



CB9M LANDMARKS PRESERVATION AND PARKS COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Wednesday, October 2, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Heather Jason, called the regular meeting of the CB9M Landmarks Preservation and Parks Committee to Order at 6:35PM EDT, on Wednesday, October 2, 2024. The meeting was held in-person and via Zoom conferencing.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT AND IN-PERSON

Co-Chair Hon. Heather Jason, Co-Chair Hon. Annette Robinson, Hon. April Adams, Hon. Patricia Caldwell, Hon. Joshua Christopher, Hon. Chris Johnson, Hon. Veronica Savage and Hon. Liz Waytkus

GUESTS PRESENT IN-PERSON

Stacy Thomas and Albert Myers

COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF PRESENT

Board Chair Hon. Victor Edwards (virtual)

GUESTS PRESENT VIRTUAL

Leslie Wright (NYC Regional Director, New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Denny Farrell Riverbank State Park (DFRSP)); Mallory Craig (Education Center Manager, The Horticultural Society of New York, (DFRSP)); Travis Berry (DFRSP); Wes Hamilton (NYC Parks, Riverside Park); Stephanie Caban (North Park Outreach Coordinator, Riverside Park Conservancy); Ijendu Obasi (Outreach Coordinator, GreenThumb); Judith Desire (Uptown & Boogie Healthy Project - Uptown Good Food Farmers Market on St Nicholas Ave & W 137th Street); Nora Cole (Edgecombe Avenue Garden Park Sanctuary); Shannon Richards (142nd Street Dog Run); Tapashi Narine (NYC Parks, Historic Harlem Parks Administrator); Matt Genrich (NYC Parks); (Brad Taylor (Friends of Morningside Park); Callie Tominsky, (Supervisory Park Ranger, North District Manhattan Sites, National Park Service) Yuien Chin (Executive Director, Harlem One Stop); Claudette Brady (Executive Director, Save Harlem Now); Savona Bailey-McClain (Executive Director of the West Harlem Art Fund); Alice Dear (Affiliate, West 147th St. Block Association); Thomas Stewart (Columbia Daily Spectator Staff Writer); Allegra LeGrande (Greenways and Cherry Walk concerns).

QUORUM

A quorum was established with all eight committee members present and in person.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND MINUTES

The minutes from June 5, 2024 and September 4, 2024 were adopted. The agenda was amended after a vote was taken for Hon. Patricia Caldwell to speak for 5 minutes on a Draft *Proposal* she prepared, "Save and Preserve Sugar Hill." The **Claremont Theater**, West 135th Street and Broadway letter was not submitted. After inquiry, it was stated by one of the authors that the matter was not urgent, and the letter would be sent to the committee next week for review and finalized as an agenda item for the upcoming executive committee meeting. Otherwise, it was held over until the November 6th meeting.

PARKS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES:

Denny Farrell Riverbank State Park (DFRBSP): Leslie Wright

- Hispanic Heritage Month events through October – concerts 10/5, 10/6, 10/10, 10/20 and 10/24.
- Full season of classes and programming underway. All events are **FREE!**
- Ice skating rink preparation starts at the end of October – until then roller skating will be available.
- High School Basketball Tournament takes place on Columbus Day (10/14). 11AM – 2PM.
- Tomorrow’s Artist Workshops for little kids 6 and under (10/31, 11/21, 12/19).
- Art in the Park for kids ages 4-12 on (10/27, 11/24, 12/15), 1PM – 3PM.
- Hosting a Taekwondo championship on October 13th.
- Saturday, October 12th from 10:30AM to noon is the monthly **Friends of Denny Farrell Riverbank State Park** which meets every second Saturday of the month in the Robert F. Smith Theater Rehearsal Room. (Main building cultural center on the second floor.) Please join us.
- The indoor pool closed on September 9th for renovation of the Aquatics Center Filter Plant and Pool Bulkhead. The pool will reopen in early 2025. The projects’ progress will be posted to everyone.
- The park’s North Stair Tower and Elevator closed on September 9th for renovation. Shuttle service (ADA compliant) is available to all patrons between the upper and lower levels – the service operates when the park is open, seven days a week - shuttles run in 20 minute intervals - details and schedules are posted at the park and on the park’s webpage.
- The HVAC system serving the theatre is being replaced requiring temporary relocation of some programs and classes.
- The Community Garden lottery will take place in February 2025. The lottery is held every two-years.
- [Riverbank State Park \(Denny Farrell Riverbank State Park\)](#)

