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Randall's Island Taskforce
September 11, 2008
Board Office

Present: Marion Bell, John Brown, Monica Brown and Frances Mastrota

Absent: Cesar Ortiz and Cora Shelton

Guest: James A. Harris and Kate Van Tassel

The Taskforce Meeting was called to order by the Chair Marion Bell.

Opening remarks were foregone due to the fact that was an unforeseen ULURP application on the agenda

Discussions and Presentations

ULURP application: Randall's Island Connector.

James Harris, Senior Associate Government and Community Relations and Kate Van Tassel Project Manger Development both from NYC Economic Development (EDC) introduced the part of the South Bronx Greenway Master Plan. This project called the Randall's Island Connector provides for a pedestrian walk, and bikeway to connect to the Bronx (CB#1) and Randall's Island (CB#11M) actually only 10 feet into CB#11's parkland. It is spearheaded by DOT, Parks & Recreation and EDC. The presentation had been made to CB#1 in the Bronx. CB#1 supports this project as it provider excellent access from the Bronx to Randall's Island. Monica Brown moved that this project go forth with the approval of the full board seconded by John Brown and unanimously accepted.

Committee Chair Bell questioned the origin of the name Hell Gate for the railway bridge that was named in the 1800's due to the presence of the "rip tide" following beneath it. Chair Bell asked for historical signage to be made available to the public.

The time frame is design and construction goes forward in the fall 2009 the goal is to complete by fall 2010.

New/Continuing Business

Summer Tour Report John Brown, Taskforce Vice-Chair gave a report on the July 16, 2008 Bus Tour to Randall's Island. Twelve board members attended and were able to see for themselves the field's project, development of areas of concern (i.e. golf and tennis facilities). Dr. Mastrotta spoke of restoring of the Wetlands and Salt Marsh. She spoke of the Atlantic Flyway and the preservation of pollinator rescue sites.

The chair, referenced the "Lets Talk About Randall's Island flyer for further information and said "she enjoyed the tour very much.

RISF Meeting Report – Sabina Ellentuck introduced the new Community Outreach Coordinator Lawrence Vargas. She distributed copies of the

1. RISF Community Access Outreach Summer 2008
2. September 8, 2008 East River Fields Report – these are the artificial turf fields and reported on "cool fill" now being used on these fields, and the ongoing research and follow-up of artificial turf use.
3. Photograph's of the newly opened East River Fields – Field 80 natural surface Field 83 synthetic.
4. The Summer 2008 Newsletter

Mr. Vargas started in July 2008 and gave a short report on his summer street fair tabling and school follow-up. Sabina Ellentuck reported that ½ of the Randall's Island Fields available go to public schools and Community Based Organizations after school from 3 to 6 PM. Relationships will be built with 8 Public Schools within walking distance and meetings with principals and parent coordinators. Mr. Vargas will attend PTA Meeting etc.

Printed materials will be available directly from Randall's Island for field permits. One half of 12 fields will be reserved everyday from the fall of 2008 for public schools and CBO's. John Brown asked what a typical field permit was. Answer PSAL= practice 2X's a week. Public new contact = 1X a week. Forty thousand dollars has been spent on Public School Transportation to Randall's Island.

Chair Bell asked for a list of what Public Schools and CBO's are currently and consistently permitted for the afterschool fields. She would like to observe their programs for a Best Practice Model. Madam chair would like these models to continue, be passed on, and sustained.

On November 24, 2008 RISF fundraiser is planned at the Plaza, more information to follow.

Madame chair suggested a linkage with the Transportation Safety Committee to work on transportation for our children to the Island would be an ideal goal for the upcoming year along with Permit Planning Reports can be filed by R ISF seasonally annually.

The Taskforce must have a Mission Statement. We are a Taskforce not a committee. We must show rapid action to events and problems as they arise. We will provide direct and transparent information to the public as the need arises.

Long –Term Planning - Taskforce must develop a process as to how to determine a community member to sit on the RISF Board of Directors. We must make that happen in October.

Summer Free Concert Series for park land. We should work on a summer concert program at no cost to the community. Perhaps we could set up a foundation to support free activities not money makers but sponsorship. Randall’s Island is our version of our “back yard”. The Taskforce means action we have to Dream Big and make it happen.

We are a task action force, respond immediately and follow-up.

Announcements:

- Monica Brown passed out civil service job information.
- The chair Bell asked those attending the City Council Randall’s Island Meeting (09-22-08, 10am) to please file a report in October.
- There will be a free Track field event on 10-18-08 at Icahn Stadium.

Adjournment:

Monica Brown called for adjournment, seconded by Danny Perez. Passed unanimous @ 8:20PM

ACTION ITEM:

Moved that the Randall’s Island Connector ULURP application go forth to the Full Board with the approval of the Parks Committee. Danny Perez seconded by John Brown

Minutes submitted by France Mastrota