

9 Landmarks Preservation & Parks Committee

Meeting Minutes

June 6, 2019

Called to Order: 6:42PM

467 West 147th Street - CMO Associates Inc.

- Stan and Michele Artap are the owners
- According to the owners all brownstones on their street have been allowed to keep their aluminum frame windows - Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) wants them to replace their current aluminum windows with historically accurate wooden **frame** windows
 - The owners want to keep their aluminum frame windows but add wood trim (as opposed to a complete replacement with wood frame windows) which they say was originally approved by an LPC official (identified as "Victor") 2 years ago - this decision was recently reversed
 - Wood trim versus wood frame is a cost issue - \$48,000 for 12 windows according to the owners
- Community Board 9 Landmarks Preservation & Parks (LP&P) Committee cannot make determination with regard to their request for a letter of support due to lack of information
 - LP&P Committee asks owners to send Committee Co-Chairs the letter of approval they received 2 years ago from LPC and any current correspondence with LPC official(s) who reversed the prior approval so that the Co-Chairs may reach out to the designated LPC official(s) with regard to this issue

Harlem Eat Up Festival_Discussion Post-Event

- According to Elephant Soccer, a sports organization that uses the fields at Morningside Park regularly, there were leftover screws from the Harlem Eat Up (HEU) event
 - Matt, an NYC Parks official who sits in on our committee meetings regularly, says NYC Parks supervised employees of the HEU event contractor as they inspected the fields immediately following the load out of the event and they found no screws
 - It's possible that Elephant Soccer participants kicked up embedded screws in the dirt but details about how the screws were found and where in the fields are not known
- The people who set up the HEU event were not the same ones responsible for the breakdown of the **event**
- HEU says they did not use screws for installation of floor mats and tents

- However, plywood flooring may have used screws for mitigating impact of trucks loading materials for the set up/break down of the event
- Drew, a community resident, says the impact of the 5 day HEU event is clearly evident - the fields are not in good condition
- According to Matt, resodding of the fields will occur in September
 - Apart from resodding the fields will also be tilled which will replenish the ground as the soil will be decompacted - after the sod is installed the fields will be aerated with a tractor
 - With regard to mitigating outstanding flooding issues Matt says resodding will bring the fields level with the surrounding pathway so the puddles that typically form on the edges of the field will likely no longer occur; however, resodding won't really address the issue of flooding as flooding paths are needed to redirect the water to the drains
 - Following the resodding the soil will be decompacted so it will be able to absorb more water but it won't prevent flooding from torrential rains
 - Manhattan Horticulture is doing the resodding
 - After resodding the fields will likely be closed through Memorial Day/early Spring - it might reopen before Memorial Day - schools/sports league will need to reschedule their activities on the fields during this period
 - **Matt assumes the funds for resodding are public dollars but will get back to the LP&P Committee with a breakdown of public/private funds used for the resodding and how much is being invested**
- Brad of Friends of Morningside Park wants to know how Parks plans to protect its investment in the fields and what the plan is going forward
 - High levels from Parks, either Bill Castro or Steve Simon, should be brought before our committee to tell us, the community, what it will take to bring the fields to their optimal condition - tell us how much they need to make the necessary changes/give us a price so we can help
 - New Yorkers for Parks, a parks advocacy organization, is asking for \$100 million for parks - a request should be put in to have one of their representatives give a presentation at our September committee meeting - Brad will draft a letter to New Yorkers for Parks

Letter of Support for Friends of Morningside Park (FMP) - Brad Taylor/Dan Cohen, Friends of Morningside Park

- FMP is applying to be a partner to the Urban Park Institute and they are also looking to interface with other organizations so they are requesting a letter of support from LP&P Committee
- Letter of Support passess unianimously with the stipulation that the letter be cognizant of using words like "sole" or "primary" with regard to park stewardship as to be sensitive to the tentative partnership that currently exists in the stewardship of Morningside Park with Morningside Park Conservancy - this partnership or lack thereof will need to be revisited at the Executive Board meeting in August

Jenny's Garden Update

- Riverside Park Conservancy sent Amtrak a bill for \$170,000, which included reparations for 5 years. Amtrak passed it off to their subcontractor whose insurance company offered to pay \$20,000. The Conservancy refused, got an attorney, and the insurance company came back with \$50,000. Parks was set to agree and settle (since the \$50,000 was about the amount of out of pocket costs for replacing the planting beds, soil, etc.), but Amtrak wanted Parks to sign something saying that they wouldn't sue. This was refused and countered with wanting Amtrak to agree to never spray at the garden again, install signage on the fence along the garden, and to give the community 30 days notice prior to any spraying. They have yet to hear back

Hazard Posed by Bicyclists

- A four year old in Community Board 7 was seriously injured by a bicyclist recently - this spurred a joint committee conference between Community Boards 7 and 9 with Parks officials including John Herrold, Parks Administrator and Senior Advisor to Riverside Park Conservancy, and local Parks Enforcement Patrol (PEP) officers - this meeting occurred on June 6th at 3:00PM
- An impact study is needed for the bike lanes on the Cherry Walk, particularly adjacent to West Harlem Piers - there are precedents in Denmark and Japan which are bicycle friendly societies which have solutions to issues of bicyclist/pedestrian safety
- Perhaps funds from Community Benefit Agreement can be used to hire seasonal PEP officers who would monitor nodes of high pedestrian/bicyclist traffic during the summer months
- A partnership with the J. Max Bond Center at City College is needed to propose a redesign of the bike lanes on the Cherry Walk near West Harlem Piers