



Sept 1, 2020

1. Friends' volunteer program is underway! The Neighborhood Gardener program is in full swing with sessions on Tuesdays-Fridays in different areas in the Park. Tuesdays are in the West Village, Wednesdays are either downtown in Tribeca or uptown in Clinton. Thursdays and Fridays take place in Chelsea. We keep it to under five volunteers per session and it is usually about 2-3 people. Openings are available for individual volunteers.

We've had 3 Saturday projects so far including a painting project, shoreline cleanup at Pier 76 and a horticulture cleanup in the Habitat Garden. The next shoreline cleanup at Pier 76 will take place on September 12th and we will have another horticulture cleanup and cutback later in September in the Tribeca section of HRPK. Bulbing around the Park starts in October!

Staff and volunteers must follow PPE protocols, including wearing masks at all times sign waivers, etc., and place barriers around their work areas so that the public doesn't get too close.

1. Park coalition update: Parks and Open Space Partners - NYC

A. Budget cuts of 14% for NYC city parks department in FY21.

Additional cuts expected to the parks department. Noticeable effects on reduced garbage pick-up, maintenance and security have been causing community complaints and a fear that city-run parks in general were going to the "bad old days." So far HRPK has not had a lot of similar complaints.

B. New private funding available for parks partners in 2021 from additional foundations that are contributing to the Green Relief and Recovery fund. We continue to work with the coalition to seek funding from foundations to help NYC Park and Open space organizations during this challenging time. Funding for 4 of the 9 seasonal gardeners came from the Green Relief fund. The rest came from our board and other private donors.

C. The final \$300,000 remaining in the park and open space partners "pot" is being discussed right now with a suggestion that some kind of coordinated communications campaign be undertaken to keep the focus on parks and their critical role in urban life and the city's economy front and center, particularly as the weather cools off. Also, coalition will be meeting with future candidates for the city's 2021 elections.

D. Press: the coalition has secured positive stories in the press on the importance of funding Parks as essential during the pandemic for the mental health of everyone. We also recently had a great NYT story on park equity and ensuring all New Yorkers have access to our parks.

https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/nyregion/nyc-parks-access-governors-island.html?mc_cid=cbe087deea&mc_eid=ff34fee88f

Other related articles including the Building Congress report on Parks & Open spaces attached.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/nyregion/nyc-parks-trash.html?referringSource=articleShare>

<https://citylimits.org/2020/08/21/opinion-budget-cuts-to-city-parks-this-year-will-worsen-decades-of-underinvestment/>

<https://www.philanthropy.com/article/Safely-Reopening-America/249215>

1. Hudson River Park Friends will have a virtual UnGala.

October 21 at 8 PM. We hope many of you can join and support the Park. We are half way to our fundraising goal. Donations are at all levels. Invite and information is below and attached.



At Friends, we're excited to announce our [2020 UnGala](#) celebration of Hudson River Park on October 21st at 8 PM. This year, we will be celebrating in a different kind of way - at-home with all of our Park friends and supporters! See attached and below for the UnGala Save the Date.

As the Park's fundraising partner, HRPK Friends needs your support now more than ever. We recognize that many critical organizations need your help to weather the current storm, and Friends is no exception. Private funding is vital for annual Park operations, maintenance, and programming, and HRPK Friends provides

essential support for the Park's environmental, educational, cultural, horticultural and sustainability programs.

Make your UnGala Donor Drive contribution today and help us reach our \$1 million goal by October 21. Click here: <https://hudsonriverpark.org/get-involved/gala/donor-drive/>

Please let me know if/how I can help facilitate your UnGala pledge or gift to support of Hudson River Park's UnGala!

TONY SIMONE
Director of External Affairs