Denny Farrell Riverbank State Park - Greenhouse & Education Center: Mallory Craig

- mcraig@thehort.org
- Email programs@thehort.org or mcraig@thehort.org
- Sunday, October 27th, Harvest Festival. 1PM – 4PM.
- Gardens & Greenhouse Tours field trips! <https://www.explorableplaces.com/places/the-horticultural-society-of-new-york> [FEES WAIVED for schools in CB9 & CB10.] Otherwise, \$125.
- Fall Registration is Open for Hort Greenhouse Internship: October 11th – December 21st. Fridays 4–6PM. https://www.canva.com/design/DAGSbeUDprQ/HKMJ4i9eFqIE8_IDMrudQ/view?utm_content=DAGSbeUDprQ&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor
- Free public programs listings can be viewed at www.thehort.org/events. Some programs to get excited about: Ethiopian coffee ceremony, natural dye with plants, Kenyan cooking, fall garden vision boards, eco poetry, cyanotypes, fall family harvesting, birding, and more!

GreenThumb and Community Garden Announcements: Judith Desire

- Uptown & Boogie Healthy Project - Uptown Good Food Farmers Market on St Nicholas Ave & West 137th Street St. Nicholas Miracle Garden Greenhouse Fundraiser; (Saturdays 9AM – 3PM) <https://www.uptowngoodfood.com/greenhouse>
- 330 St Nicholas Miracle Garden, 10027 (St. Nicholas Avenue & West 127th Street)
- Greenhouse; is open to visitors Thursday, 3PM-9PM. Heather Jason attended the Climate Week event.
- Plan to install a solar panel connected to a power station to activate the fan and an irrigation system in coordination with Cornell inside the Greenhouse to allow it to be self-sustainable and provide data.
- The goal is to become a hub to community gardens in Upper Manhattan and the Bronx for year round seedlings. There will be a seedlings giveaway at the end of October.

Riverside Park and West Harlem Piers: Wes Hamilton

- Cherry Walk – repaving currently underway should be completed in six to eight months.
- Kayak launch project requires response from NYCEDC
- Wes to follow-up regarding bike and pedestrian markings on paths as Victor Edwards suggested.
- 142nd Street Dog Run renovation is on schedule according to the capital team.
- The concession area in the upper area of the park may have experienced an electrical issue. There are not many details, but improvements are required.

Riverside Park Conservancy: Stephanie Caban, stephanie@riversideparknyc.org

- “Works in Public” at Riverbank Park 145th St. is celebrating two new art sculptures, October 5th, 3PM-4PM.
- Yoga every Thursday, 145th Street lawn at 6:30PM.
- Billion Oyster Project Presentation on Baylander’s boat at West Harlem Piers, 1st & 3rd Saturdays at noon.
- Bingo Thursdays at 5:30PM and Dance Fitness Class Saturdays at 11AM at West Harlem Piers.
- Jenny’s Garden activities: drop-off compost on weekend mornings; cleanups on Sundays at 10am and light weeding projects on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month i.e. October 8th and 22nd from 1PM to 3PM.
- Cleanups and gardening at Ralph Ellison Memorial at West 150th Street on the 4th Saturday monthly (October 26th) from 9AM to 11AM.
- Every Wednesday from 9AM to 12PM, there are volunteer opportunities at Sakura Park.
- “1.5 Mile Tour”, Oct 20th, 10:30AM, starts at Grant’s Tomb – tour of monuments in northern Manhattan.
- Please email any special events to be included in the monthly newsletter from your organizations.
- [Events | Riverside Park Conservancy \(riversideparknyc.org\)](#)
- [North Park Initiative | Riverside Park Conservancy \(riversideparknyc.org\)](#)

