



Robert Rodriguez  
**Chair**

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**District Manager**

## COMMUNITY BOARD ELEVEN

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### PARKS & RECREATION MEETING SEPTEMBER 11, 2008 BOARD OFFICE

**PRESENT:** Marion Bell, Frank Brija, Alvin Johnson, Frances Mastrota, Daniel Perez, Russel Shuler, Richard Touissant

**ABSENT:** Chester Asher, Nadir Aslam, Henry Flores

**EXCUSED:** C. Elaine Parker

**GUEST(S):** John Fala, Arlene Belton, Alisa Brogdon

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by committee chair Marion Bell at 6:07 PM at which point we had quorum.
2. There were no opening remarks presentations or discussion at this point the agenda.
3. Continuing/ unfinished business

#### **Summer Update**

*Greenthumb Soil Testing* – Frances Mastrota reported that Community Gardens under the jurisdiction of Parks Recreation do soil testing. She stated that she had personally submitted for testing of soil from three gardens. The submitted samples from U. Mass Amherst found no appreciable levels of lead or cadmium in the garden soil samples submitted. She found all gardeners in the Parks and Recreation who were growing for food were doing so in either raised beds or new top soil on top of clean landfill. Danny Perez challenged the statement that there were NO Community Gardens established on brown fields. The chair asked to review the Greenthumb letter in reference to brown fields.

A letter written in May, 2008 to Edie Stone Director of Greenthumb was sent and responded to by Director Stone, however our Chairman had no copy of the response letter. Therefore the report was given for “informational purposes only.

*Lincoln Playground* – YES Russell Shuler came before the committee in June concerned about the issuing of his basket ball permit from the Parks Department. The chair, Alvin Johnson and Inez Dickens Office set a meeting date to assure that Mr. Shuler's YES Program would have an opportunity to use Lincoln Park over the summer. Mr. Shuler was able to prove to this committee that his program did function actively. He was able to utilize the park during the summer, however not to full capacity. He was also informed of the date that the 2009 permit forms were to be filed, January 15, 2009. Upon his submission of the forms Mr. Shuler should be open for full consideration having met the mandate for holding events within the same threshold as in the past.. This committee will continue to monitor and follow-up to be sure Mr. Shuler meets his January 15, 2009 deadline.

Mr. Shuler thanked the committee for their support and stated that if he had his permit on time a lot more could have been done, this summer.

### **Upcoming Year**

*Park site visit*- because of site visits to Lincoln and Randall's Island no other visits to Parks were made due to time constraint.

The chairman asked committee members if they had a park they favored, would they please volunteer to monitor that park, and inform her of their choice. It is her goal to eventually have every park in CB11M observed by a committee member.

*Mr. Toussaint, Harlem River Park WALK* volunteer Steward of Harlem River Park Walk (HRPW). He reported some problems over the summer in the park, i.e. network parties. After two incidents the residents of Riverton, Riverbend and surrounds established a "telephone tree" to call the Police Department to control the situation. He also reported problems with "homeless individuals" and drug activity. Phase II of HRPW which was to be completed in the fall 2008 is delayed until winter 2008 due to construction problems. Phase II runs from east 139<sup>th</sup> ST to west 145<sup>th</sup> St, it covers two community board 10 & 11. Another issue is the official name of HRP walk as there is currently a park named Harlem River Park located at 132<sup>nd</sup> St and Lexington Ave. Mr. Toussaint felt that the Parks Department is considering the consolidation of Harlem River Park, Harlem River Park Walk and crack is walk into one park named Harlem River Park. He feels HRPW is a unique river front park and should NOT be merged with the other two parks under one name. Also when responding to emergencies it may be confusing as to the exact site location of HRPW.

*Community Gardens* - The chairman asked Dr. Mastota if she would work with Greenthumb to map and monitor the community Gardens in CB11. All gardens under Geenthumb stewardship must be opened for public access 10 hours a week during the months of March through October. Rules and regulation should be posted and a further contact inquiry telephone number poster on the gate. Until the chairman's requests have been fulfilled the issue of Community Gardens was tabled.

## **Outstanding items**

*Jefferson Park renaming* - Chester Asher communicated to the chairman that he is no longer spearheading that issue. Therefore now the item is off the agenda.

*Crack is Wack Park update* - Con Edison was to report back to the committee on a tree and reconstruction issue. The chairman requested a representative from Con Edison make a Presentation at the October meeting.

*Park Permitting* - Park Permits are due on January 15, 2009. We are challenged as a committee to get clarity for ourselves and then to communicate to CBO's for filing a permit. Grandfather clauses must be understood and addressed for clarification in the permit process. The chairman inquired as to how many other community board are having Grandfather clause and permit filing problems? If they are also having problems, then we should be informed, and ask for guidelines and enforcement. No one has officially stated that Park will honor grandfather clauses. Grandfathering may be a practice but not a policy.

## **Action Items:**

1. Again request that the Parks Department come before the committee to give a presentation on permitting and make it possible for people to file on with a parks Department staff member in November. Therefore, the permits can be filed by Jan 15. Motion made by F. Mastrota seconded by Danny Perez and passed unanimously.
2. Signage – in order to have a better informed community the committee requested that signs be placed on parkland reading “if you want to use this park call this number”. Motion made by Alvin Johnson and seconded by Frank Brija and passed unanimously.
3. In order to clarify the issues surrounding the name of the Harlem River Park Walk the committee wanted to see some research on the official name of HRPW. A letter to both the N.Y.C. Parks Department and the Harlem River Taskforce would be sent requesting research for/on the original name of Harlem River Park Walk. The motion was made by Frank Brija and seconded by France Mastrota and approved unanimously.

## **Announcements:**

- Monica Brown: New York state department of civil service exam & career information  
Exam information 518-457-6216  
Career Information 518-474-8865  
E-mail- [Examinfo@cs.state.ny.us](mailto:Examinfo@cs.state.ny.us)

## **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Frances Mastrota, seconded by Frank Brija and passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:04 PM