



CB9M Landmarks Preservation and Park Committee
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Wednesday, November 1, 2023

LOCATION:

3295 Broadway New York, NY 10027 & Hybrid for Guests

CO-CHAIR:

Hon. Heather Jason and Hon. Annette Robinson

COMMITTEE:

Hon. April Adams; Hon Eddy Antoine; Hon. Patricia Caldwell; Hon. Daniel Cohen; Hon. Juaniros Ovalle; Hon. Carolina Ramirez; Hon. Hugo Torres-Fetsco; Hon. Liz Waytkus; and Hon. Elisa Yoo.

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Hon. Heather Jason called the regular meeting to order at 6:35 PM EDT, on Wednesday, November 1, 2023. The meeting was held hybrid in-person and via Zoom conferencing.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT AND IN-PERSON

Co-Chair Hon. Heather Jason; Co-Chair Hon. Annette Robinson; Hon. Elisa Yoo; Hon. and April Adams.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT AND/OR VIRTUAL

Hon. Patricia Caldwell (virtual), Hon. Eddy Antoine (absent), Hon. Daniel Cohen (absent), Hon. Jauniros Ovalle (absent), Hon. Carolina Ramirez (absent), Hon. Hugo Torres-Fetsco (absent), and Hon. Liz Waytkus (absent)

GUESTS PRESENT AND IN-PERSON

Chair Hon. Victor Edwards, Jann Soriano, CSS PTA, Dena Manradge, and Ijendu Ohasi

GUESTS PRESENT VIRTUAL

Ahn Nguyen; Aime N.; Alex Munoz NYC Parks Green Thumb; Alma Ramirez; Andrew Telzak PS 125; Angelica Villaviencio CSS; Anita Rao CSS; Annette Robinson; April, B Roberts; Brad Taylor Friends of Morningside Park; Brian Russell CSS; Cathleen Roque CSS PTA Co-President; Cecilia Manzolillo; Charmian Gartland PS 125 PA Board; Christina Celuzza PS 125; Christina V CSS; Christine Rigby CSS; Clare Friedrich PS 125; Cynthia Jung CSS; Daniele Martinez CSS; Danielle Hartley PS 125 CSS; Davison Avery CSS; Hon. Deidre McIntosh Brown CB9M; Dr. Liz Heckel PS 125; Edward Jose CSS; Davison Avery CSS; Desiree Rodriguez CSS; Doreilly; Dr. Dwight Manning CSS; Emily Gallo CSS; Erin Flaherty CSS Admin; Erin Patrick PS 125; Friends of Morningside Park; Gabriela Carelo; Heather Hewitt CSS Faculty; Helena Sang; Ignacio CSS student; Ihsana Muhammad PS 125; Iman Singh CSS; Inez; Isis; Jan Sereni CSS; Jasmine Africano CSS; Jason Gooden PS 125; Jen Singh CSS; Jesus Sanchez CSSp; Jessica Raha CSS; Joan Gelpi CSS; JoAnn Garcia CSS; Jodie Levinson; Jorge Arias CSS student; Julie Ford CSS; Julie Mardin; Kate Itzkowitz PS 125; LaRae Klarenbeek; Mitchell CSS; Lawrence Lee; Leanne Gonzalez CSS; Lesley Berson Mbaye PS 125; Leslie Wright NYC Regional Director NYS Parks;



