



THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

Cathedral Station • P.O. Box 1316 • New York, N.Y. 10025 • (212) 539-7602

Website: ThreeParksDems.org • Email: ThreeParksDems@aol.com

President
Merle McEldowney

Editors
Corinne Constantine
Jock Davenport
Richard E. Luna
Lorraine Zamora

District Leaders
Bob Botfeld
Cynthia Doty

State Committee
Lynn Thomas
Daniel Marks Cohen

Happy New Year!

Club Meeting, January 9, 2019, 8:00 pm
The Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Avenue at 103 Street

Guest Speakers:

Candidates for Public Advocate

Agenda

7:45 pm Sign In

8:00 pm Call to Order

District Leader Report

Speakers:

Candidates for Public Advocate

Questions & Answers

Adjourn

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Wednesday, Jan. 23, 8:00 pm
Three Parks Board Meeting

Wednesday, Feb. 13, 8:00 pm
Annual Club Meeting and 2019 Election

Wednesday, Feb. 27, 8:00 pm
Three Parks Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 13, 8:00 pm
Three Parks Club Meeting

Wednesday, March 27, 8:00 pm
Three Parks Board Meeting

President's Report

By Merle McEldowney

This is the end of an amazing year for Three Parks Independent Democrats. Who can forget the evening of November 8, 2016? We woke up that morning sure that all of our efforts of the past months would result in the election of this country's first female president. It was a day of joyful, hopeful work. I remember canvassing in the 19th congressional district for Zephyr Teachout and driving back to the Three Parks campaign storefront to attend the celebration party and watch the results with other club members. Instead, the storefront felt like a funeral and we all went home early.

The November 6, 2018 election turned out to be different. It triggered a resistance movement. Three Parks became part of a nationwide effort to fix what happened in 2016. We would help elect a Democratic Congress and a truly Democratic State Senate. Our club chose three races to work on: we made phone calls, sent postcards, and knocked on doors to elect Antonio Delgado as congressperson in the 19th congressional district; we stood on street corners to encourage our neighbors to vote for Robert Jackson for State Senator; and we took the Staten Island Ferry to help Max Rose turn that borough blue. Delgado and Rose are now part of the Democratic majority in the House of Representatives, and Jackson is now part of the group of New York State Senators who is replacing the Independent Democratic Caucus.

Our holiday party in December was reason to celebrate! The hall was beautiful to behold, full of twinkling wreaths, colored lights and clusters of poinsettias. The food was delicious, and the music drew many club members to the dance floor. Thanks to chairperson Lois Safian and her band of elves, the party went off without a hitch. Highlighting the evening were visits by Senator Chuck Schumer and Rep. Jerry Nadler, the incoming Chair of the House Judiciary Committee, both of whom spoke to an attentive crowd.

On a personal note, my last two years as president have been truly rewarding. Three Parks Independent Democrats is composed of a remarkable bunch of people and is led by a dedicated group of board members. A special thank you to Lorraine Zamora and Chuck Wall. Lorraine produced our monthly newsletters and helped plan the club and board meetings, and Chuck played a major role in coordinating the Take Back Congress phone banks. The Three Parks board has nominated Lorraine to be club president, and Chuck, Corresponding Secretary, in 2019. I thank them and the other nominated board members for the dedication and commitment they've all brought to Three Parks.

Three Parks Annual Meeting & Board Election

The election will be held on Wednesday, February 13. Additional nominations can be made from the floor at the January 9 club meeting. Biographies of all candidates will be presented in the February newsletter. Here are the proposed candidates:

Officers

Lorraine Zamora, President
Daniele Gerard, 1st V.P.
Merle McEldowney, 2nd V.P.
Ellen Flax, Treasurer
Theresa Canter, Membership Secretary
Jock Davenport, Recording Secretary
Charles Wall, Corresponding Secretary

