



COMMUNITY BOARD ELEVEN

BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN
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Nilsa Orama
Chair

Angel D. Mescaín
District Manager

RESOLUTION

Date: December 17, 2019
Committee: Environment, Open Space & Parks
Board Vote: **27 in favor; 0 Opposed; 0 Abstained**

RE: Design Proposal for the Rink and Pool at the Harlem Meer in Central Park North

WHEREAS, Lasker Pool is located on West 110th Street and Lenox Avenue/Malcolm X Boulevard in the Borough of Manhattan in Community Board 10; and

WHEREAS, Central Park was originally designed as an idealized rural landscape, one that would provide New Yorkers an escape from the stresses of urban life and an ability to move seamlessly through a diverse and beautiful sequence of naturalistic settings; and

WHEREAS, The massive Lasker Rink and Pool facility, completed in 1966, undermines this intention by blocking the flow of water from the Loch to the Harlem Meer and disrupting the connection between the Meer landscape and the rest of the Park; and

WHEREAS, Lasker Pool's aging structure — long plagued by serious flaws in the original engineering — is beyond repair; and

WHEREAS, The Central Park Conservancy is investing in a comprehensive reimagining of the site; and

WHEREAS, The proposed facility will be more integrated into the surrounding landscape, and provide Park users with year-round access to restrooms and amenities, a boardwalk that travels through a series of small islands and a freshwater marsh, unhindered access across the north end of the Park — both by reconnecting the watercourse that runs through the Ravine so it flows freely into the Harlem Meer, and re-establishing the pedestrian path that once ran alongside it; and

WHEREAS, The glass facades used for the new facility are tested to ensure safety for birds and other wildlife in the park; and

WHEREAS, The new rink supports East Harlem organizations and residents in access to recreational sports, such as the existing ice hockey, ice skating, and swimming uses; and

WHEREAS, The Central Park Conservancy includes CB11 throughout the future processes of programming and operations to ensure access to residents and organizations of the community; and
WHEREAS, The applicant commits to transparency regarding the identity of the concessionaire, their plans for providing programming access for the community, and the proposed budget for programming; and

WHEREAS, The proposed pool will still be larger than an Olympic size pool (i.e., 164' by 84'), and one of the largest public pools in the city. It will continue to be one of the few pools in the city to accommodate 50 meter lap swimming (facilitated by deployable bulkheads that can be configured for a variety of lane lengths).

WHEREAS, The developers and architects meet with the community board to discuss any changes in the design proposal or schedule and to review progress of these agreements; and

WHEREAS, Most of the \$150M needed for the planned work is already accounted for, two thirds of which is to be privately raised by the Conservancy while the city will provide \$50M; and

WHEREAS, The Conservancy and the New York City Parks anticipate that groundbreaking will take place in spring 2021. Construction is expected to be completed in 2024; and

WHEREAS, The Conservancy is working with NYC Parks to develop a plan to minimize inconvenience and to identify interim locations for existing programs during the construction period.

WHEREAS, The adjacent Community Board directly impacted by this project, both on its disruption as well as its completed results, is in favor of the proposal;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Manhattan Community Board 11 supports the joint efforts of New York City Parks and Central Conservancy to upgrade the landscape of the Harlem Meer and reconstruction of the Lasker Pool and Rink through new designs.