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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Parks and Waterfront Committee
Thursday, October 9, 2025 - 6:30PM
Conducted remotely on Zoom.

Please note: The resolution contained in the committee minutes is a recommendation submitted by the committee co-chairs to the Community Board. At the monthly full board meeting, the resolution is discussed and voted upon by all members of Community Board 8 Manhattan.

Resolution for Approval:
Item 2: Approval of the revised plan for the reconstruction of 24 Sycamores Park

MINUTES

Present: Felice Farber, Miles Fink, Bradley Hershenson, Sahar Husain, Barbara Rudder, Barry Schneider*, Judy Schneider, Irma Torres*

**Public Member*

Approximate Number of Public Attendees: 40

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

Item 1: Ruppert Park Environmental Stewardship and Parks Beautification Day, Saturday, October 18 by Mubeen Siddiqui.

Mubeen Siddiqui provided an overview of the Muslim Volunteers of New York (MV4NY) and discussed the upcoming Park Beautification Day at Ruppert Park on October 18th from 10 AM to 1 PM. In addition to the cleanup of the park, mulching and planting, the event will include music and activities for children. She provided some statistics about MV4NY and the efforts at Ruppert Park, noting 1,836 volunteers, 5,508 hours of community service, 2,000-3,000 plants on average per season, and 20-25 bags of rubble per event were removed. MV4NY has expanded its work into John Jay Park and 24 Sycamores Park. The registration link for the October 18th event is MV4NY's Oct 2025 Environmental Stewardship Day at Ruppert Park.

Item 2: Presentation of a revised plan for the reconstruction of 24 Sycamores Park by the Parks Department.

The Parks and Waterfront committee chairs were very happy to see a much larger segment of the community turn out for this meeting than for the prior meetings. Some of the changes from the original presentation are:

The small fence separating the previous basketball and pickleball play areas was removed from the plan. The two dedicated pickleball courts have been amended and are now painted on top of the Junior Basketball courts. The practice area for pickleball in the original plan will be painted for children's games on a reconstructed handball court. The back of the handball court will have a climbing wall with a rubber safety surface below. The fitness area has been changed because of comments that the original plan was too adult-focused and did not have room for youth activities. The equipment has been modified to be teen-oriented, as

well as for adults. A partial chain-link fencing has been lowered to 4 feet in the fitness area to increase the sightlines, and a 10-foot fence has been installed in the basketball area. The height of exterior fencing has changed in certain areas.

Manhattan Borough Commissioner Tricia Shimamura joined the meeting, explaining that the goal of the changes is to create as flexible a space as possible. She asked for specificity in the resolution. There will be a review of the area with the gaming tables to see how that area can be used.

Park House: Parks will fund the repairs to the Park House Plumbing and will seek to do these repairs in advance of the full park reconstruction, but if they cannot do it first, it will be included in the full park reconstruction.

Public comments:
Comments of support:

- The community appreciates the Parks Department's changes to the park design and its effort to listen to community concerns voiced at the previous Full Board meeting back on September 17th.
- The community likes having proposed vines on the fence to block out the FDR Drive and create a sense of more green space.
- The community likes the teen area and the open area space.
- Suggestions were made of pickleball courts running through North/South rather than East/West directions in the north section of the park. This is to allow a pickleball court and the basketball court to be used at the same time by the public.
- The community suggested changes to the location of the half basketball court, with the Parks Department noting that the basketball hoop cannot be moved because of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) infrastructure underneath.
- The community thinks the design works well for multi-purpose uses.
- The community suggests widening the shared space of the park.

Comments of concern:

- The adult fitness area becoming a teen fitness area was brought up as a concern from the public. It was explained by the Parks Department that the equipment can be used for both teens and adults.
- Members of the public expressed that the painting of the multi-purpose area is confusing and does not clearly show pickleball courts.
- There were also concerns about the seating area with game tables. Since there are a number of game tables in Andrew Haswell Green Park, with the Alice Aycock sculpture adjacent to 24 Sycamores Park. In response, it was noted that the game tables would be a useful amenity for birthday parties, and for other park users to eat lunch and take a break from work.

Other questions and comments:

- Since the area is near a medical facility, there should be a seating area for adults as well.

The following resolution was then put forward by the Committee:

WHEREAS the Parks Department presented a revised plan for the restoration of 24 Sycamores Park based on feedback from the community and Community Board 8; and

WHEREAS the presentation covered many areas for all ages: new climbing equipment, all types of swings, basketball, handball, pickleball, fitness equipment, seating areas, game tables, better access for people with disabilities to the park, and restoration of trees and added greenery; and

WHEREAS the Parks & Waterfront Committee supports the proposed restoration of the missing trees from 24 Sycamores Park, as well as the use of rat deterrent plants; and

WHEREAS the Parks & Waterfront Committee supports the ramp accessing the upper and lower level, as well as changing the stairs for walking and sitting in keeping with the design in Andrew Haswell Green Park; and

WHEREAS the Parks & Waterfront Committee supports the changes in the handball courts, the addition of a climbing wall and fitness equipment on the south side, and the painted games for children on the pavement on the north side of the wall, when handball or tennis is not being played; and