Members-at-Large

Paul Bifani
Corinne Constantine
Wendy Dannett
Jessica Habershtock
David Lazarus
Hannah Leider
Marie Lunn
Mary Ann Marks
Lynn Bender Max
Steve Max
Miriam Rabban
Lois Safian
Irene Shrier
Daniel Tsadok

Founding Member Emeritus

Milivoy Samurovich

Three Parks on Election Day

By District Leader Bob Botfeld

November 6, 2018 turned out to be a wonderful day: The Democrats regained control of the House of Representatives. The Trump-led Republican onslaught of unchecked corruption, environmental suicide, treason, racism, and international isolation may have been halted—for the moment. According to the most recent count, the Democrats gained 40 house seats, exceeding most estimates. The Democrats flipped 43 seats; the Republicans just three.

Voter turnout was the key, nationally and locally. In our neighborhood, Part A of the 69 Assembly District (69A), we traditionally have one of the highest voter turnout rates in New York City, yet our turnout also doubled from the last off-year election. Over 56% of registered voters voted in 69A. Among Democrat voters, we estimate that more than 75% voted. (Based upon previous elections, the exact percentage will not be known until the Board of Election reissues the voter rolls in Spring 2019).

The heavy turnout created long lines at two of our larger poll sites, PS 163 and PS 75. On the other hand, West Side High School, under the able leadership of club member and poll site coordinator Jerry Cordova, ran smoothly. Similarly, poll site coordinators and club members, Alex Medwedew (also the bartender at the Three Parks' holiday party) and Antoinette Williams, adeptly supervised their poll sites at Grace Methodist Church and Red Oak, respectively, resulting in minimal delays for the voters.

The delays at the polls could have been worse. In the September 2018 primary election, the City and our neighborhood poll sites were woefully understaffed. Positions for Election Inspector and poll clerk went unfilled. Usually, the City has a reserve pool of hundreds of standby poll workers to fill the vacancies, but in the primary the standby pools were empty. For the November election, we realized that it was important to fill all our local poll worker positions. To recruit additional poll workers, Hannah Leider and I contacted the club's local area churches and synagogues and described the election day staffing needs. It worked. They alerted their members, we had a strong influx of new poll workers, and nearly every position was filled.

Three Parkers also aided the poll workers on election day. When the volume of voters is unyielding, the poll workers have little time to go out for refreshment breaks. This year, as we have done for years, Three Parks again provided coffee, orange juice, Lenny's bagels and cream cheese, and Dunkin' Donuts to our local polls. Club members Lois Safian, Jock Davenport, Lynn Max, Steve Max, Deborah Thomas, Elaine Hazzard, and Hannah Leider joined me in delivering the refreshments to over 200 hungry and thirsty poll workers.

How We Voted in the Three Parks election districts

In this overwhelmingly Democratic area, the most interesting ballot results were not about the candidates but about two controversial ballot propositions: Proposition 2—which would create a mayor-controlled Civic Engagement Commission, and Proposition 3—which placed term limits on Community Board members.

Propositions #2 and #3 were strongly opposed by Borough President Gale Brewer and many members of Three Parks, including me. Both proposals easily passed citywide with margins greater than 2-1. But in our election districts Proposition 2 was defeated and Proposition #3 barely passed with 55% of the vote. On page 4, you can see how your ED voted.

State Committee Report

By Daniel Marks Cohen

A number of members of the State Committee, myself included, recently signed a letter to Byron Brown, the Chair of the NYS Democratic Committee, about the events that occurred at the last State Party meeting. It was at the 2018 fall meeting, held in Albany in October, when progressives attempted to hold people accountable for the scurrilous Gov. Cuomo campaign mailer that accused Cynthia Nixon of antisemitism during the height of the fall gubernatorial campaign season.

