

Minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting, March 27, 2019 at

Mosaic Mental Health, 5676 Riverdale Avenue

Attendees:

Committee: Bob Bender, chair; Marvin Goodman, Robert Fanuzzi, Daris B. Jackson, Tao Moran, all CB8; Herb Barret, Christina Taylor, community committee members

Absent: Eric Bell, David Gellman, Donnel Leverett

DPR: Joseph Magneri, Margot Perron

Guests: IC L'Engle, BCEQ

Agenda

The meeting began at 7:10 pm. Minutes of the February meeting were unanimously approved.

Discussion of Committee Capital and Expense Budget Requests

With the assistance of Mr. Magneri and Ms. Perron, the committee agreed on these items:

Capital

1. Construction of a restroom at Broadway and W. 251st St. in Van Cortlandt Park, adjacent to the Parade Grounds.
2. Redesign and reconstruction of Bailey Avenue playground to reduce paving and introduce green space, update equipment, and repair deteriorated drains.
3. Renovation of the Van Cortlandt House Museum in Van Cortlandt Park to bring it into code compliance, provide handicapped accessibility, make repairs associated with waterproofing the structure, paint exterior fence, and repair deteriorated stairs on the historic south side entrance.
4. Renovation of Strong Street playground. The committee notes that this project is now partially funded by Borough President Ruben Diaz and Councilman Fernando Cabrera.

5. Funding for the proposed pedestrian bridge over the Major Deegan Expressway (I-87) in Van Cortlandt Park to bridge the gap between the \$12 million in hand and the funding required by DDC to build the bridge. The committee urges DPR to work with DEP, DDC, NYS DOT, NYC DOT, and other relevant parties to find ways to lower the cost of the project.
6. Erosion control measures in Ewen Park to prevent runoff downhill toward Riverdale Avenue.
7. Construction of a pond wall at Spuyten Duyvil Shorefront Park to prevent water runoff from the pond onto the roadway of the parking lot at the adjacent Metro-North station.
8. Repair of the footbridge over Tibbetts Brook outside the fence around the golf course in Van Cortlandt Park. The committee notes that this project is partially funded.
9. Replacement of the roof, renovation of sinking floors, replacement of leaky windows, replacement of exterior doors, renovation of bathrooms including upgrading to ADA compliance, and repair or replacement of stoves, refrigerators, cooling handlers, and HVAC control panel at Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, which is a DPR facility. (NEW)
10. Renovation of Van Cortlandt Park stadium.

Expense

1. Gardeners and other personnel sufficient for proper maintenance, especially of lawns, landscaped areas, and sidewalk Greenstreets in Community Board 8.
2. PEP personnel sufficient to alleviate with the assistance of NYPD the chronic double-parking along Broadway adjacent to the Parade Grounds, especially on weekends and other times of high use, and to enforce regulations in other CB8 parks, in particular bicycle-mounted PEP officers in both Van Cortlandt Park and neighborhood parks.
- 3 .Purchase of a tractor and accompanying trailer and a lawnmower to aid in maintenance of CB8 parks.

4. Purchase of a mini-packer garbage truck for CB8 parks. (NEW)
5. Purchase of a crew cab pickup with a lift gate for use in CB8 neighborhood parks.

“It’s My Park” Day

Committee members agreed on Brust Park as the location of this year’s “It’s My Park” Day service activity. We will coordinate with the Stewards of Brust Park, who have scheduled a park event for May 4 with a rain date of May 11.

Irving Ladimer Community Service Award

Committee members agreed to nominate the Stewards of Brust Park in recognition of their efforts to beautify and maintain the park.

Old Business

The chair thanked Tao Moran for attending a March 6 meeting to discuss Councilman Cohen’s proposal to fund adult fitness equipment in Ewen Park. Tao reported that there was no consensus on exactly where in the park to place the equipment or what sort of equipment to install. The chair noted that Mike Ortiz from Bronx DPR Commissioner Rodriguez’s office has indicated that he expects to present a design for community discussion at the June committee meeting.

The chair reported that DPR seems to have found an alternative site for the BBQ area in VCP that will be closed during Parks without Borders construction. More information will be forthcoming.

No progress has been made in identifying an alternative BBQ area in Kingsbridge Heights. Plans are being made to improve the appearance of Washington’s Walk and to strictly enforce no barbecuing regulations this summer.

The chair reported that the Putnam Trail renovation will be postponed to August so that there will be no interference with the bird breeding season along the trail. DPR has given firm assurances that the renovation will commence in August.

New Business

Christina Taylor reported on upcoming events in Van Cortlandt Park. They include fitness programs for seniors. That information was previously sent to the CB8 office and has been shared with the Aging Committee. The Van Cortlandt Track Club also has upcoming events.

The Friends of Van Cortlandt Park will be offering summer internships for teens. Information about this and other events sponsored by the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park can be found on the FVCP website: vancortlandt.org

Christina also advised about a conference on Green Infrastructure and Water Affordability at the BCEQ annual membership meeting on April 10 at Manhattan College's Leo Engineering Building.

There will be a fundraiser for Van Cortlandt Park prior to the New York Philharmonic Concert in Van Cortlandt on Tuesday, June 11. The June CB8 board meeting is moving to a different date.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Bob Bender, Chair