

**Brooklyn Borough President Recommendation**

**CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

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**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Return this completed form with any attachments to the Calendar Information Office, City Planning Commission, Room 2E at the above address.

2. Send one copy with any attachments to the applicant's representatives as indicated on the Notice of Certification.

**APPLICATION #: 140227 MCK**

**Red Hook Park Ballfield Number Three  
Major Concession**

In the matter of an application submitted by the Department of Parks and Recreation, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for a Major Concession to Xavier High School to use and renovate Red Hook Park Field Number Three:

COMMUNITY DISTRICT NO. 6

BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN

**RECOMMENDATION – 140227 MCK**

APPROVE

APPROVE WITH

MODIFICATIONS/CONDITIONS

DISAPPROVE

DISAPPROVE WITH

MODIFICATIONS/CONDITIONS

BOROUGH PRESIDENT

April 25, 2014

DATE

## **RECOMMENDATION FOR RED HOOK PARK MAJOR CONCESSION 140227 MCK**

The applicant, the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), proposes to grant a major concession to Xavier High School (Xavier) to use and renovate Red Hook Park Field Number Three.

On March 19, 2014, the Borough President held a public hearing on the proposed major concession. A representative for Xavier noted that the installation of the light fixtures as well as the resurfacing of the track are entirely meant to be community benefits, as Xavier is not seeking a permit for the track and its intended field hours do not require field lighting. The type of surface, "field turf," percolates water to the subsurface and is a flexible turf that is a vast improvement on earlier version of synthetic surfaces; it will thus minimize knee and ankle injuries. In addition, it will keep the field open throughout the year, as DPR ceased field use twice a year to reseed and allow the new grass to get established.

Given the approximately 500 expanded hours of use, the Brooklyn Borough Parks Commissioner expressed intent to work with the local community to develop community-based leagues and that time allotments would be blocked out for more casual non-league play. Due to the condition of the field, interest for league play has decreased, though with the improvement it is anticipated that there will be demand for available permit slots.

The Commissioner noted that most hours, when the field is reserved for use by Xavier, the track will still be open to the public. Though, as a safety precaution, this would not be the case for Xavier home games when spectators need to be accommodated. In addition, for six track meets there would be no use of the field as a measure to assure the safety of the runners.

The representative for Xavier noted that the construction is expected to take about four months and that it can proceed during the winter, provided there would not be extreme weather conditions. This time of year would result in the least interruption to league play. Regardless of what month the final approval is in place, the construction would take place during the late fall of that year, though it is uncertain whether it could start in 2014. If any scheduled league play were to conflict with the construction sequencing, it is agency practice to accommodate youth organizations as nearby as possible and thus defer adult leagues nearby to make such accommodations or shift such adult leagues to another facility if available.

Finally, the Deputy Borough President noted the Borough President's policy to maximize job opportunities for Brooklynites on local construction projects and was seeking for the applicant to incorporate Brooklyn-based contractors, including participation by MWBEs and Brooklyn material supply firms in the construction process. The representative of Xavier noted that the field turf installation requires specialized contractors, where locally-based firms are in either Long Island or New Jersey, though it might be feasible for those working at the direction of the foreman to be locally-based hires. DPR has shared with the president of Xavier the importance of pursuing locally-sourced contractors/supplier and their willingness to assist with achieving participation by MWBE firms.

In response to concern expressed by a representative of Assemblymember Ortiz regarding accommodations for surrounding schools and after-school programming, the Commissioner noted

how arrangements are made to layout soccer fields in the combined outfields of other Red Hook Park fields and that the lighting will result in a year-round 6 PM to 8 PM permit slot reserved for youth programming, while slots through midnight would be established as this park is separated by ball fields and commercial uses from the nearest residential occupancy. When permits become available (several months before actual availability) they are typically filled on a first come, first served basis online as follows: <https://www.nycgovparks.org/permits/field-and-court/request>

#### **CONSIDERATION**

Community Board 6 approved the application.

