

STATE OF NEW YORK

682

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 11, 2023

Introduced by M. of A. DINOWITZ -- read once and referred to the Committee on Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development

AN ACT to dedicate and designate Jerome Park as parkland of the city of New York, and to establish a working group for such park to enhance use thereof

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Legislative intent. The legislature hereby finds that
2 Jerome Park, located around the Jerome Park reservoir, that is located
3 in the borough of the Bronx in the city of New York, has been used for
4 numerous outdoor recreational and open space purposes for over a centu-
5 ry. Furthermore, such park has the potential to incorporate additional
6 urban wildlife sanctuary, outdoor recreational and open space uses for
7 the betterment of the local community. Through the auspices of master
8 plans authorized and approved by the parks and recreation department of
9 the city of New York and work by community groups such as the Jerome
10 Park Conservancy and the Friends of Jerome Park, it is a sound public
11 policy and community benefit to advance the increased use of Jerome Park
12 for additional outdoor recreational and open space uses and to integrate
13 such park functions with the adjacently located Fort Independence Park.
14 Going forward, key elements of the future design of the park should help
15 to preserve its historic essence, reveal its potential as public space,
16 and link places and events with the park to the surrounding community.
17 Finally, such future development of Jerome Park should frame the beauty
18 of the reservoir with a new layer of landscape and purpose.

19 § 2. To achieve the legislative intent articulated in section one of
20 this act, all lands that are contained in Jerome Park, which are located
21 in or adjacent to block 3246, section 12 of the land map of the borough
22 of the Bronx, city of New York, excluding those lands that are the
23 reservoir itself and lands bordering such reservoir shore line that are
24 a distance of ten feet from the outside border of such reservoir shore

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 line shall be dedicated and designated as parkland of the city of New
2 York.

3 § 3. The borough president of the borough of the Bronx may assist in
4 convening a working group for Jerome Park that shall consist of communi-
5 ty stakeholders to establish an action plan for Jerome Park to help
6 foster increased outdoor recreational uses, such as hiking, biking,
7 nature studies, bird watching and other outdoor recreational uses;
8 enhance community enjoyment of such park; and to preserve and enhance
9 open spaces contained within the park. The working group may identify,
10 recommend the design of and financing of capital projects to advance the
11 increased use of Jerome Park for increased outdoor recreational uses and
12 to enhance open spaces. Such capital projects may include, but are not
13 limited to, walking and bicycle pathways; athletic fields and play-
14 grounds; basketball and handball courts; table, seating and picnic
15 areas; establishment of vista seating and viewing areas; related parking
16 areas for bicycles; and nature trails. Membership of such working group
17 shall consist of representatives of local civic and community organiza-
18 tions, Lehman College, local high schools, the state senator, member of
19 assembly and city councilman representing senate, assembly and city
20 council districts in which such park is located, the parks and recre-
21 ation department of the city of New York, the department of environ-
22 mental protection of the city of New York, and other community leaders
23 and stakeholders such as youth, parent and senior citizen organizations.

24 § 4. The working group for Jerome Park shall issue, on or before Janu-
25 ary 1, 2023, a report and findings to satisfy its charge to establish an
26 action plan for Jerome Park to help foster increased outdoor recreation-
27 al uses and community enjoyment of such park and to preserve and enhance
28 open spaces contained within the park. Such report and findings shall be
29 submitted to the Bronx borough president, the mayor of the city of New
30 York, the parks and recreation department of the city of New York, and
31 the department of environmental protection of the city of New York and
32 to the state senator and member of assembly who represent the senate and
33 assembly districts within which such park is located.

34 § 5. After the issuance of such report and findings, such working
35 group shall remain in existence until January 1, 2028 to help implement
36 such action plan. During this period of time, the working group shall
37 work with the state and city agencies to implement such action plan.

38 § 6. This act shall take effect immediately, except that section two
39 of this act shall take effect January 1, 2026.