreciated, but since then a large puddle is created whenever there is rain. A request has been made to find a way to implement drainage or otherwise solve this potentially dangerous situation.
- Dogs at Seravalli Playground: an attendee explained that a petition has been circulating asking that dogs be allowed to run off-leash before 9 AM. The community member stated that this activity has been a long-time practice and that it had been allowed even though technically against the rules. However, DPR has recently moved to stop it, even writing citations. The group is working to obtain support from elected officials. Representatives from DPR responded saying that the rule is and has always been that dogs are not allowed to run in the playground, but pledged to ask Commissioner Castro if DPR might be open to modifying the rule as requested. Our committee offered to follow-up with the DPR, but did not debate it as a committee or state a majority opinion for or against it.
- The water tunnel site at Hudson St. between Clarkson St. and Houston St: there may be an opportunity to design and develop the space with funding that has been pledged from the DEP, City Council Speaker Johnson’s office, and potentially the Hudson Square BID, but questions

remain about the size of the space in the southern parcel and what is to be done with the northern parcel, as well as what uses are allowed by DEP and desired by the community. Our committee is working to raise this topic for community review in an upcoming meeting.

- Duarte Square: the project to redevelop this park space has been delayed, but the proposed design should soon be ready to present to the community. We hope to hold a committee meeting to this end in the coming months. An attendee stated that the space, including the de-mapped street, is not regularly maintained. DPR responded that it does maintain the area, including the status, but would review the status of the park and the efforts moving forward.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard A. Caccappolo".

Rich Caccappolo,  
Chair, Parks & Waterfront Committee  
Community Board 2, Manhattan