



✓ Pleasant Village Community Garden, Inc. ✓



Sunnyside Community Garden



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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Joint Statement to Protect NYC's At-Risk GreenSpaces

(New York, NY, April 20, 2021) - Green space has always been a vital part of New York City. Throughout this global pandemic, the need for our parks, community gardens, and open spaces has been emphasized more than ever before. Despite their importance, many of our green spaces are under threat; from devastating cuts to our budgets, to dubious contract stipulations. Communities across the city are too often left with the false choices put forth by our city government and by private developers that leave neighborhood treasures at-risk of being negatively impacted or completely destroyed.

This is a city-wide issue, and this Earth Day, April 22, we're calling on all New Yorkers, representatives, and 2021 candidates to treat it as such and join us as we protect Mother Earth in NYC. #EarthDayActionNYC

Elected officials and candidates: don't stop at vague statements about climate change, we want real action and transparency. Pledge to protect these and other at-risk green spaces across the city, tell us how you're going to do so. We want details.

New Yorkers, your vote counts and the upcoming elections will determine the future of many generations of our city. Let the city-wide candidates and your local candidates know if they want your vote, you want their commitment to protecting NYC's at-risk green spaces.

East River Park ACTION

East River Park ACTION (ERPA) is a grassroots nonprofit community organization fighting the current East Side Coastal Resiliency (ESCR) project at East River Park in Lower Manhattan, a largely middle to low income area, where it is faced with the imminent threat of bulldozers everyday for an environmental disastrous flood resiliency plan that had no community input. ERPA is demanding: interim flood protection; a stop to the ESCR plan now during the pandemic; an independent review of the ESCR plan by engineers, environmental scientists, and public health experts. ERPA is also seeking transparency through their lawsuit for an unredacted version of the Value Engineering Study, where possibly less destructive alternatives were reviewed and passed over for this current plan that involves the total destruction of the Park (46 acres), in its entirety.

Elizabeth Street Garden (ESG)

Elizabeth Street Garden is a community garden providing over 20,000 sq ft of vital public green space along with hundreds of free public programs. The garden is currently at risk of being destroyed by the city for a mixed use building that includes 123 units of non-permanent affordable housing for seniors, 4,400 sq ft of luxury retail space, and 11,200 sq ft of office space for the developer. While ESG is currently involved in a lawsuit to save the garden, we continue to advocate for the proposed development to be built at an alternative location, in the same community board district, that can provide up to 5x the amount of units for those in need. Affordable housing and community green space should never come at the expense of one another, nor do they have to with proper long-term city planning.

Metro Area Governors Island Coalition (M.A.G.I.C.)

M.A.G.I.C. supports preservation of the incredibly unique green open space quality of Governors Island - an irreplaceably peaceful public place in the middle of New York harbor visited by New Yorkers from 99% of the city's zip codes. It is home to a national monument and a historic district, and provides space for education, the arts, playgrounds, athletic fields and environmental projects. The City's currently proposed up-rezoning of the island's south area must be withdrawn. MAGIC has an Alternative Vision that will prevent this urban refuge from becoming essentially a backyard for a massive high-rise high-density corporate-style facility.

Save Central Park NYC

The mission of Save Central Park NYC is to mobilize the public to share their concern with elected officials about the impact of the proliferation of Megatowers on all sides (south, north, east and west) of Central Park. We need to halt the frenzied pace of new construction around the park pending adoption of zoning modifications and/or legislation that will benefit the city for generations to come. This battle to save our parks and neighborhoods from overdevelopment must be fought in the City, State and in the Courts. The time is now to #CloseTheLoopholes that developers are abusing to create soaring and out-of-context towers.

Graniteville Wetlands

The Environmental Justice community of Graniteville Staten Island and the mobile home community of elderly, disabled and low income people nearby, are in great danger of flooding, especially if we lose the 18 acre wetland to development. The loss of 1800 trees to a BJs, a parking lot for 835 cars, a gas station and two additional buildings, will leave us with no protection from climate; change and the air pollution coming from the expressway, the airport and the chemical refineries in close proximity We cannot lose this wetland!

Movement To Protect the People

For the past decade residents in the Crown Heights/Flatbush community have been fighting to protect our green spaces from real estate interests whose only focus is making money. Our community was targeted not only because we border both the Brooklyn Botanic Garden “BBG” and Prospect Park but because it is a low to moderate income community of color whose has a history of political corruption. Currently the largest development project in Brooklyn is being proposed along the parameter of BBG, which would destroy over 50% of the plant life at this garden within ten years. Despite this, the City has certified this application, showing not in words but in deeds just how vulnerable our green spaces are and how if we the people do not protect them they will be destroyed.

New York City Community Garden Coalition

The New York City Community Garden Coalition, (NYCCGC) founded in 1996, advocates for the 550+ community gardens citywide. Our community garden partners organized against the 2019 GreenThumb license because of the restrictive nature of the agreement. Among the issues were different sets of rules in the license, the GreenThumb Handbook and the rules and regulations of the NYC Parks and Recreation Department. Waiver of Trial by Jury, Liability concerns and the inability to appropriately fundraise to maintain the community gardens were also at issue. NYCCGC seeks a fair license that addresses how GreenThumb administers the community gardens and how resources are allocated. The structural inequalities of the City, apparent to almost all community gardeners need to be fully addressed as they apply to food security and land tenure.

Friends of Pelham Parkway

Friends of Pelham Parkway founded in mid July 2017 in response to the lack of maintenance, trash piles and littered grounds. We organized successfully against the ban on feeding birds and squirrels in parks which opened the discussion for the need of native trees. Currently we are organizing against a tree planting plan that is an environmental injustice due to lack of community input and inequality of trees. We need native trees that benefit all living beings and address climate change as opposed to the trend of cutting down trees and replacing them with ornamental shrubs and nonnative trees if any are planted. We ask for equity in maintenance, equity in trees, and equity in nature rich green spaces. Protect Our Green Spaces.

Flower Lovers' Against Corruption Statement

Flower Lovers Against Corruption came together when it was clear that our local elected officials along with big real estate interests were determined to make money by casting over a 7-mile radius of shade onto the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and Prospect Park. We understood that our public green spaces are at serious risk because the emphasis on park and garden views would outweigh the protection of these sensitive ecosystems. Thus, we join together with our fellow green space lovers and say, enough is enough we must protect our public green spaces before they are completely gone.

CityWide People's Land Use Alliance

CityWide People's Land Use Alliance is a citywide group of over 30 community organizations who are against the excessive influence of big real estate on our city. Private development seizes land and deprives our green spaces of air and sunlight. The City's green space is very limited and is essential to our psychological, emotional, spiritual and physical health and must be protected.