



Diane Collier
Chair

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District Manager

COMMUNITY BOARD ELEVEN

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Environment, Open Space, & Parks Committee Thursday, May 11, 2017, 6:00 p.m. Bonifacio Senior Center, 7 East 116th Street New York, NY 10035

MINUTES

Present: Cinthia De La Rosa, David Giordano, Frances Mastrota, Russel Shuler, Marie Winfield

Excused: Chandra Smith

Absent: n/a

Guests: Tony Hillery, Harlem Grown; Bob Rumsey, Central Park Conservancy (CPC); Jennifer Wong, CPC; Jose Lopez, NYC Parks and Rec (DPR); Craig Church, DPR; Nilsa Orama, CB11; Kieishsha Garnes, DPR; Ricardo Hinkle, DPR; Carlos Martinez, Green Thumb DPR; Joy Gutierrez, DPR Capital; John Siddall, Acacia Netowrk; Kamala Redd, Chenchita’s garden; Asher Freeman, Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD); Eileen Munsen, Randall’s Island Park; Rosalind Barbour, Public Theater; Charlie Reynoso, New York Restoration Project; Renee Keitt, Chenchita’s Garden; Chantal Gailloux, Chenchita’s; Connie Lee, Marcus Garvey Park Alliance (MGPA); Jack Danna; Eric Peterson, Randall’s/DPR; Julia Wagner, DPR; Jesse Yin, Ltm; Arielle Goldberg, HPD; Josh Price, DLandStudio; Susannah Drake, DLandStudio; Sarah Ashcroft, Johnathan Rose Companies; Fred Harris, Johnathan Rose; Steve Simon, DPR

1. Call to Order - Adoption of the Agenda

The Chair called the meeting to Board at 6:05pm with quorum.

Motion to adopt the agenda by C. De La Rosa, seconded by M. Winfield. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Announcements

The Chair made several announcements about upcoming CB11 events (see cb11.org calendar).

3. Presentations & Discussions

- a. Informational presentation on Harlem Grown and Wagner Houses’ Urban Farm (10)
Tony Hillery, Executive Director, Harlem Grown

Mr. Hillery presented the work of Harlem Grown as a youth development organization that uses city green space and turning the space into urban farms. Harlem Grown partners with elementary schools, bringing full-time mentors in lunch rooms. Last year, Harlem Grown partnered with NYCHA and Green City Force at Wagner Houses (East 122nd Street) on the old ball field.

Mr. Hilley describe the process of setting up the farm, participation for community residents and the hiring Harlem Grown does and requirements to incentivize further education and skills building. Mr. Hillery questioned why with vast amount of unused land – instead of selling it through private development – why not make spaces where people can come out learn, share, and produce local food.

Mr. Hillery noted Harlem Grown hours at the Wagner Farm for visits, 10am -2pm Saturdays and Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday all day. Harlem Grown works with schools, often Title I schools, and does not charge for their programming. Harlem Grown underwrites all of the costs for a 7 week summer camp that serves 70 children. Community members are also invited to visit Harlem Grown’s hydroponic greenhouse at their main location.

- b. Informational presentation on Belvedere Castle and East 67th Street projects (10).
Central Park Conservancy

The Central Park Conservancy presented the updated design elements for the East 108th Street playground renovations and will send the powerpoint slides to the Community Board. CPC also presented the designs for renovations at the East 67th Street “nature play” playground and Belvedere Castle (see attached).

- c. Request for letter of support for Abe Lincoln Playground renovations through Community Parks Initiative (20).
Craig Church, Department of Parks and Recreation

Craig Church presented the new schematic designs for Abe Lincoln Playground, a Community Parks Initiative project. Also in attendance were Joy Gutierrez and Ricardo Hinkle, Julie Wagner (CPI) and Steve Simon.

The project’s current status is at the Public Design Commission for approval. Mr. Church explained that the project’s total cost will be \$8.6 million, including \$7.2 for construction. The schematic design is based on the majority preferences for active amenities improvement, including 6 ADA compliant entrances, expanding the stage area, expanding seating in the basketball area, increasing the area of the pool, and increasing the percentage of green space overall.

Community members, the representatives from the NYC Department of Parks and the committee had a lengthy discussion about maintaining fencing around the children’s playground area.

Mr. Church said that the PDC hearing would take place on May 22nd; construction would take from a year to 15 months. Steve Simon and R. Shuler committed to follow up about the funding for the Abe Lincoln Playground with Assemblywoman Dickens' office.

Motion for the conditional approval of the schematic design for renovations to Abe Lincoln Playground, on the condition of maintaining a 7-foot fence around the playground area and phasing in construction after summer 2018 by M. Winfield, seconded by David Giordano. Motion passes unanimously.

- d. Informational presentation on Sendero Verde, East 111th Street Development (20). Fred Harris, Johnathan Rose Companies.

Mr. Harris presented the open space and community garden elements of the Sendero Verde project, along with an overview of the development.

Issues that the community members in attendance and committee noted were: access from East 112th Street to the open space, interest in public art at the open space location, management of the open space, use of the open space by the social service organizations sited for the block, concerns about discrepancies between the license agreements and the space allocated to community gardens in the design, management and number of public access bathrooms, no change to Green Thumb requirements for community gardens, and the designated use of the community room for community gardeners or the greater community.

On license agreements: Arielle Goldberg from HPD said that the discrepancies between license agreements for Chenchita's gardens was due to an uncorrected license agreement. Renee from Chenchita's noted that a 2002 agreement included lots 51 and 53 on the block.

On management of and public access to open space: Developers explained that the open space is not designated as a "privately owned public space" and will have no restrictions on it. The three residential buildings will have the same management company as the open space and the maintenance of the open space will be paid for by the three residential buildings. Community and committee members suggested a memorandum with conditions that the open space be maintained as open to the public in perpetuity, along with other conditions that incentivize public and community use such as wayfinding. Developers said due to several concerns expressed at meeting they are looking at options of public access with transparent visibility to the open space from East 112th Street.

On community room: Community gardeners stated that it was their understanding that the community room was planned for workshops and use by community gardeners only, but at a previous Community Board 11 presentation the community room was categorized as open for use by community nonprofits. The developers and HPD said they were unaware that the gardeners had requested sole use of a community room. The developers asked for further clarification in writing.

On bathrooms: There was concern about the management and oversight of bathrooms open to the public.

4. Informational Updates

The Chair noted that she accompanied members of the African Burial Ground Task Force and the NYC Economic Development Corporation of a tour of Hart's Island, in relation to the proposed burial ground memorial site.

5. Continuing Business

- a. Report on community gardens, CPI parks sites, and ongoing capital projects

The Chair reported back that the skate park at Thomas Jefferson Park is still under construction.

- b. Discussion on East Harlem Rezoning

Committee members were directed to review the handouts on the East Harlem rezoning.

- c. Environmental reviews

Currently, there are draft environmental impact statements available for the East Harlem Rezoning and the Sendero Verde projects for review and comment. The Chair noted the recent oil spill and continuing follow-up on combined sewer outflows and the long-term control plan.

- d. Street tree initiative update

The Chair has observed recent changes in local tree stumps that have not yet been removed. These include four holes drilled into the stumps and "x" marks. Resident Jack Danna will follow up with the committee on continued planning for a street tree care event in the neighborhood.

6. New Business

None

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by M. Winfield, seconded by D. Giordano. Motion passes unanimously.

Minutes submitted by M. Winfield