When we attempted to raise the issue, the meeting was summarily adjourned. Furious, we confronted senior staff, including Geoff Berman, the Executive Director (who has just announced his resignation a few days ago), and received not even a half-hearted attempt to excuse their behavior. This, after we spent several days and then a long night negotiating with Berman and others in an effort to prevent such an incident from happening again. The fact is that committee members travel from across the state to meetings with no compensation for their time, travel and expenses, to then be completely disrespected and totally ignored. It was infuriating. I have reprinted the letter in full below:

Hon. Byron Brown

Chair, New York State Democratic Committee

220 East 42 Street, Suite 1306

New York, NY 10017

December 18, 2018

Dear Chair Brown,

We, the undersigned members of the New York State Democratic Committee (“NYSDC”) and Chairs of County Democratic Committees, would like to express our disappointment with the manner in which the October 1 Fall Business Meeting was conducted. On multiple occasions during the meeting, as well as in the preceding Executive Committee meeting, the chair(s) of those respective meetings did not adhere to Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised (“RONR”).

Article IX § 1 “Rules of Procedure” of the Rules of the Democratic Party of the State of New York (“Party Rules”) states the following:

In all cases not provided for by law or by the Rules, the authority for parliamentary procedure for the State Committee and the Executive Committee shall be the latest edition of “Robert’s Rules of Order,” insofar as such rules of order may be appropriately applied.

Consequently, adherence to RONR is required for each and every meeting of the NYSDC and its Executive Committee, and by not following RONR, the chair(s) of the October 1st Fall Business Meeting have broken the Party Rules. Specifically, the chair(s) have:

Failed to clearly hear, address, or rule on points of order. (RONR Art. IV § 21)

Failed to respond to calls for a division of the body. (RONR Art. IV § 25)

Entertained a motion to adjourn while a point of order was still under discussion, and while the “New Business” agenda item had not yet been addressed. (RONR Art. III § 25)

How the election districts voted in November 2018

	Enrollment	Voted	% Voted
NYS Total	11,574,222	5,792,005	50.04%
NYC	4,613,320	1,912,936	41.47%
NYS upstate	6,960,902	3,879,069	55.73%
Manhattan	1,002,050	476,762	47.58%
69th AD	86,613	44,563	51.45%
69th AD Part A	28,666	16,250	56.69% (including est for unscanned ballots)
Bronx	711,828	256,584	36.05%
Kings	1,442,118	587,048	40.71%
Queens	1,166,584	461,826	39.59%
Staten Island	290,740	130,899	45.02%

69th Part A-ED	Enrollment	Total Vote	% Voted	Prop 2 YES	Prop 2 NO	Prop 2 NO %	Prop 3 YES	Prop 3 NO	Prop 3 NO %
25	772	337	43.65%	115	120	51.06%	145	93	39.08%
26	805	438	54.41%	139	213	60.51%	173	179	50.85%
27	550	282	51.27%	111	110	49.77%	137	82	37.44%
35	474	268	56.54%	94	122	56.48%	135	82	37.79%
36	175	69	39.43%	38	25	39.68%	43	20	31.75%
37	491	303	61.71%	90	160	64.00%	123	129	51.19%
38	760	412	54.21%	149	162	52.09%	187	124	39.87%
42	770	463	60.13%	134	214	61.49%	173	174	50.14%
44	973	506	52.00%	158	234	59.69%	209	185	46.95%
45	1,055	543	51.47%	143	268	65.21%	201	212	51.33%
46	996	495	49.70%	157	231	59.54%	201	186	48.06%
47	624	319	51.12%	73	195	72.76%	114	154	57.46%
48	772	403	52.20%	100	223	69.04%	130	194	59.88%
49	802	492	61.35%	131	292	69.03%	178	244	57.82%
50	805	473	58.76%	123	265	68.30%	165	223	57.47%
51	792	438	55.30%	155	219	58.56%	208	163	43.94%
52	868	467	53.80%	160	218	57.67%	192	184	48.94%
53	731	272	37.21%	131	26	16.56%	133	27	16.88%
54	984	437	44.41%	182	96	34.53%	199	80	28.67%
55	892	507	56.84%	215	126	36.95%	228	111	32.74%
56	657	254	38.66%	105	29	21.64%	93	41	30.60%
57	1,003	399	39.78%	181	33	15.42%	186	29	13.49%
58	824	397	48.18%	191	121	38.78%	217	99	31.33%
59	475	221	46.53%	124	79	38.92%	130	74	36.27%
60	913	541	59.26%	157	273	63.49%	205	225	52.33%
61	785	501	63.82%	145	311	68.20%	199	258	56.46%
62	781	518	66.33%	150	243	61.83%	185	208	52.93%
63	580	378	65.17%	126	243	65.85%	170	203	54.42%
64	716	460	64.25%	120	280	70.00%	164	240	59.41%
65	646	428	66.25%	116	281	70.78%	146	252	63.32%
66	388	191	49.23%	110	61	35.67%	102	65	38.92%
67	841	409	48.63%	234	98	29.52%	242	87	26.44%
68	813	347	42.68%	206	67	24.54%	221	50	18.45%
69	1,061	617	58.15%	201	259	56.30%	255	211	45.28%
70	621	221	35.59%	134	55	29.10%	153	39	20.31%
71	457	227	49.67%	115	89	43.63%	136	72	34.62%
111	549	326	59.38%	111	169	60.36%	146	135	48.04%
112	510	289	56.67%	58	181	75.73%	87	153	63.75%
113	507	252	49.70%	71	139	66.19%	95	113	54.33%
114	448	168	37.50%	85	25	22.73%	86	26	23.21%
TOTALS	28,666	15,068	52.56%	5,338	6,555	55.12%	6,492	5,426	45.53%

