

**COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX
MINUTES OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE
HELD SEPTEMBER 13, 2009
AT THE BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8**

Attendees:

CB8 Committee Members:

Bob Bender (chair), Rosemary Ginty, Yael Levy, Amy Moore, Colleen Hanley, Steve Balicer, Laura Spalter, Tom Durham. *Other CB Attendee:* Steven Froot

Other Committee Members: Lawrence Moiatto, Herb Barret, Don Tannen, Christina Taylor, Andrew Sandler

DPR Representatives: Emilio Llopiz, Margot Perron, Ray Acosta

Old Business:

The meeting commenced at 7:05 P.M. Minutes of the May, 2010 meeting were approved.

The Chair announced that Yael Levy had been appointed and had accepted the vice-chair position on the committee. Chair also welcomed new committee members and urged them to read the committee mission statement and to review the budget priorities from the April 2010 committee meeting minutes.

(Review of old business was suspended so that the speaker could address the committee.)

New Business:

Emma Rodgers of the Bronx Smoke-Free Partnership discussed the initiative to ban smoking in city parks and beaches. She explained that second-hand smoke can affect park- and beachgoers, and she said that litter in the form of cigarette butts was both a nuisance and a danger to small children. Ms. Rodgers said that 97 municipalities in the U.S. and 10 counties in N.Y. State have banned smoking in parks and beaches. Smoking is currently prohibited in NYC playgrounds. The next step in the process would be the introduction of a bill in the City Council.

(Note: Three days after the committee meeting, Council Speaker Christine Quinn indicated that such a bill would be introduced, and Mayor Michael Bloomberg indicated that he would sign such a bill.)

Old Business (con't.):

Margot Perron, Van Cortlandt Park Administrator, reported that she is working with Manhattan College students on a "carry-in, carry-out" initiative in VCP as part of DPR's anti-littering campaign. She reported that VCP suffered only moderate damage in the July 25 tornado, losing far fewer trees than in the March, 2010 storm.

Ray Acosta, parks supervisor for CB8 parks, reported that the tornado caused extensive damage to Riverdale Park, Vinmont Park, and particularly Hackett Park. Committee member Laura Spalter asked whether DPR would replace street trees and Mr. Acosta said it would be done through the 311 system. Larger trees that were removed (32" or larger diameter) would require stump removal first. The Chair commended DPR on its excellent response to the tornado.

Ms. Perron mentioned that the Memorial Grove restoration had gone to the third-lowest bidder, the two lower bidders having been disqualified. She said that Parade Ground drainage problems were being addressed in specific locations but that no systemic drainage problem has emerged.

The Chair brought up the question of opening the PS 81 playground to the community on weekends, which Mr. Sandler said he would investigate. There was discussion of access to the playground, the importance of security while the playground is open and arranging for someone to open and close the playground at acceptable hours. Mr. Sandler agreed to investigate further, and Ms. Moore said she would be glad to coordinate with the PS 81 Principal.

Christina Taylor of the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park advised about the Friends' volunteer event in VCP on September 25.

Rosemary Ginty asked Mr. Acosta about restoration of the upper reaches of Spuyten Duyvil Park. Mr. Acosta said the contractor was obligated to restore the area and promised to do so.

The Chair discussed the status of the delays in reconstructing Sid Augarten (Vinmont) ball field.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Submitted by,

Bob Bender
Chair
Parks & Recreation Committee