

(Pending Committee Approval)

Minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting  
April 27, 2022, 7pm via Zoom

**ATTENDEES:**

*Committee:* Ramdat Singh, Deb Travis, David Gellman

*Absent:* Bob Bender, Robert Jacklosky

*Guests:* Stephanie Ehrlich, Christina Taylor, Ira Charles Levenberg, Leona Teten, Araceli F.

**AGENDA:**

Ramdat Singh called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.

***Approval of Minutes***

A quorum being present, the minutes of the March 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting, were approved, 3-0.

***Chairperson's Report***

The Tibbets Brook Daylighting walkthrough was amazing and very insightful. It was great to put in perspective the conceptual plan presentation and see it on a walking tour. Thank you to Stephanie and Christina from Van Cortlandt Park Alliance for this great walkthrough.

The weather is getting warmer and the Board office is receiving noise complaints. Stephanie mentioned that there was a joint meeting between the 50<sup>th</sup> precinct, PEP and Van Cortlandt Park Alliance to strategize how to handle these illegal barbecuing and excessive noise complaints. The office received a complaint from Kelly field and the Board office is scheduling a meeting between CB8, NYPD, PEP and Van Cortlandt Park Alliance, to address these issues. If there are any graffiti issues, please file a complaint with 311 and email the Board office the complaint number, so it can be followed up on.

Michael Ortiz, from the Department of Parks and Recreation, was invited to attend our meeting to update us on the three capital budget items in procurement. Unfortunately, Michael had a last minute emergency and was unable to attend. We will invite him to the committee meeting in June to update us on these projects.

***Discussion of Parks and Recreation Committee Budget Priorities FY 2024***

Last month, the committee discussed and created its list of both capital and expense budget items. Ramdat mentioned that there were three additional joint capital budget requests and we should include those in our budget lists.

Ramdat asked Deb Travis to present the two joint committee budget requests from Traffic and Transportation Committee.

- **JOINT – PARKS/TRAFF&TRANS – DPR/DOT – Van Cortlandt Park Bailey Pedestrian Plaza:** Reconstruct Van Cortland Park South step street from Van Cortlandt Park South to Gale Place including integrating green infrastructure to capture storm water and creating a pedestrian plaza at Bailey Avenue entrance to Van Cortlandt Park
- **JOINT – PARKS/PUBLIC SAFETY/E&S/TRAFF&TRANS - (DPR/NYPD/DEP/DOT) – Jerome Park Reservoir Pedestrian Safety Lighting:** Add park-style lighting around the pedestrian perimeter of the Jerome Park Reservoir along Reservoir Avenue between Sedgwick Avenue and Goulden Avenue and along Goulden Avenue between Sedgwick Avenue and Reservoir Avenue for pedestrian safety from crime, increase pedestrian visibility for cars and to reduce dumping

Ramdat discussed the potential joint capital budget request with Economic Development.

- **JOINT- PARKS/ Economic Development – Tree Pit Guards-** Install tree pit guards along commercial corridors in CB 8

The Economic Development Committee wanted to put in a joint request for beautification of the commercial corridors in CB8. The request will focus on planting trees and installing tree guards in tree pits that do not have one. Ramdat mentioned that Economic Development meets tomorrow, so they will iron out the exact locations at their meetings. The issue was raised that Department of Parks of Recreation do not actually install tree guards, but plant the trees, removes the stumps and trim the trees. The Committee recommends that Chairs of both committees, Ramdat and Nick, draft a letter to the Councilmembers asking for funding for this type of request.

The Committee decided to include the two joint budget requests with the Traffic and Transportation Committee. The Committee voted to adopt the capital and expense budget requests unanimously.

<b>FY 2024 Ranking</b>	<b>PARKS Bronx CB8 FY2024 Initial Capital Budget Requests</b>	<b>FY 2023 Ranking</b>
1	<b><u>PARKS- (DPR) Redesign and reconstruction of Bailey Playground:</u></b> Reduce paving, introduce green space, update equipment, and repair deteriorated drains. The CB recommends incorporate adjacent Tibbett's Tail area into an expanded Bailey Playground.	2
2	<b><u>PARKS – DPR: Reconstruct Old Fort Four Park and upgrade equipment:</u></b> Reconstruction of Old Fort Four Park including playground equipment, basketball courts, benches, greenspace, stone walls and fencing.	12
3	<b><u>JOINT – PARKS/TRAFF&amp;TRANS – DPR/DOT – Van Cortlandt Park Bailey Pedestrian Plaza:</u></b> Reconstruct Van Cortland Park South step street from Van Cortlandt Park South to Gale Place including integrating green infrastructure to capture storm water and creating a pedestrian plaza at Bailey Avenue entrance to Van Cortlandt Park	12
4	<b><u>PARKS – DPR: Renovation of Van Cortlandt Park Stadium:</u></b> Renovation of Van Cortlandt Park Stadium, funding for engineering study to assess and to develop a restoration plan of Van Cortlandt Park Stadium	15
5	<b><u>PARKS- DPR: Renovation of the Restrooms in Van Cortlandt Park:</u></b> Construct restroom at Broadway and W 251st Street in Van Cortlandt Park, adjacent to the parade grounds.	16
6	<b><u>PARKS- DPR-Spuvten Duvvil Shorefront Park Green Infrastructure:</u></b> Green Infrastructure; to divert, absorb, and clean stormwater runoff from catch basins, streets, and the Henry Hudson Bridge outfalls that drain into the stream bed	20

