

Lynne Serpe, 22nd CD

2009 CANDIDATE SURVEY

What do you believe are the top priority park issues that need to be addressed in your district and citywide?

We need more community gardens. I am on the Steering Committee of Two Coves Community Garden, located adjacent to Astoria House. We have over 200 active gardeners, a waiting list of several dozen and more each weekend as local area residents pass by and see the garden grow and flourish. There is an enormous demand throughout the city for safe, green spaces where people can grow food, flowers and friendship.

The City Council should work in conjunction with "No Child Left Inside" legislation to promote, encourage and fund environmental educational programming to get every NYC child to a NYC shoreline and in *or on* the water. In District 22, we are surrounded by water on the west and northern boundaries and yet public access to the waterfront is limited. As Councilwoman, I will work with Con Edison, LaGuardia Airport, and private property owners to ensure that residents have easy, safe and connective public access to local waterways and waterfront esplanades.

As a volunteer with the LIC Boathouse (which provides free kayaking on the East River and encourages shoreline cleanup by those waiting) I understand first-hand the value of improving the NYC Water Trail and would work to develop kayaking launch sites at Hallet's Point and Luyster Creek in District 22 as well as other parts of the city such as College Point and West Harlem. As a lifelong fisherwoman, I would also work to develop more fishing areas along our 500 miles of shoreline.

District 22 is in dire need of green space between the waterfront and St. Michael's Cemetery - which is counted as open space but not truly used as such. Athens Square Park is a field of asphalt, as are most area playgrounds. I would work with the City to find vacant city-owned lots that could be developed into community green spaces (that do not use artificial turf).

Finally, I believe the City needs to require that *all* municipal buildings, including schools and libraries, should have green roofs. Not only will this lower municipal utility bills and improve our air quality, open and accessible rooftop gardens on our public schools would provide a living classroom and increased green space for our children, while rooftop gardens on our public libraries would provide similar benefits to New Yorkers of all ages.

Securing Adequate Funding / Maintenance for Parks

a. Will you work towards securing long term funding for Parks?

Yes

i. If so, would you consider exploring creative financial models such as Parks Improvement Districts (based on the BID model), tax increment financing (TIF), zoning benefits and public private partnerships to supplement maintenance and operating costs?

Yes. Park Improvement Districts based on the BID model could generate much-needed revenue. Studies show that neighborhood Parks improve the property values of surrounding residential and commercial properties. As Councilwoman, I would also support a pilot tax increment financing (TIF) program for small-scale projects and would look to replicate successful efforts in Chicago and throughout California.

b. Would you support dedicating revenue earned through park concessions to parks maintenance and operations?