These breaches of RONR and the Party Rules call into question whether or not the officers of the NYSDC have been duly elected, and have prevented the NYSDC from considering multiple germane resolutions which are no longer timely. In addition to this, the chair(s) have broken the spirit of RONR by:

Inconsistently passing the gavel between officers, so that the Sergeant-at-Arms, rather than the Chair, presided over the meeting with the implicit consent of members, while seeking explicit consent at the Executive Committee meeting.

Allowing the Sergeant-at-Arms to preside over his own election.

Ignoring the right of members of the NYSDC to introduce resolutions from the floor.

Allowing no time for additional nominations of officers to be made.

Rushing adjournments in order to prevent members from introducing new business or making points of order.

We ask that, in order to prevent future breaches of RONR and the Party Rules, and to promote open discussion and productive resolution of issues within the Democratic Party of the State of New York, the following requests be met by and for the next meeting of the NYSDC:

That the incumbent Sergeant-of-Arms of the NYSDC, Michael Reich, no longer be permitted to chair meetings of the NYSDC or the Executive Committee, having demonstrated an insufficient knowledge, or willful disregard, of RONR and the Party Rules to do so.

That an independent parliamentarian shall be designated to hear disputes over RONR and the Party Rules during meetings of the NYSDC or the Executive Committee.

That whoever chairs a meeting of the NYSDC or the Executive Committee shall diligently hear and address points of order, points of privilege, points of information, calls for division, and any other motions made by members during the course of the meeting, without undue consideration of the member's age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, or intra-party political orientation, affiliation, or stature.

We would appreciate a timely response from either yourself, the Executive Director of the NYSDC, or any other empowered representative of the NYSDC, by January 11, 2019 so that other avenues to resolve these grievances need not be pursued.

No Tax Breaks for Amazon

By Daniele Gerard

As many of you have been reading over the past several

weeks, Amazon has chosen Long Island City as one of its new headquarters in exchange for \$3 billion in tax breaks and incentives from New York State. Governor Cuomo and Mayor de Blasio negotiated the deal with no input from the City Council or the public. There were no hearings, no review of terms, no advocacy on behalf of everyday New Yorkers—who are told on a regular basis the state and city do not have enough money for public education, NYCHA repairs, supportive housing for the homeless, MTA service upgrades, or a host of concerns affecting millions of us each day.

Instead, we are paying Jeff Bezos, the richest man in the world, to move here and hire 25,000 high-paid workers, who could and would move to any other location in the U.S., to work for one of the richest companies in the world.