Friends of Morningside Park: Brad Taylor

- Celebrating the restart of the waterfall in Morningside Park, Oct 4th, 10AM-1PM, the waterfall has not worked in over six years.
- The art work provided by Savannah will be on display until the end of October.
- Brad asked about the status of a marker commemorating the 1960s protests of the gymnasium site.

Friends of St. Nicholas Park: Karen Asner

- Saturday, September 21st was an unveiling of the 130th St. basketball courts on St. Nicholas Terrace – the event was well attended and the 3rd project completed with Project Backboard and NYC Parks, the artist Jeff Sonhouse who created the court’s design was also present.
- The next community clean-up day is October 12th.

NYC Parks and Historic Harlem Parks: Tapashi Narine, tapashi.narine@parks.nyc.gov

- **St. Nicholas Park:** Harlem Sculpture Gardens in Morningside, St. Nicholas, and Jackie Robinson Parks are displayed until October. <https://harlemsculpturegardens.com/>
- The reopening celebration of the 130th Street St. Nicholas Terrace courts designed with a diamond shape which is consistent with other courts renovated in the park since 2020. The event was paired with community affairs and occurred on September 21st from 9AM to 12PM. CB9M representatives included Veronica Savage, Annette Robinson and Heather Jason.
- **Morningside Park:** The waterfall is on, and flowing. A celebration event is planned on October 4th from 10AM to 1PM. There will also be a display of air and water drones used by the researchers & teams.
- NYC Parks Halloween events at J. Hood Wright Park will take place October 18th – details on website.
- <https://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2024/10/18/hallowscream-fright-walk>

NEW BUSINESS, PRESENTATIONS, AND DISCUSSIONS

NYC Parks, Matt Genrich

- The Alexander Hamilton Playground basketball court capital project started and should take six months. However, the contractor has a year to complete the work. It also includes repairs to the retaining wall on West 141st Street.
- The construction on the 113th Street staircase and Morningside Park is underway.
- Comfort Station at Sheltered Arms Park is still under construction and overdue. – Matt to provide update.
- **NYC Parks initiative on Vital Parks for All**
- The website gives info on past and upcoming projects across community boards and gives a profile on each park across the city.
- This data can be used to advocate for specific parks and can be used to compare to other parks within community boards, neighborhoods, or across other boroughs.
- Each profile includes a rating/information on capital investments, mapped trees, events, volunteer engagement, Parks Condition Score which shows its level of condition, cleanliness, and maintenance from our Parks Inspection Program.
- **Link to Vital Parks:** <https://www.nycgovparks.org/about/vital-parks>

National Park Service - (Grant's Tomb and Hamilton Grange): Callie Tominisky, Supervisory Park Ranger, North District Manhattan Sites, Callie_Tominisky@nps.gov, www.nps.gov/npnh

- The National Park Service (NPS) purpose is to conserve the scenery; the natural and historic objects; the wildlife therein; and to provide for the enjoyment of the public.
- NPS preserves all kinds of places including natural and historical parks.
- The main criteria or what the NPS will preserve is that the place has to preserve a piece of the American puzzle, so each site will be significant in its own way.
- The Organic Act (1916) established the NPS – (nine parks are in Manhattan and two parks are in CB9).
- Open from 10AM to 4PM Labor Day until Memorial Day (off peak) and until 5PM during the summer.
- Overviews volunteering, educational programming, and special events Overview with NPS.
- **Hamilton Grange:** 222 years old. Open Wednesday through Sunday. Volunteer Sunday at 10AM. The closure of the gate recently at West 141st Street on Monday and Tuesday is inconvenient. Update request.
- Yearly Events: January-Hamilton's Birthday, February-Black History, June-Caribbean Day, July-Hamilton's Death Day, and September-National Public Lands Day. nps.gov/hagr (Hamilton Grange)
- There are no plans to open the second floor of Hamilton Grange in part because there is no historical record of how it was used or decorated. Additionally, it does not have the required two means of egress.
- **General Grant National Memorial:** The largest mausoleum in North America and final resting place of Ulysses S. Grant, our 18th President. One of the foremost figures in abolishing slavery; 15th Amendment. Yearly Events: Grant's Birthday in April, Jazz Mobile each Wednesday night during the summer, A Great Day in Harlem in August, and National Public Lands Day in September. nps.gov/gegr (General Grant)

