

ASSEMBLY MEMBER
REBECCA A. SEAWRIGHT



ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 76
SeawrightR@nyassembly.gov

Dear Neighbor,

Thank you for contacting our office regarding the hill at Carl Schurz Park across from 200 East End Avenue. I understand your concern for the park throughout the emergency repairs to the Esplanade between 88th and 89th Streets and I welcome the opportunity to respond.

First and foremost, I would like to invite you to the groundbreaking ceremony for the East River Esplanade Phase I reconstruction project, which was previously postponed, now rescheduled for tomorrow, July 21, at 10:30 a.m. It will take place on the John Finley Walk in Carl Schurz Park at E. 88th Street near Gracie Mansion. I hope you will join us on this remarkable occasion to mark the beginning of Phase 1 for the improvement of our beloved park and backyard.

With regards to the emergency repairs to the esplanade, our office contacted the New York City Department of Parks to inquire about the status of the project due to concerns for the safety, the reduction of park space and the detours during the project. On Thursday, July 13, 2017, Community Board 8 Parks and Recreation Committee held their meeting and heard comments from the community. Commissioner Castro attended the meeting where he assured community members that they are not flattening the hill or filling it with gravel, and that trucks will not be parked there. Currently, the plans are to have the access route to the esplanade on the south side of the hill. Some gravel is being placed on the lawn to create the temporary roadway. There are plans to re-sod the lawn at the completion of the work in May 2018. Unfortunately, the hill will not be accessible until the completion of this part of the project in May 2018.

On Friday, July 14 at 12:30pm, our office joined a conference call with Chief of Staff to Commissioner Castro Steve Simon and the project managers to receive an update on the detours that are planned for esplanade access until May 2018. The following detours were agreed upon for cyclists to avoid the FDR service road and to utilize existing bike paths. These changes were implemented on Monday, July 17, 2017:

- Those who are traveling Southbound from 96th Street will proceed to Second Avenue, travel along the Second Avenue protected bike lane and re-enter the path using the 90th Street crosstown bike path.
- Those who are traveling Northbound from will travel to First Avenue using the 89th Street crosstown bike path, travel along the First Avenue protected bike lane and re-enter the path at East 96th Street.
- This detour will be in effect until the completion of the project in May 2018.

Here is an official statement issued by the Parks Department:

“This area is not being demolished nor planned as a parking lot. Temporarily, as a necessary part of the Phase 1 East River Esplanade reconstruction project, this area will be used for contractor access to the esplanade.

“This area is being used to protect public safety during construction. The planned access route keeps as much of the park open to the public as possible. When construction is completed, the space will be restored and reopened to the public. We look to do this as quickly as possible.”

Thank you again for contacting our office. If I may be of further service, please call upon me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rebecca A. Stewart". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of the rest of the page.