

## COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX

### MINUTES OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE HELD JUNE 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2009 AT THE BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

#### **Attendees:**

Community Board: Bob Bender, Steve Balicer, Tom Durham, Rosemary Ginty, Ari Goldman, Yael Levy,

Community residents: Christina Taylor, FVCP; Jill Staats, VCTC; Herb Barret, VC Memorial Grove; Lynn Schwarz, FIPNA; Felicity Nitz, FVCP; Margot Perron, DPR; Eric Seiff; Jane Sokolow, BCEQ; David Gellman; Renee Cecil, FVCP; Dart Westphal; Ed Ravin; John Scherf, Novel Solutions, Hartsdale.

The meeting began at 7:05 pm. The minutes of the May meeting were approved by a vote of 3-0 with one abstention.

#### **Putnam Trail:**

Margot Perron says that there is \$3 million allocated for the improvement of the trail in Van Cortlandt Park. (Another \$3 million has been allocated for the portion of the trail south of the park.) This is NYS DOT money and is intended for a paved and multi-use trail. The ideal solution is a side-by-side paved and unpaved trail, but the trail is narrow in places, and it is unclear whether this dual use is possible. Drainage is a concern, particularly if the trail is paved. There is runoff from the Major Deegan highway at the sound end of the trail that is an existing problem. Margot would like a representative from NY State to look at the trail. The trail is part of a larger greenway/bikeway that connects other areas in the Bronx with the Westchester South County trail (Putnam Trail in Westchester).

Many questions were asked by the audience, among them whether a permeable surface might satisfy the requirements of the NYS DOT (this is unknown at present and DPR might test a semi-permeable surface). Runners generally object to paving the trail, saying that the natural surface is better to run on, and the shade of the trail makes it more desirable than some open trails in the park. Bikers would like the trail paved. A permeable surface that would support bikes was suggested. Some bikers say that there are other trails for runners, and that the Putnam Trail is intended to be part of a mapped bikeway. Some opposed to the paved surface worry about water runoff and its effects alongside the trail. Crushed gravel was proposed as a possible surface, but only finely crushed gravel would support bikes, and that surface would support only mountain bikes, not road bikes. Wheelchair access was brought up. There could be an access point from the playground in the southwest corner of the park, but there is no bathroom facility north of the Golf House for the entire length of the trail.

Margot will meet with the State DOT representative to see what the options are and will report back to the Committee.

### **Mosholu Golf Course**

At present the design of the driving range on top of the Croton Water Filtration Plant (at ground level) crosses the alienation line and appears to necessitate a relocation of the fairway on the first hole of the golf course. DEP says that its designer can cross the alienation line because the driving range is a park use. DPR signed off on the design. Relocating the first hole fairway could result in the loss of some trees or could require that the hole be moved to a location outside the boundary of the current golf course.

Several issues were raised. One concerns the storm-water treatment that is an integral part of the driving range design. Dart Westphal and Jane Sokolow observed that the storm water treatment is driving the design, not the driving range. They further observe that this is entirely a DEP use caused primarily by the amount of groundwater displaced by the filtration plant. There is also disagreement between DEP and DPR over maintenance of the storm water treatment, each agency saying that the other is responsible.

One suggestion was to restrict club size on the first fairway so that the fairway can continue to be used, even if it is not as long. This would allow the fairway to remain competitive. Several people asked to see the design for the golf course. Margot said she would request it from the Capital Projects group at DPR.

Both Dart Westphal and Jane Sokolow asked that DEP compensate for the turnaround and handicapped drop-off area of the golf course parking lot, which slightly crosses over the alienation line at its southern end, by giving up an equivalent area from the golf course itself.

There was general agreement that a proposal to reduce the size of the golf course to 8 holes was a bad idea. Removing trees is a bad idea. There was further agreement that of the various options available, altering the design of the storm water treatment/driving range area made the most sense.

The next CFMC meeting is in September, and this subject should be on the agenda for that meeting.

Bob Bender  
Chairman  
Parks & Recreation Committee

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