Save Harlem Now!: Claudette Brady, Executive Director, info@saveharlemnow.org

- Provided an overview of the forum held September 21st, Financial Benefits for Homeowners In Hamilton Height/Sugar Hill and the Manhattan Avenue North and West Harlem HISTORIC DISTRICTS:
- Event took place at The Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture, 141 Convent Avenue
- Event sponsored by State Senator, Cordelle Cleare and Former City Council Member Richardson.
- Presentations on Tax Credits, Grants, Loans, and other Financial Benefits available to property owners.

Draft Proposal to Save and Preserve Sugar Hill, Hon. Patricia Caldwell, CB9M

- An intended resolution related to a historic district, constrained by mental health facilities, panhandling, quality of life, and gentrification issues. Caldwell believes calling Sugar Hill, Hamilton Heights is an offense to Americans who have been historically denied civil rights. The focus and draft will be further developed.

Capital and Expense Budget Priorities and Requests Fiscal Year 2026

- LPP committee will be meeting October 16th to review proposed requests.
- Annette overviewed the proposal process and cycle. CB9's submission is due October 31st.
- <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7333194/CD-Needs-Online-Survey>
- Capital budget request to repair path in Edgecombe Avenue Garden Park Sanctuary. (Nora Cole)
- Capital budget request for pavement in the public areas on St. Nicholas Terrace Park in the grill area near West 130th Street to ensure both safety and accessibility, including railings, grills, picnic tables, and seating area to accommodate gatherings. (Stacy Thomas)
- Capital budget request to renovate the basketball court on West 129th Street as well as the bleachers and restoration of damaged trees due to a lightning strike several years ago. (Stacy Thomas)
- The 134th Street Staircase has been closed for almost 15 years, and the stairs at 136th, are very deteriorated and other parts of St. Nicholas Park including playgrounds. (Karen Asner)
- Heather Jason, April Adams and Veronica Savage submitted capital and expense items by email.

Greenways and Cherry Walk concerns, Allegra N. LeGrande

- In reference to the National Park Service: 10 days ago at the 2024 NYC Greenways meeting, Alan Hunt (NPS) attended. Insofar that NPS is an integral part of the East Coast Greenway, of which the Empire State Trail is a vital component. A discussion is requested about the NPS intersection with bike infrastructure in CB9M.

NYC Probation: Albert Myers, Probation Officer

- Discussed the 'Youth Rap' program, which provides stipends to young men and women on probation participating in the clean-up program at St. Nicholas Park.

OLD BUSINESS UPDATES/ Landmarks Preservation Property Improvement Concerns

- **Reviewed the LPC MCB9 monthly permit and Violation list for September 2024**
- No updates regarding the calendaring of **West Harlem and Morningside Heights Historic District**.
- Monitor **St. Luke Church** which is experiencing deterioration, lack of maintenance and a dire financial situation. It was suggested that the church could be converted into a Visitor's Center for Hamilton Grange.

ANNOUNCEMENTS The next meeting will be held on Wednesday November 6, 2024 at 6:30PM EDT.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting was adjourned at 9:01PM EDT.

Minutes respectfully submitted by, Heather Jason and Christopher Johnson.