

Public Comments

287 Convent Avenue Visioning/Scoping Meeting

Speaker concerned about why the cost of the community center was not considered (secured) before the Grange was moved.

Speaker asked where is the money coming from.

Appropriations, Partnerships

Speaker suggested turning the site into a community garden space in conjunction with local organizations, with neighboring associations and block associations.

Speaker attended exhibit planning meeting and commented on the limited space in the Grange for a Memorial to Hamilton, and incredible person. How can the story of the great man's accomplishments be told?

Speaker suggests NPS needs core partnerships with City College, New York State, New York City to make a real memorial.

Speaker believes site could be an economic generator; church could be used as an extension. City College should establish a Hamilton Chair for scholarly study. Site could be a location to start walking tours. Partnerships can make the vision come true. People especially children need to learn from Hamilton and his impact on the country and city.

Speaker questioned if St. Luke's Church was represented. Thinks there are interesting visions but would like to know what the price tag would be.

Speaker is looking for something more dynamic. Speaker proposes a holding pattern such as garden or farmers market and the establishment of an exploratory committee to evaluate ideas.

Speaker suggested the Foundation Center in lower Manhattan as a good resource for fundraising. Also the Ford Foundation has an open window for submission of grant proposals.

Speaker expressed interest in "Lot B", what can be done for or with the church. NPS could help the church to maintain its property.

One speaker involved in Heritage Heights Village suggests it takes talking to the community, listening and networking to achieve success.

One speaker points out there is not a lot of green space in the area – site needs a children's learning component.

Speaker suggested partnerships be created around Hamilton. Alexander Hamilton Resource Institute.

Speaker supports components of the original vision – interpretive center and community meeting space should be included.

To the point about green space, no one has forgotten about St. Nicholas Park. The space can be used by many including the church for concerts, art shows and educational programs.

Speaker points out the need to talk to each other as neighbors and get involved.

Speaker wants a dynamic garden, site of walking tours, place people want to get married in; space for public art and beauty of smells. Church could be converted to new uses, there is a lot of space for education etc. The area is the architectural gem of northern Manhattan.

Speaker identified space as an issue. Harlem is a cultural capital. Children's Art Carnival has no space to display art. There is no place to put culture under one roof. Site needs to be covered and secure.

One speaker suggests the church is the key. Interpretive functions and community space could be housed in the church.

Speaker suggests plan should give the church some breathing room, which was not considered in 1995.

Speaker suggests there needs to be a long term plan and short term plan. Points out that a grand plan may take ten years and people would still be looking at a hole in the ground.

Speaker suggests there is an opportunity to set up a cultural space particularly for children, not limited to Alexander Hamilton Shrine. It should make known the history of Harlem and the important people of Sugar Hill.

Speaker identified legal question: how can public funds be used in active house of worship; in partnerships with other 501 C. 3s.

Speaker suggests in the short term a garden and the long term the plan should give the church some space perhaps an ATRIUM.

A speaker points out NPS has a responsibility to the nearby residents, home and coop owners. They were in the first line of inconvenience and should be made to feel special for what they have endured. Young people should be treated as special and be involved. Efforts of people involved in the original planning effort should be respected.

Speaker suggests NPS should reach out to John Henry Park House. Suggests cultural icons be featured along St. Nicholas Avenue along the lines of the bronze statues in Philadelphia. Idea would repay itself in tourism revenue. Salvatore Institute

NPS identifies First Bloom Program working with students to design a temporary garden.

Two speakers suggested the Alexander Hamilton Statue remain where it is. One speaker had heard it cannot be moved to the new Grange location. One speaker questioned the location of the plaque moved during the construction.

City College representative indicated a willingness to partner and would take into consideration the ideas and suggestions made. The College is pulling together ideas for what could be done including where the statue resides.

Speaker questions what will happen to the church and recommends a collaborative effort with the church.

One speaker suggests Going Green. Any building/structure should be sustainable – green.

Speaker suggests NPS should have meetings with people in positions to make things happen to determine what is feasible. Project needs to be collaboration.

Speaker suggests NPS needs to find a way to make it work for everybody.

Speaker suggests education should be for young people and adults.

Speaker suggests city college students design the space as a project.

Community Board 9, Parks Committee offers services to facilitate meetings.