

BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 9

Antonio Reynoso
Borough President

Dante B. Arnwine
District Manager

Fred P. Baptiste
Chair

Ethan Norville
1st Vice Chair

Felice Robertson
2nd Vice Chair

Linda Watson-Lorde
Executive Secretary

Mayna Legoute
Treasurer

Nicolas Almonor
Member-at-Large

(vacant)
Member-at-Large

BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 9 RESOLUTION PRESERVE GREEN SPACE IN MOUNT PROSPECT PARK AND OPPOSE BUILDING A PAVED SKATE COMPLEX ON URBAN GREEN PARK SPACE

WHEREAS, Mayor Eric Adams, with the support of Council Member Crystal Hudson and Brooklyn Borough President Reynoso (“Elected Supporters”), in January 2024 announced a plan to construct a 40,000-square-foot, regional-scale, mostly paved skateboarding complex on urban green park space in Mount Prospect Park (“The MPP Skate Facility”); and

WHEREAS, the Elected Supporters have provided only limited and insufficient opportunities for Community Board 9 to weigh in on the MPP Skate Facility and its impact in Mount Prospect Park despite an outpouring of community concern about its location, design and impacts; and

WHEREAS, the MPP Skate Facility originated with participatory budgeting centered in Park Slope and District 39 (now represented by Council Member Shahana Hanif) – and not in Crown Heights or Prospect Heights or District 35, such that Council Member Hanif is supporting construction of this project outside her district; and

WHEREAS, the MPP Skate Facility is championed by California-based celebrity skateboarder Tony Hawk whose foundation, The Skatepark Project, is donating in-kind design services, but would be financed entirely by public money; and

WHEREAS, Mount Prospect Park’s inherent features violate the Skatepark Project foundation’s own, published, “best practices” guidelines, in that the steep grade and raised plateau of Mount Prospect Park mean there are no sightlines from street level, which Hawk’s foundation says are necessary to deter potential problematic activity in a skate facility; and



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 9

WHEREAS, The MPP Skate Facility would pose a serious danger to those who access Mount Prospect Park via the ramp entrance including people pushing strollers, elderly and frail people, small children accessing the playground, people walking pets, people who use mobility aids or who have disabilities and skateboarders themselves from skaters “hill-bombing” down that crowded access ramp, which empties into the Brooklyn Botanic Garden’s entrance and Eastern Parkway’s busy pedestrian and car traffic; and

WHEREAS, the Parks Department, Tony Hawk and the Skatepark Project are pushing for a novel skate facility design which they refer to as a “skate garden” that would incorporate skate elements under trees and within greenery at grade with the rest of Mount Prospect and without any barriers to the Park’s other uses, but which has never been built or tested before; and

WHEREAS, Many Parks Department skate sites nearby draw skaters’ complaints over their design and degraded condition; and

WHEREAS, Park debris like twigs and pebbles, which create dangerous conditions for skaters, naturally falls and scatters in the park and will create a constant peril of falls and injuries; and

WHEREAS, The Parks Department Operating Expense budget is subject to significant cuts in the 2024 budgeting cycle and neither the Elected Supporters, the City, the Parks Department, Tony Hawk nor his Skatepark Project have articulated a plan or allocated a budget to maintain or monitor the success of this experimental project, and

WHEREAS, the second Mount Prospect Park entrance, features a steep railed stone stairway and extended raised banister that also empties into Eastern Parkway’s crowded sidewalk next to the Central Library’s children’s wing, which based on online comments from skaters, would be an attractive feature to skate; and



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 9

WHEREAS, Particular groups in Community Board 9 rely on and thrive by having access to Mount Prospect Park, including but not limited to local daycares, schools, and camps; families with dogs; and children who enjoy pickup games of soccer and frisbee, celebrating birthdays in the park, etc.; and

WHEREAS, Mount Prospect Park is a thriving and well used park in which locals build community and visitors flock to, especially given how little shade there is to spare on Prospect Park's sprawling lawns; and

WHEREAS, elderly people, people with physical disabilities, and people with high sensitivity to stimuli seek refuge in Mount Prospect Park, people with small children make special use of Mount Prospect Park because although, vibrant and busy, it is easy-to-navigate, more easily accessible and enclosed in contrast to Prospect Park and its loop (i.e. it serves a different purpose than Prospect Park); and

WHEREAS, our neighborhoods are set to expand substantially with the City's proposed Atlantic Avenue Mixed-Use Plan and it is important to preserve greenspaces for our new neighbors to enjoy; and

WHEREAS, paving green spaces worsens dangerous heat effects and heat islands; and

WHEREAS, the Brooklyn Public Library, which is directly next door to Mount Prospect Park, runs a crucial cooling center, and a community member analyzed satellite data from August 2023 that showed temperatures about 13 degrees higher in NYC skate facilities (even where some shade was present) as compared to adjacent green space; and

WHEREAS, MPP Skate Facility's construction could endanger the tree canopy, which is vital to combating harmful heat even if trees are not cut down; and

WHEREAS, paving green space exacerbates stormwater impacts, flooding, and sewer overflow, which will compound Mount Prospect Park's well-known drainage and flooding problems; and



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 9

WHEREAS, Converting green space to concrete is contrary to and flies in the face of climate resiliency design guidance; and any new drainage and flooding interventions should be added to address the existing and growing problem – not added to offset new paving; and

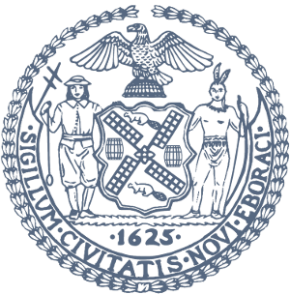
WHEREAS, Other environmental impacts of a skate complex in Mount Prospect Park include increased noise from skating and events, and increased local sidewalk and street traffic on a block already jammed with tourist attractions and frequent events; and

WHEREAS, Community Board 9, local organizations and community members are deeply concerned about these environmental, climate, access, and safety concerns of constructing a paved structure in Mount Prospect Park's precious green space welcome the construction of a skate facility in our neighborhood with open arms and also welcome skateboarders into our communities; and

WHEREAS, The Parks Department and the Elected Supporters have produced no analysis of the economic, environmental and health impacts of substituting a single use paved complex for multi-use free public green space; and

WHEREAS, the City and the Parks Department have run an opaque site selection process whereby they have not solicited public input into choosing Mount Prospect Park as the location for a skate facility nor have they explained why there are no already-paved alternative locations available in Crown Heights, Prospect Heights or Park Slope; and

WHEREAS, while Community Board 9 believes it is bad public policy to convert green space to concrete skate space, Community Board 9 believes it is great public policy to build facilities (including skate facilities) in our backyard for children and people of all backgrounds.



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 9

THEREFORE, is it **RESOLVED**, Brooklyn Community Board 9 **opposes** the construction of a paved skateboarding facility on precious urban green space in Mount Prospect Park; and

It is **ALSO RESOLVED**, we call upon the Elected Supporters to heed community input on the proposed MPP Skate Facility; and

It is **FURTHER RESOLVED**, we call upon the City and the Parks Department to seriously consider alternative locations for this ambitious project right here in Prospect Heights and Crown Heights.

ADOPTED: JUNE 24, 2024