



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 6
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Honorable Vanessa L. Gibson, Bronx Borough President
Honorable Oswald Feliz, New York City Council Member

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Board Chairperson

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District Manager

Environment and Parks Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 9, 2026 at 6:30 PM
Margarita Espinosa, Environment and Parks Committee Chairperson

The Environment and Parks Committee met on Wednesday, September 9, 2026, both in-person and via Zoom Video Communications. The following Board Members attended the Environment and Parks Committee meeting: **Nicole Carter, Margarita Espinosa**, Laura James, Reggie Powell, **Renee Reed, Carol Robinson**, and **Angelina Zervos**.

The Environment and Parks Committee discussed the following information:

- **Presentation by River Garden on their Audubon Mural Project**

The Environment and Parks Committee received a presentation regarding the Audubon Mural Project, a program of the New York Bird Alliance, formerly known as the Audubon Society. The program engages professional artists to create murals in community spaces with the goal of enhancing and beautifying neighborhood environments. River Garden has been selected to participate in the program and has identified artist Danny Bonilla to create a mural on the garden shed, with the potential for additional surfaces within the garden to be included in the project. The proposed mural will feature endangered bird species selected from a list provided through the program. River Garden has secured funding for the project, including a contribution from 9Dot Energy, which previously provided funding for the garden shed. It was noted that GreenThumb requires community notification when a mural or similar improvement project is proposed within a community garden. The presentation was therefore provided to the Environment and Parks Committee for informational purposes and to ensure that the project was documented in the Environment and Parks Committee's records. No formal action was requested of the Environment and Parks Committee.

The Environment and Parks Committee was subsequently advised of the garden's fifth annual Harvfest, scheduled for Saturday, October 17, from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM, rain or shine. The event will also commemorate the 50th anniversary of the garden, which was established in 1976. Representatives reported that numerous community organizations and partner organizations are expected to participate through informational tables, giveaways, demonstrations, and other activities. The Environment and Parks Committee members and Community Board members were invited to attend and participate in the event.

- **Update on the Walter Gladwin Park Recreation Center Construction**

The Environment and Parks Committee received an update regarding the construction of the Walter Gladwin Recreation Center, located within the section of the park near East Tremont Avenue and

LaFontaine Avenue. Members were advised that preliminary construction activities are beginning at the site, including the appearance of survey equipment and other early-stage construction activity. A construction liaison has been hired to serve as a point of contact for the project and to facilitate communication between the project team and the surrounding community. The Environment and Parks Committee discussed the anticipated scope of construction and the challenges associated with the removal of existing rock and bedrock at the site. The possibility of blasting was raised, including discussion of the potential impacts on nearby residents and buildings. Members expressed concerns regarding construction-related noise, vibration, traffic, and the potential for complaints from residents during the construction period. The Environment and Parks Committee expressed an interest in closely monitoring the progress of the project and documenting construction activities throughout the process. Members also emphasized the importance of maintaining regular communication with the construction liaison and ensuring that concerns raised by residents and the surrounding neighborhood are communicated promptly to the project team. The Environment and Parks Committee will continue to monitor the project and provide updates as construction progresses.

- **Other Business**
 - Safety and Environmental Concerns at River Garden**

The Environment and Parks Committee was informed about ongoing safety, sanitation, and environmental concerns affecting a strip of land adjacent to River Garden and the Bronx River. Garden representatives reported continued illegal dumping, public urination, suspected drug activity, nighttime activity, overgrown vegetation, and unauthorized access to the riverfront. The area is not regularly maintained, and garden members have been unable to address the volume of refuse accumulating at the site. Concerns were also raised regarding the condition of nearby tree pits and the potential for debris and pollutants to enter the Bronx River. It was also noted that the Department of Parks and Recreation recently installed new fencing along three sides of the garden following repeated incidents of unauthorized entry. While the new fencing has improved security, the narrow strip of land between the garden and the Bronx River remains outside the garden's footprint and continues to present significant maintenance and public safety concerns. Garden representatives reported that multiple 311 complaints have been submitted and that Department of Parks and Recreation and GreenThumb have been contacted regarding the condition of the site. However, the reported conditions have continued. The Environment and Parks Committee discussed the need to clarify the agency responsible for maintaining the area and noted that the absence of a distinct street address may be contributing to difficulties in directing service requests to the appropriate location. Garden representatives requested the Committee's assistance in exploring the possibility of incorporating the affected area into the community garden's footprint, which would allow for more consistent cleaning, landscaping, and maintenance while preserving public access to the riverfront. The Environment and Parks Committee and elected officials. Garden representatives will provide photographs, correspondence, and NYC311 complaint documentation for inclusion in a comprehensive submission. The Environment and Parks Committee will also explore the feasibility of incorporating the area into the garden and will continue to monitor the outstanding health, safety, sanitation, and environmental concerns. A motion recommending the transfer of this land to GreenThumb was made by Margarita Espinosa, second by Nicole Carter, and adopted unanimously.