Kasumi Parker CSS; Kate Allgood Cowley CSS; Katy Morgan CSS; Kevin Uno; Kizziah Knight CSS; Maki Prokop CSS; Mallory Craig; Mara Tucker PS 125; Maria J. Marti CSS; Mariana Marron CSS; Mario Suarez CSS; Mario Suarez; Mary Richardson PS 125; Matilda Rosario PS 125 CSS; Matt Genrich District Park Manager NYC Parks; Mark Simon CSS; Matt Legro PS 125; Maura McNally; Michelle Kelly CSS; Michelle Shenk PS 125; Minah Whyte MBPO; Miranda Schwartz CSS; Monique Hanna PS 125; Morgan Family CSS; Morgan Adams PS 125; Nina Talley Edgecombe Avenue Garden Park; Nora Cole Edgecombe Av Garden Park Sanctuary; Rebecca Bauman; Ricardo Ramirez; Robin; Nancy Lerman CSS; Nina Talley Edgecombe; Odette Wilkens Wire Broadband; Ofelia Ramirez CSS; Olu Oluwashola; Patricia Caldwell; Patricia Jimenez CSS; Rebecca Bauman CSS; Ricardo Ramirez CSS; Robin Benjamin CSS; Rosalie R Sanchez CSS; Rosa Toribio CSS; Sam; Sams 14; Sarah Johnson CSS; Sareeda Green CSS; Sebastian CCC student; Shane LeClair PS 125; Hon. Shaneeka Wilson CB9M; Shannon Richards 142nd St. Dog Run; Shirley Chang CSS; Solenn de Kersauson CSS; Stephanie Caban Riverside Park Conservancy; Sue Peters; Tanya Munoz; Tonya Munoz CSS; Tsehai Taitu Alfred - Journalist Columbia Daily Spectator; Tim Shenk PS 125; Tom Gabel PS 125; Wendy Christian CS; S Yael Leopold PS 125 Principal; Yuko Simon CSS; Zoe S Schneider CSS, and Zoom user

QUORUM

A quorum was not established with four voting members being present.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The agenda was not adopted because a quorum was not established.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The meeting minutes from Wednesday, October 31, 2023 were distributed but not adopted because a quorum was not present.

PARKS PRESENTATION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Denny Farrell Riverbank State Park (DFRSP) - Leslie Wright

The track and field are all done. The renovation on locker rooms on aquatics continues. The pool is open. There are temporary trailer shower facilities and restrooms available while the locker rooms undergo complete renovation which will be completed next summer. Leslie invited the public to share what they want to see more of in athletics and cultural department in music, film, and open mic night, and theater. Send her an email. They will not take away tennis for pickleball. RFP is now publicized for the skating rink snack bar. The contract is drawing close. They are looking for new proposals starting in the spring. They are making ice now for the skating rink as the temperature drops building it layer by layer. Shannon Richards asked a question about what happened to the expansion of the community gardens. Leslie responded they hold a lottery for the community garden beds once every two years in February. The 64 garden beds are growing beautiful vegetables and flowers. leslie.wright@parks.ny.gov



The Greenhouse & Community Gardens (DFRBSP) – Mallory Craig

Now is the season of harvest. Guests were invited to visit the Greenhouse Community from 10 AM – 4 PM, seven days a week. A staff will welcome you. Gardeners are preparing beds for the winter. The Learning Garden and Greenhouse at the park will have classes. There are open hours between 5-6 days a week and weekend programming. They have a therapeutic horticulture harvest fest that Denny Farrell Riverbank State Park. Come this Saturday to eat Ethiopian and Jamaican food and talk about cultural responsive harvests. There will be painting collective murals and recipes and rituals for healing. This Saturday from 9:30 AM – 12 PM. They began their internship program and welcome fieldtrips. Reach out if you have ideas.

Riverside Park Conservancy – Stephanie Caban

They had a great October fest with their pop up restaurant on 151st and Riverside Drive. The leaf lift event to gather and jump on them will take place on November 18 10 AM – 1 PM on 148th St. and Riverside Drive. stephanie@riversideparknyc.org

142nd Street Dog Run - Shannon Richards 147th dog run.

They had their Halloween costume dog party on October 18. They put pictures on Instagram. They created their flyer for the Christmas event and are working with the conservancy. You can take pictures with Santa and your puppies with light refreshments provided. Local businesses make donations to their events. The lighting was addressed and restored on W. 147th West Side Drive. The water main broke. There are brand new trash receptacles on Riverside Drive on the east side. Two at every intersection from W. 135, 136, 137, 138, 149, 141, and 142. They are the older style city wire garbage cans. 142ndstdogrun@gmail.com; @dogrun142

Friends of Morningside Park – Brad Taylor

Everyone is invited to their tree lighting on December 9. Details are on their website. You can find volunteer opportunities every Friday from 9 AM – 11 AM and the second Saturday from 10 AM – 12 PM. Columbia University 1968 Gymnasium Protest Marker at Morningside Park pond update – he had a conversation with Jonathan Kun who does monuments. Jonathan is not a fan of any permanent markers. Jonathan said he would consider and get back to them. Brad used to be the chair of this committee. Annette said to recognize that the African American students at Columbia University and that community activism can preserve open space.

