



The City of New York
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #1

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Serving and Representing: Port Morris, Mott Haven and Melrose



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CHAIRPERSON

ANTHONY R. JORDAN

DISTRICT MANAGER

Municipal Services Committee Minutes

February 7th, 2024

Ngande Ambroise, Chairperson

Members discussed various community services and infrastructure oversight. Katerine Broome from the Parks Department discussed the ongoing delays in the St. Mary's project and the proposed construction of Lozada Park Playground. Members also discussed challenges and concerns related to managing public parks and school yards, including delays in park development, safety concerns. Members highlighting issues in parks around the District such as outdated play equipment, poor drainage, and lack of green spaces. Members emphasized the importance of community involvement in the design process and proposed solutions such as increasing greenery and using light-colored pavers to reflect sunlight.

Outline

Community services and infrastructure in Bronx.

- Ngande Ambroise thanks previous leaders and sets clear objectives for the team.
- The committee addresses public safety, infrastructure, and community wellbeing in Bronx Community Board One.

Delayed Park renovation with community frustration.

- Katerine Broome, capital director, provides update on St Mary's Recreation Center construction delays.
- Frustration with lack of playground for kids in a city with planned schedules and expensive amenities.
- Sonyi Lopez requests clarification on the status of the project, while Ngande Ambroise recounts a previous conversation about targeting one section of the building.

Unfinished Recreation center and contractor accountability.

- Community frustrated with delayed park project, considering fines for contractors who don't complete on time or budget.
- Committee member expresses frustration with contractors making bad deals and repeatedly sending projects back to the drawing board.

Construction delays and safety concerns in a NYC park.

- Residents express frustration with lack of affordable housing options in the Bronx.
- Members discuss potential tour of unfinished Recreation Center.

Missing deadlines and playground upgrade.

- Ngande Ambroise expresses frustration with lack of detail on project delays and issues.
- Committee members debate bringing in contractors to answer questions about missed deadlines.

Lozada Park Playground

- Upgrade sport and play areas for climate resilience, flood.
- Danny Su, NYC Park Rep, highlights the importance of green spaces and play areas in the park, based on community input.
- Danny Su discusses the redesign of a park, including the addition of new play equipment and site furnishings, and the reorientation of the basketball court to improve sunlight and visual connectivity between areas.
- The park's new design features a lowered fence, new light poles safety surface, and light-colored pavers to reduce the heat island effect and create a cooling effect beneath the trees.

Park design and safety features.

- Danny Su highlights the inclusion of trees in the design and the increased permeability, while Ngande Ambroise expresses safety concerns for children in the park.
- Community involvement was key in designing the playground, with requests from virtual and in-person meetings incorporated into the design.
- Planners aim to increase greenery in park by 19% while prioritizing safety zones for play equipment.

Playground renovation and public safety concerns.

- Argelia Ortiz asks about the use of solar-powered light poles in the district, citing their potential to provide better lighting in dark areas.
- Tim Rowe explains that solar-powered light poles are not currently an option due to maintenance standards set by the NYC Department of Design & Construction.
- Budget constraints prevented the upgrade of the public restroom in the playground project.
- Committee discussed public safety concerns at the playground.

School construction and playground access.

- The members to address potential loss of play area for students during construction.

- Tim Rowe discusses soil testing.
- Katerine Broome, NYC Parks Rep, clarifies that jointly operating agreements with Department of Education are in place for the multipurpose area.
- Argelia Ortiz shares concerns about parents dropping off their children at school in the morning, with Katerine Broome adding that neighborhood kids cannot participate in school activities during school hours.

Park improvements and community input.

- Member Argelia Ortiz and NYC Park Rep Tim Rowe express concern about the removal of flat seats in the park, citing safety issues for children.
- Tim Rowe suggests the possibility of installing a chair with straps to address dog bite concerns.
- Parks requests support for a park project, while Ngande Ambroise discusses a condition and a motion to vote for support.

Action Items

Take back St. Mary's Recreation Center concerns and requests to Parks Dept, ask for regular updates.

Research options for solar-powered lighting in parks

Advocate for more green space in Lozada Playground

Motion for letter of support for Capital Improvement Plans for Lozada Park.