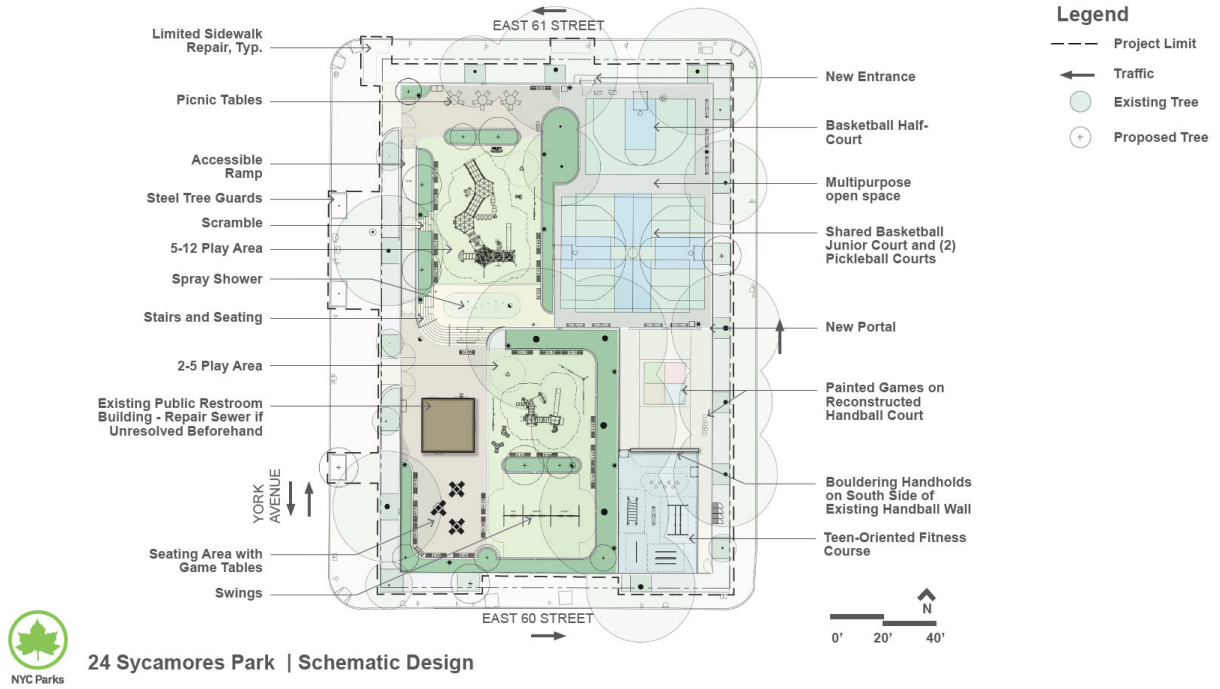
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Community Board 8 Manhattan supports the plan presented by the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation for the reconstruction of 24 Sycamores Park with the following recommended changes:

- We strongly support the shared space with the basketball and pickleball superimposed on one another, given the existing positive interactions and cooperation between these user groups at the park. However, we recommend that the pickleball courts be turned in the north/south direction so that one basketball court and one pickleball court can be used at the same time. Parks agreed to look into the feasibility of this suggestion and to paint the lines on the courts with contrasting colors so that each sport will be clearly delineated. They also agreed to show us the changes. (If the drawing is ready by the full board meeting on October 22nd, they will forward it to Community Associate Jon Kraus at the board office for the meeting.)
- Parks should work with the pickleball group to provide a storage container and location for pickleball nets and equipment.
- We would like the Parks Department to install wire hooks on the 16-foot fence with baskets for pickleball paddles.
- We request Parks review the upper-level arrangement of the tables and chairs and, if possible, add an additional swing.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED Community Board 8 Manhattan is very concerned about the repair of the plumbing lines for the park house, which have been out of use for over a year. The Parks Department should make this a priority and report back to Community Board 8 Manhattan on the status of this issue now that we have the estimated cost.

Board Member Vote: 7-0-0 Farber, Fink, Hershenson, Husain, Rudder, B. Schneider*, J. Schneider

The plan below was presented at the previous Parks and Waterfront Committee meeting. As a result of the suggested changes, the Parks Department is making a new revised plan:



Item 3: Report by Robert McLean, NYC Parks, Regional Manager

- Ruppert Park – in procurement. Bid opening anticipated for spring 2026.
- Carl Schurz Park – No funding right now for the handrails on staircases on East 86th Street Plaza. Will be noted for future. There is a plan to add a handrail to the staircase at East 89th Street.
- Stanley Isaacs Playground – restrooms should be repaired in the next month or so.
- Carl Schurz Park Conservancy – Sunday, October 20th, Halloween Howl dog parade, from 1 PM to 3 PM.
- East River Esplanade (East Midtown Greenway) – Update: Interns and volunteers have weeded 502 hours and removed 168 garbage bags of weeds. Every garden bed has been weeded twice, with garden beds by the great stairs being weeded three times.

Item 4: Report by Shena Kaufman, NYC Parks, District Manager 8 & 15

District Manager Shena Kaufman was unable to attend the meeting.

Items 5 & 6: Old and New Business

Permits – can only ask for a basketball permit and note in the comments that it is for pickleball. Need permit revisions. Robert McLean is working on this.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

By Felice Farber and Judy Schneider,
Co-Chairs, Parks and Waterfront Committee