NYC Parks and Historic Harlem Parks – Matt Genrich

St. Nicholas Park has begun path work and tree pruning. As of this week, paths on St. Nicholas Park north of 135th on the lower path and north of the dog run on the upper path will be closed for asphalt work. Expect the work to be completed by the end of winter. Question – Will the basketball courts closer to Hamilton Green and playground be closed? How could they access the playground? Answer – There is a ramped entrance into the playground by the seating area and steps off of St. Nicholas Ave in the basketball courts. The path work will be from 139th – 136th in St. Nicholas Terrace. It will be the lower section of the dog run.



PS 126 and Columbia Secondary School playground update – On October 19 Parks met to discuss the punch list items that needed to be addressed. They are working on logistical details for the ongoing care and maintenance with the School Construction Authority. Hon. Shaneeka Wilson Co-Chair of YEL inquired about the playground reopening delay. Hon. Deidre McIntosh – Brown Co-Chair of YEL stated there was a lack of communication between the community board, parks, SCA, and the schools. Matt does not have the punch list. Hon. Patricia Caldwell (virtual) asked who is in charge of the district of parks and recreation and who is the person he directly reports to? Matt replied he is in charge of maintenance operations once the site is turned over to him as a capital project. Chief of Operations are Paul Diamora and two Deputy Chiefs of Operations are Ralph Mussolino and Bonnie Williams. Dennis Morgan, Columbia Secondary School parent in District 5 – He stated he has been on the PTA and CEC for seven years in District 3 said it's not immediately a parks project but the SCA. Use the CEC to put pressure on the elected officials to help. Borough Commissioner is Anthony Perez and is leaving parks to work for another agency. After school is dismissed, the park and field as a whole will be open to the public. The school will be able to apply for permits to use for the field. If you want to have an organized game like a soccer game and wanted priority on the field, you need to apply for a permit.

3 Public Comments: 3 minutes

Jann Soriano – in person: President of PTA and parent of Columbia Secondary School. 1,325 students. Stated nursing staff caring for three schools had a trend of injuries due to lack of space. Calling for transparency, valid timeline, and to reopen the playground.

Danielle Hartley PS 125/CSS parent. There is no transparency. There are no returned emails from inquiries in two months.

Mara Tucker PS 125 parent - The building is overcrowded with over 1,300 students. The space was meant for 500. Space is priority. Ages 4 year olds from PreK to HS. There is a need for outdoor space and physical activity. School leaders have been reaching out and have not been getting responses.

Minah Whyte MBPO – A letter was submitted on October 12 to the SCA and Parks department. The office has not received an update. She hopes to receive something by next week. . He submitted a letter to SCA and Parks Department. Lack of transparency. Oct. 12 submitted. Have not heard a response. As soon as they get an update they will share.

Hon. Shaneeka Wilson Co-Chair of YEL recommend to come together and the Congressman wrote a letter.

Yael Leopold – PS 125 Ralph Bunche School Principal said CB9 was supportive. The school wrote a letter to Parks and SCA for clarity. They were not invited to the meeting. Asking for full transparency and to be part of the communication. Anybody can fill out a permit for after school hours. Historically, the people who gave been granted permits for spaces in the community have not served the community. Groups that have gotten permits have not been made by the children in our community who have been historically marginalized. Demanding for the school to have control of permitting after hours to ensure whoever is utilizing the space is doing so for the betterment of the community including weekends. Five years in the making.



NEW BUSINESS AND PRESENTATION

NYC Parks Green Thumb Community Gardening Program – Alex Munoz, Assistant Director of Community Engagement. (Ijendu Ohassi - Community Engagement Coordinator for CB9 in person)

The community garden program supports more than 550 community gardens across the entire city. Founded in 1978, they are the largest urban gardening program in the US. The mission is to support and educate about community gardens and urban farming. They provide free materials and technical assistance. Teams are made of nine community engagement coordinators. They support 55 – 60 community gardens which are volunteer groups. The operations teams does the heavy lifting with supplies, deliveries, property management, topsoil, and lumber. The planning team does special events, harvest fair, capital allocations, marketing, and branding. The garden season runs from April 1st until October 30th. Most gardens go dormant over the winter. Some do activities. You can become a member. In CB9M, there are 15 green thumb community gardens. Seven are on department property with a property manager with a 10-year license agreement. They are responsible for retaining walls, fencing, and sheds. Three are with the Manhattan Land Trust. Two are with the New York Restoration Project. www.nycgoparks.org/greenthumb They offer workshops and training. Spotlight Gatehouse Garden - 1195 Amsterdam Ave 119th Street is a very active and engaged group. They do annual solstice celebration.