For the last ten years, Xavier has been a recognized DPR permit holder for practicing on Field Number Three and other locations in Red Hook Park. Xavier has been a user of Ballfield Number Three since the 1950's.

All recreational fields within Red Hook Park contain field lights, except for Ballfield Number Three. Its playing surface is extremely worn due to its heavy use and the difficulties involved for DPR to maintain a seeded lawn. Such maintenance puts the field out of service for over two weeks while the seeds take hold and grow.

Xavier is proposing to undertake capital improvements to renovate the field, including replacing the worn grass surfacing with synthetic turf, installing field lights for evening play, which will increase playing time for the larger community on a yearly basis, resurfacing the perimeter running track and reconstructing the existing chain link fence. Xavier intends to use the field primarily for football use, though other uses may include soccer, rugby and lacrosse. Although the running track would be improved by Xavier, it would not be part of the concession agreement for specific use by Xavier.

This renovation and subsequent dedicated use would be subject to a major concession to allow the intended construction, while specifying dates and time that Xavier would have exclusive use of the field. Xavier would gain an increase in the number of hours of exclusive use, though DPR would gain a greater number of available hours for Field Number Three to be available for others to use. Additionally, the improved recreational facility will be easier for DPR to maintain for the local community; maintenance will remain the responsibility of DPR and be subject to DPR's Inspection Program.

A major concession is being pursued because the area affected by the DPR permit to Xavier exceeds 30,000 square feet (approximately 73,500 sf) of a separate parcel of parkland. The concession would be for a ten-year term that schedules use by Xavier for roughly between the hours of 3 PM to 6 PM between September and May and for a several hours, time window to be determined, during weekdays during two weeks in August.

It is the Borough President's policy to support land use actions would benefit the neighborhood while providing additional recreational resources through the expanded hours of use and resulting in employment opportunities during construction.

The Borough President supports DPR's intent not to immediately fill the 500 hours of new field usage through permits as a means to allow locally-based leagues to develop. He further endorses DPR's intent to keep slots available for informal community use.

The construction pursuant to the major concession would create opportunities for jobs preparing the surface for the installation of "field turf" and the track surface, as well as the installation of lighting fixtures and chain link fence.

Though the Borough President is generally supportive of the major concession, he seeks assurances regarding the timing of the field being out of use to accommodate construction and that there will be a maximization of Brooklyn-based participation as part of the construction.

The Borough President believes that, in order to assure the least conflict with league play, the intent to commence with construction in the late fall should actually be memorialized in the major concession documentation; he urges DPR to have such commitment language in place prior to action being taken by the City Council and that such a work restriction be incorporated into relevant bid specification documents.

The Borough President is concerned that too many residents of Brooklyn are unemployed or underemployed. It is his policy to promote economic development as a means of creating more employment opportunities as well as promoting Brooklyn-based businesses, including those that qualify as MWBE and Locally-Based Enterprises (LBE). As new construction, this development provides an opportunity for Xavier High School to retain Brooklyn-based contractors and subcontractors, especially those that are designated LBEs consistent with section 6-108.1 of the City's Administrative Code and MWBE establishments as a means to meet or exceed standards per Local Law 1 (not less than twenty percent participation).

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Be it resolved that the Borough President of Brooklyn, pursuant to sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter, recommends that the City Planning Commission and City Council approve the land use action requested according to the following conditions:

1. The Department of Parks and Recreation memorialize in the major concession documents that construction must commence in the late fall and that such work a restriction be incorporated into relevant bid specification documents.
2. Xavier retains Brooklyn-based contractors and subcontractors, especially those that are designated LBEs consistent with section 6-108.1 of the City's Administrative Code and MWBE establishments as a means to meet or exceed standards per Local Law 1 (not less than twenty percent participation) and that such firms pursue the hiring of residents in Red Hook.