The Public Authorities Control Board (PACB), a state agency, must approve the deal before any project-related financing begins. The five members of PACB are appointed by the Governor to serve one-year terms, with one member representing the Governor and acting as chair. The Governor appoints the four remaining members based on recommendations from the majority and minority leaders of the State legislature.

The City Council of Seattle, where Amazon has its original headquarters, wanted to pass a law requiring large companies to pay a tax of \$500 per employee to fight the burgeoning homeless problem there. Amazon whittled it down to \$275 per employee. But when the Seattle City Council passed the legislation, Amazon got it rescinded altogether. The New York Times has reported that Amazon will “retain bargaining power” with New York for decades to come. Is that what we the people really want—another corporation dictating government policy?

We urge you to support the resolution that follows in this newsletter so Three Parks can advocate against any tax breaks or incentives for Amazon to bring its headquarters here. Other companies, including tech giants, have located here and employed thousands without setting the dangerous precedent of using our tax dollars to do so.

Resolution to be read and voted on at the January 9, 2019 club meeting

WHEREAS Amazon is one of the richest companies in the world, and its owner Jeff Bezos the richest man in the world,

WHEREAS the company is reportedly receiving approximately \$3 billion in tax breaks and incentives to build a headquarters in Long Island City, money that could be well spent on education, infrastructure, housing for the homeless, transportation, energy efficiency, and more,

WHEREAS this deal was made by Governor Cuomo and Mayor de Blasio without input from the New York City Council or the public,

WHEREAS other large companies, including Google and Facebook, have located offices in New York City without any tax breaks or incentives,

WHEREAS Amazon will reportedly “retain bargaining power” with New York for decades to come, and

WHEREAS in 2018 Amazon successfully leaned on the City Council of Seattle, where its headquarters is located, to rescind a tax the council had levied on large employers to combat homelessness,

WHEREAS the Public Authorities Control Board (composed of representatives of Governor Cuomo and the Senate and Assembly majority and minority leaders) must approve financing for the deal,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Three Parks calls on Mayor de Blasio, our elected officials, and the Public Authorities Control Board to deny approval of any tax breaks or incentives for Amazon to locate its headquarters anywhere in New York State.

Editor’s Note: From time to time, Three Parks has introduced resolutions to enable the club to work formally on various issues. These have included healthcare/single payer, social security, banning fracking, and disbanding the IDC. This resolution will be presented at the January 9 club meeting.

Voting Rights in a Progressive State

By Jessica Haberstock

New York is often raised up as a progressive, forward thinking state. But New York has some of the most restrictive voting laws in the entire country. The state ranks in the top ten for most restrictive voting laws, as well as election turnout. Coming from the state of Missouri, I was shocked at how the voting laws in Missouri were more progressive than in my new state, and Missouri does not even have early voting.

New York State is one of 13 states where early voting is unavailable. States that do have early voting include Texas, Louisiana, Georgia, and Indiana. In addition, voters can only cast an absentee ballot in very limited circumstances.. This limits the ability of voters who may have inflexible jobs or other responsibilities and/or limitations, such as child-care or disabilities, to cast their vote.

New Yorkers must register with a party at least six months and ten days before an election. This deadline is the most restrictive party enrollment in the country. If a New Yorker does not register with a party, as 43% of New York resi-

dents do, they are unable to vote in the primaries. In many areas in the state, including New York City, primaries often determine the outcome of the race. Many states, including my home state of Missouri, offer open primaries in which a person of any party can vote. Adjusting the deadline or implementing open primaries would allow around three million more voters to cast their ballots in the primaries.

Fourteen states, including Georgia, California, and New Jersey, have automatic voter registration. This system registers eligible voters when they visit a state government agency, like the DMV, unless they opt out. This system could add up to 2 million eligible voters to the rolls in New York State.

