



COMMUNITY BOARD ELEVEN

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Nilsa Orama
Chair

Angel D. Mescaín
District Manager

November 19, 2019

Ms. Aimee Boden
President
Randall's Island Park Alliance
24 West 61st Street, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10023

Dear Ms. Boden,

Manhattan Community Board 11 supports the Randall's Island Park Alliance (RIPA) application for the Urban and Community Forestry Grant which would facilitate the development of a Randall's Island Park Tree Inventory and Community Forest Management Plan. The grant program is managed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYDEC) "to improve the health of urban and community forests and to increase the sustainability of forestry programs" and applications for the current Round 15 cycle are due by December 4, 2019.

RIPA's proposal explains that it would seek to retain an ISA Certified Arborist to augment an existing tree inventory by adding maintenance recommendations (prune, train, remove, etc.) for the 3000+ landscape trees at Randall's Island Park, and to use this augmented Tree Inventory to create a Community Forest Management Plan. As part of a citywide effort, the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation recently completed an initial inventory of the 3000+ landscape trees at Randall's Island Park; by retaining an ISA Certified Arborist to add maintenance recommendations to this inventory, RIPA will help better protect this precious local resource. Working with RIPA and in consultation with Parks Forestry, the Arborist will then develop a comprehensive, participatory Community Forest Management Plan. The Plan will provide long-term vision and strategy for community management; budgets, work plans, and timelines for specific tasks toward that vision; and an environmental benefits analysis. It will include in-house training of RIPA staff, local education about the role and health of the Island's trees, and community engagement in long-term stewardship.

Alongside maintaining and improving the Park's natural areas and recreational facilities, RIPA annually provides horticultural and environmental education programs for thousands of local students, volunteer events for thousands of local stewards, and 200+ drop-in public events -- all with nature-based themes. As the Plan is developed, RIPA will involve students, volunteers, and neighbors in tree-themed efforts; once complete, the Plan will further guide RIPA and the local community in wisely caring for the Park's trees.

Randall's Island Park is a precious resource for our city. The Island's trees offer a welcome oasis, providing shade, reducing heat effects, and contributing to improved air quality. Their care is crucial to our wellbeing, and community engagement in their stewardship is an investment in our future. It is our full expectation that outreach for Randall's Island's programming and educational opportunities that arise from the receipt of this grant will increasingly engage the East Harlem community and children in local East Harlem schools.

We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with RIPA and toward receiving detailed updates as work on this project commences.

If you have any questions, please contact our Carly Wine, our Assistant District Manager, at 212-831-8929 or cwine@cb11m.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nilsa Orama". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nilsa Orama
Chair

cc: Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President (via email)
Hon. Diana Ayala, New York City Council (via email)
Hon. Jose M. Serrano, New York State Senate (via email)
Hon. Robert Rodriguez, New York State Assembly (via email)
Steve Simon, NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (via email)
Judith Febbraro, Community Board 11
Ryan Sheffield, Community Board 11 (via email)