

This PDF includes a chapter from the following book:

Rebuilding Central Park

A Management and Restoration Plan

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Acknowledgements

A great long-term project such as the rebuilding of Central Park requires the creativity, collaboration and commitment of many people as well as the combination of many talents. Because the Park is a work of landscape art and a treasured New York City landmark, the primary authors of this plan are landscape professionals. But government officials, architects, engineers, urban sociologists, wildlife experts, and others have also played a large role in its development.

Mayor Edward I. Koch, by giving Park staff and consultants the widest latitude possible to entertain goals and objectives, has been a subtly potent force in its development. Parks Commissioner Henry J. Stern, actively involved in the day-to-day administration of the Park, has provided valuable counsel and leadership. Deputy Parks Commissioner Robert Russo and Manhattan Borough Commissioner Patrick J. Pomposello have lent managerial and operational expertise; Deputy Commissioner for Capital Projects Alan Moss has helped forge the strategy for the public-private funding of the restoration enterprise. Assistant Commissioner for Revenue Joanne Imohiosen has been especially helpful in attracting and supervising concessionaires that participate in the plan's objectives and uphold its standards.

Several consultants have contributed studies and reports which form the basis for many of the plan's conclusions and recommendations. William Kornblum and Terrance Williams of the Department of Urban Sociology at CUNY undertook a user analysis that provided much of the information to be found in "A Park for the People" (page 23). Lockwood, Kessler and Bartlett, Consulting Engineers, performed a hydrology study of Central Park and assisted the landscape team in developing some of the conclusions found in "Topography, Soils and Drainage" (page 45). Also contributing information to that chapter were the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, which respectively

undertook surveys of the Park's soils and water quality. John Hecklau, a biologist, wrote a comprehensive wildlife report that gave important insight into the quantities and behavior of the Park's bird, mammal, reptile, amphibian, invertebrate and insect populations, and its conclusions are reflected in "Vegetation and Wildlife" (page 55). Pamela F. Tice, former Executive Director of the Central Park Conservancy, prepared a management study that was particularly useful in portraying current Park management practices as outlined in "Managing Central Park" (page 75).

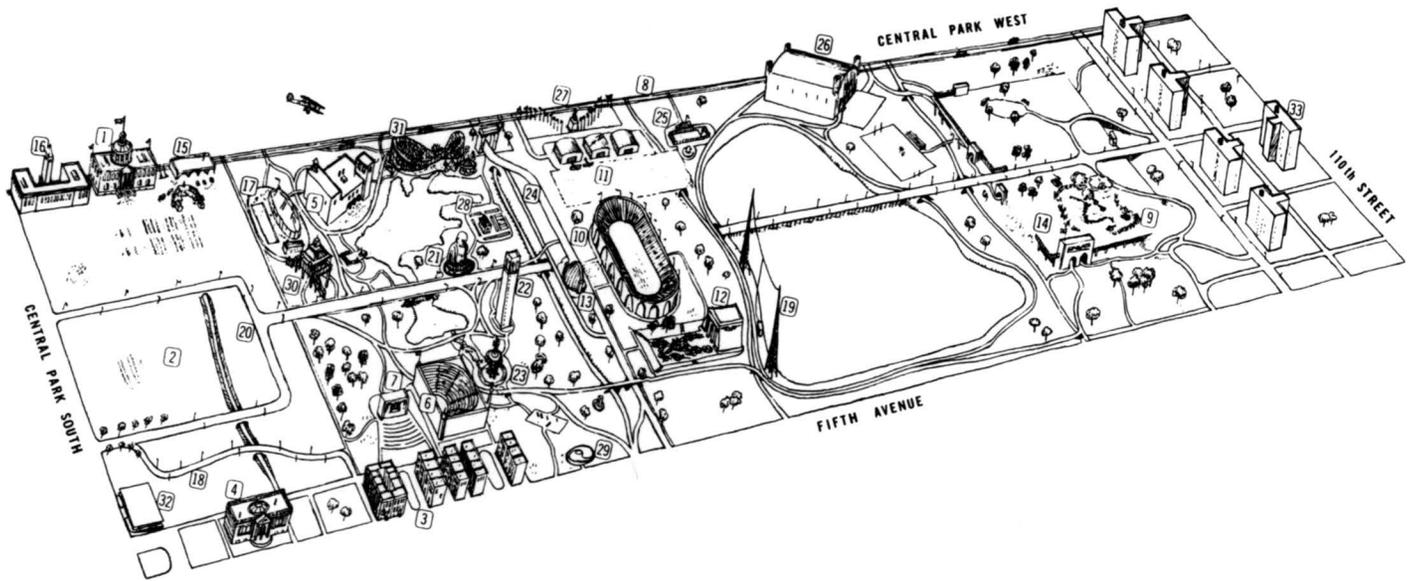
The greatest help of all, however, has come from the men and women who work everyday in the Park and out of whose lives and careers the plan is taking substance. Ron Cianciulli, Chief of Operations for Central Park, is conceiving and supervising various strategies to upgrade maintenance and morale. Marianne Cramer, one of the authors of the plan, is currently the Assistant Administrator for Design and Planning, and, as such, she oversees the landscape architectural staff responsible for refining the plan and developing working drawings for the numerous projects that constitute its implementation. Timothy Marshall, Assistant Central Park Administrator for Construction and Preservation, has formed restoration crews capable of building rustic shelters, repairing stairs and walls and removing graffiti. In addition, he supervises projects built by outside contractors. Marie Ruby, Assistant Central Park Administrator for Visitor Services, continues to enrich and expand the programs offered at the Dairy, Belvedere, Bandshell and Conservatory Garden. She also supervises an active volunteer program. Frank Serpe, Director of Central Park Horticulture, is responsible to a significant degree for reestablishing grounds-keeping (arboriculture, turf care, planting) in Central Park. Marie Sarchiapone is responsible for researching bronze and stone conservation techniques, and her crew deserves credit for keeping Central Park graffiti-free.