Hon. Annette Robinson – There was a change in leadership at Sugar Hill. Gardens are on parks property. They planning workshops and need to work on providing pathways for membership. They have Spanish translation interpreters and offer workshops and training to help with license agreement.

Heather – Heather and Annette will visit the gardens this next year.

Shannon Richards – Asked if Ijendu can come regularly to give us updates. He said yes.

Why Section 106 reviews of Link5G cell towers matter to CB9 Historic District – Rick Meyer

New wireless towers are coming. Payphones have been replaced by Link NYC Kiosk. From 2016 – 2021 1816 kiosks have been placed in NYC mostly in Manhattan below 96th street. The company was 60 million behind in payments in NYC. They renegotiated and replaced the 10 foot devices with 32 foot towers 15-19 feet above ground. It can be 10 ft close to your window 24/7, 365 days a year. They give access to Verizon, TMobile, and Dish Networks to provide wireless coverage. There are 85 kiosks already. City Bridge has the contract for the conversion. The plan is to install 2184 Link 5G towers in 5 boroughs. 739 are based on revised contract in underserved districts in northern end of Manhattan - CB12 and CB3. In May 2023 they installed 94 towers. CityBridge is behind schedule to install 2,184 in total. Community activists got the attention of Jerry Nadler, a powerful person in the House of Representatives. Jerry got FCC's attention and wrote a letter about section 106. If you build a tower in a historic district have to go through a section 106 review process near federal designated sites. You can argue that the tower will diminish the integrity of the location design, setting materials, workmanship, feeling, or association of a site where they're going to change the character and physical property setting, streetscape, causing an adverse visual effect on the historic building, district, and resource. City Bridge has been operating under the name Bolden Networks. Information goes to the State Historic Preservation office. There has to be a notice published in the local paper in 35 days to issue public comments. The New York State Historic Preservation Office renders the decision and decides whether



or not there's going to be mitigation on the site. A nomination form is filled out for each historic resource, a district, and landmark building information about the characteristics and specific attributes of a structure. The Tower Builder City Bridge is a building that has got information about the historic landmarks. It is up to you to explain why the tower is going to adversely affect the feeling and streetscape of the historic district or building. Type M lamps were presented. There's a bishop's crooks on the right present in CB9. Have historic photographs, illustrations, newspaper clippings, postcards, for context of older buildings to build your case. The Groton Aqueduct Gatehouse is one of the oldest structures in New York. A tower was built without section 106 review. This building was eligible for historic designation at W. 119th St. You can use the M light pole as evidence that the new towers are completely out of context next to a federally designated landmark.

Odette Wilkens - We do not have reprieve anymore. They already started advertising in New York Post which is required by law. Comments can be done in two ways. One can be a public comment without a consulting party and another with a consulting party. Provide information to the State Historic Preservation office. They have been in touch with Landmarks West. Be robust respond with specific reasons. What was the streetscape? What was the idea at the time of the urban planning? Who did it? Idea of the urban planning of the time. Work with Rick. This is a one time opportunity to stop the whole program. Not the same as LPC review. This has to do with federal law and federal landmarks with only a few weeks left. These towers are dangerous cause cancer in lab animals. It causes stress and neurological damage. Children develop ADHD. Radiation cause cancer. City has not identified the areas. FCC refused to review showing emission limits. New federal bills can eliminate entire historic preservation review that is now underway in New York City prohibiting moratoria of 5G towers. The Health Commissioner didn't know anything about the towers and wasn't able to comment. The Environmental Health Trust sent a letter to the Health Commissioner and they never responded. The only legal recourse is the aesthetics and historic preservation not health. Be rigorous in your analysis and research with good arguments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next committee meeting will be held on December 6, 2023 at 6:30 PM EST.

ADJOURNMENT

The meet was adjourned at 8:37 PM EDT.