



Old Astoria Neighborhood Association (OANA)
www.OANA-NY.org

OANA Parks and Playground Security Resolution

April 13, 2016

Our parks and playgrounds are some of our most important institutions. They can define a community. They are where we interact with our neighbors, spend time as a family, connect with nature and keep physically fit.

When our parks and playgrounds are clean and secure, it makes entire neighborhoods better places to live.

To this end, the “Old Astoria Neighborhood Association (OANA) has the following resolution:

OANA Requests that Parks Enforcement Officers (PEP) be domiciled in Astoria and LIC Parks, also for improved lighting, especially in the North End of Astoria Park, but also district wide, and playground gates to be secured at night.

We recently learned that the City Council had approved 65 additional officers. However, not only did our district not get any of the new officers, the entire borough of Queens, which has the largest amount of parkland of any borough, received only 8 additional officers to be domiciled in Corona Park.

Human nature is such that individuals will not change negative behaviors unless there are consequences to their actions. We need tools such as the issuance of summons and the possibility of arrest. In order to accomplish this, we need PEP officers.

Improved lighting throughout the district is an essential for the safety



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of both Parks patrons and those on perimeter sidewalks next to Parks facilities.

Lastly, regarding securing all playground gates secured at night. While we understand the eclectic vision of gateless and fenceless parks (as envisioned by the “Parks Without Borders” policy currently being promoted by the NYC Parks Dept.), we insist that there be a distinction between “Adult Parks” and Playgrounds. There can be no policy that would put our children at risk. You also cannot ask that citizens groups be tasked with locking gates, as they have neither the responsibility nor expertise to remove unruly individuals from Playgrounds.

Recently, a toddler found a crack pipe in Sean's Place playground. Playground users continue to find condoms, garbage, human waste, and drug paraphernalia at Sean's Place as well as at facilities such as Athens Square Park, Dutch Kills Playground, Hoyt Playground and the Astoria Pool Terrace. This is an unacceptable environment for our children.

The three policies above apply common sense solutions to major security issues. We ask that they be instituted as soon as possible.

Richard Khuzami

President, OANA

Note: We also endorse the resolution passed by Community Board 1 on security in Parks and Playgrounds issued on April 19th, 2016.