	that feeds the 2 ponds in the Park before discharging overflow into the sewer system and Harlem River. Rehabilitation and restoration of natural areas, trails, wetlands and aquatic features.	
7	<b><u>PARKS- DPR-Renovations to Washington’s Walk:</u></b> Renovations to Washington's Walk; new benches, replacing temporary fence with a wrought-iron fence, and repair of adjacent sidewalk.	22
8	<b><u>PARKS- DPR: Van Cortlandt Park Mansion – Fence and Brick Stairway Restoration</u></b> :We are aware that this project is partially funded. CB8 is requesting additional funds to complete the restoration of the wrought iron boundary fence and exterior red brick stairway into the Van Cortlandt Park mansion.	N/A
9	<b><u>PARKS- DPR: Update Fort Independence Park Dog Run</u></b> : Upgrade dog run in Fort Independence Park_ and improve ADA accessibility, improve shade and upgrade the drinking fountain around the dog run	N/A

10	<b><u>JOINT – PARKS/PUBLIC SAFETY/E&amp;S/TRAFF&amp;TRANS - (DPR/NYPD/DEP/DOT) – Jerome Park Reservoir Pedestrian Safety Lighting:</u></b> Add park-style lighting around the pedestrian perimeter of the Jerome Park Reservoir along Reservoir Avenue between Sedgwick Avenue and Goulden Avenue and along Goulden Avenue between Sedgwick Avenue and Reservoir Avenue for pedestrian safety from crime, increase pedestrian visibility for cars and to reduce dumping	N/A
11	<b><u>PARKS- DPR - Restore Riverdale Park’s Alder Brook Stream Bed:</u></b> Restore the Alder Brook stream bed, which runs through the Riverdale Park and discharges directly into the Hudson River.	N/A
12	<b><u>PARKS- DPR - Renovation of the Mosholu Golf House:</u></b> Connection of sewer to former Mosholu Golf house so that the golf house can become a Parks Headquarters building. The committee urges DPR to ask DEP to provide funding for this project.	N/A

<b>FY 2024 Ranking</b>	<b>PARKS Bronx CB8 FY2024 Initial Expense Budget Requests</b>	<b>FY 2023 Ranking</b>
1	<b><u>PARKS – DPR: Gardeners and other Personnel Sufficient for proper monitor CD08:</u></b> Gardeners and other Personnel: sufficient for proper maintenance of lawns, landscaped areas, and sidewalk Greenstreets.	8
2	<b><u>PARKS - DPR - PEP Personnel sufficient to monitor CD08 Parks:</u></b> PEP Personnel to properly enforce rules and regulations with assistance of NYPD: illegal use of Putnam Greenway by electric bikes, motor bikes and ATVs; Seasonal problem of unlawful BBQs in CD08 parks; chronic double-parking along Broadway adjacent to Van Cortlandt Park (VCP) Parade Grounds, and to enforce regulations in VCP and other CD08 parks, in particular by bicycle-mounted PEP officers.	10
3	<b><u>PARKS - DPR Van Cortlandt Park Equipment – Mini Packer and Gator</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Mini-Packer:</u> to deal with growing trash problem in VCP, particularly to reach remote and difficult areas.</li> <li>• <u>Gator for Van Cortlandt Park:</u> VCP Alliance requests a replacement Gator for use by Landscape Management and Maintenance &amp; Operations staff to maintain park; Existing Gator is in disrepair.</li> </ul>	N/A
4	<b><u>PARKS - DPR CD08 Parks Equipment:</u></b> Serious and increasing trash conditions, necessitates Parks Department needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One large garbage truck Currently equipment is shared with another district.</li> <li>• Crew Cab Pickup: to transport staff &amp; equipment/tools around CD08. Necessary to address maintenance needs of District.</li> <li>• Deere Tractor with Cutting Unit: Constantly need maintenance, especially with hilly topography, such machinery is essential for mowing.</li> </ul>	

***Van Cortlandt Park Updates***

Stephanie mentioned that it was great to see everyone on the walking tour. The Van Cortlandt Park’s Annual Gala benefit is on May 19<sup>th</sup>, where the Alliance will honor Deputy Commissioner Iris Rodriguez- Rosa and Sonia Manzano from Sesame Street.

Christina mentioned there are several volunteer opportunities coming up.

- Every Wednesday morning, we have volunteers working on the cross country trails and on the flats around the parade grounds. Last couple of weeks, we have had Manhattan College come out a couple of times and help, which has been a tremendous help.
- On Fridays, we meet at the Golf House, from 9am -12pm and we work on various restoration projects.
- On Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> we will partner with Women of Woodlawn for a special volunteer day. We will have another one in June as well.
- City Nature Challenge: People can go around from April 29<sup>th</sup> to May 2<sup>nd</sup> and use the app on their phone called “iNaturalist” to take pictures of plants and identify them.
- For upcoming volunteer opportunities and special events, visit us at <https://vancortlandt.org/>

***New Business***

***Old Business:***

No update on Sedgwick trees. Ramdat will follow up with Zev and Department of Forestry.

***Adjournment:***

Meeting adjourned at 7:57pm.