Staff photographer Sara Cedar Miller has taken most of the contemporary photographs in this document and has researched various photographic archives for historic views. Finally, we owe a special debt of gratitude to Heidi Humphrey, who has overseen the graphic production of this publication, and to Timothy Purcell, who has typed all of the drafts and revised drafts as well as the final manuscript.

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In summary, the existence of this plan is product of the moral and financial commitment of the City of New York and its public servants as well as the faith of the trustees of the Central Park Conservancy and its many friends in the exhilarating enterprise of rebuilding the Park and operating it as a dynamic and cherished institution.

Elizabeth Barlow Rogers
Central Park,
August, 1986



“Improvements” Suggested for Central Park since 1900

- 1. Exposition Building, 1903.
- 2. Drill ground, 1904.
- 3. Selling off lower park for building lots, 1904; proposed for west side of Fifth Avenue by Mayor La Guardia in 1930s.
- 4. Building for National Academy of Design, 1909.
- 5. Opera House, 1910.
- 6. Outdoor theater seating 50,000, 1911; opera amphitheater proposed 1933.
- 7. Marionette theater, 1912; proposed again, 1964 and 1965.
- 8. Relocation of Central Park West streetcar tracks, 1917.
- 9. Trenches in North Meadow as war display, 1918.
- 10. Large stadium, 1919.
- 11. Airplane field, 1919.
- 12. Sunken oriental garden, Memorial Hall for war trophies and sports amphitheater, 1920.
- 13. Music stand and road connecting drives to be called Mitchel Memorial, 1920.
- 14. Underground parking lot for 30,000 cars, 1921; proposed many times since.
- 15. Police garage, 1921.
- 16. Music and Art Center, 1922.

- 17. Swimming pool, circus and running track, 1923.
- 18. Filling in of Pond for new driveway, 1923.
- 19. Radio towers for city radio station, 1923.
- 20. Central roadway to relieve city’s traffic congestion, 1923.
- 21. Statue of Buddha, 1925.
- 22. Carillon tower, 1925.
- 23. Fountain of the Seasons, 1929.
- 24. Promenade connecting Metropolitan and Natural History museums, 1930.
- 25. Recreation building and swimming pool, 1935.
- 26. Armory and stables, 1940.
- 27. Plaza of South America, 8 acres, 1941.
- 28. Recreation Center for the Elderly, 1955.
- 29. Garden for the Blind, 1955.
- 30. El Station as monument to Elevated Railroad, 1955.
- 31. Amusement Center, 1955.
- 32. Huntington Hartford Outdoor Café, 1960.
- 33. Housing Project, 106th to 110th Streets, 1964.

Sketch by Ken Fitzgerald, based on information supplied by Alan Becker