Finally, nearly 35,000 New Yorkers are prevented from voting in New York elections because they are on parole. Seventeen states, including Utah, Montana, North Dakota, and Pennsylvania, restore voting rights post-incarceration. This law disproportionately disenfranchises New Yorkers of color. In addition, people who vote after release from supervision prisons are half as likely to be rearrested.

It is time for New York to live up to its progressive reputation. By implementing some of these basic voting law changes, which have been successfully implemented in many states, voters throughout the state will have more access to the polls and thus to make change in our state. This is a right many people in the world are not granted, and all New York residents should have the ability to partake in this right.

Sanctuary in New York City

By Wendy Dannett

We have been hearing about the many atrocities taking place with migrants at the Mexican border. Families are being separated, children are being forced to stay in frigid rooms called “ice boxes” which recently caused one child age 5 to be hospitalized with pneumonia, and there are endless waits to be processed for asylum. Some of these waits have led to children’s deaths. But many people may not know that in our city and suburbs, immigrant families are under constant fear of being separated. Yasmine Farhang, an immigration attorney, said that “every day in our communities, children as young as 2, 3, and 4 years old are traumatized by having a parent ripped away from them.” Some immigrants, therefore, have sought to stay in churches for sanctuary.

I met one such woman who has sought sanctuary at the Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew on West 86 Street in Manhattan. Her name is Debora Barrios-Vasquez. She was threatened with deportation after being pulled over for a traffic stop in 2011. She had been living in Mamaroneck with her two American born-children after

fleeing Guatemala in 2005 when she was 19. She had been having regular check-ins with ICE until February 2018, when she was ordered deported. But before attending her last ICE visit, she met with someone from the New Sanctuary Coalition. They located St. Paul's church, which would take her in for sanctuary. She has been there since June 4.

The Reverend Matthews at the church said Debora broke down crying after stepping into the church the first time. "It was then that the profound weight of what we were doing came on me. It's not just her fight; this is our community's fight." I had a similar experience as the Reverend with Debora. I attended a conference at which Debora spoke. It was when she started crying that the enormity of her plight, and that of others like her, hit me. And I, too, felt Debora's issue was my concern and our community's concern.

Debora's life after taking refuge is not easy. Her 10-year-old son is staying with relatives in Westchester as he wants to continue in his school. He stays with her weekends. He would be traumatized by having to leave his home, which has made Debora's decision even harder. Her daughter lives with her, and cries when her brother leaves. Debora is unable to leave the church, as she could be arrested. She now has a

lawyer through the sanctuary movement who is trying to get her case heard before a judge.

A reporter from the Intercept wrote, "At a time when many Americans are up in arms over the Trump Administration's policy of forced family separations at border detention facilities, Barrios-Vasquez's story highlights the reality that parents and children are being wrenched apart by ICE deportation orders...all over the country."

If you would like to help the immigrant community at large, there are various groups, including the New Sanctuary Coalition. To help Debora, you can contact her at St. Paul and St. Andrew Presbyterian Church.

In Memoriam

Christopher P. Mooney, Three Parks club member, died on February 9, 2018. Belated condolences to his family and friends.

If you wish to become a member of Three Parks, please visit our website:

www.ThreeParksDems.org



Holiday Party, December 9, 2018

Left to right: Robert Jackson, State Senator; Danny O'Donnell, Assemblyman; Cynthia Doty, District Leader; Chuck Schumer, U.S. Senator; Merle McEldowney, TPID President; Bob Botfeld, District Leader; Jerry Nadler, Congressman; Daniel Marks Cohen, State Committee Member; Mark Levine, City Council Member.

Three Parks Independent Democrats
Cathedral Station P. O. Box 1316
New York, NY 10025

WHAT'S INSIDE

TPID Board Nominations, p. 2
Three Parks on Election Day, p. 2
State Committee Report, p. 3
No Tax Breaks for Amazon, p. 5
Voting Rights in a Progressive State, p. 6
Sanctuary in NYC, p. 6

Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Speakers:
Candidates for Public Advocate