



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Adriano Espaillat

Seantor Espaillat Supportive of Improvements to Dolphin Park

ADRIANO ESPAILLAT May 12, 2014



With funding from the Port Authority, Dolphin Park will receive improvements that will make the park even more welcoming for kids and adults alike and bring it into ADA compliance.

By Nigel Chiwaya, DNAinfo

WASHINGTON HEIGHTS — Dolphin Park is about to get the best birthday present ever. The children's playground, located at West 180th Street and Cabrini Boulevard and nicknamed "Dolphin Playground" by locals because of the shape of its sprinklers, will get a total makeover just in time for its 20th birthday, a Port Authority spokeswoman confirmed to DNAinfo Tuesday.

The area will get a complete makeover including new seating, children's safety surfaces, better drainage, an ADA-approved ramp for those with disabilities and repairs to its famed sprinklers, officials said.

The renovations will take place in two parts, Port Authority spokesman Erica Dumas said. The first phase will begin on May 27 and close the park until August while seating, play surfaces and the sprinkler are replaced.

The ADA ramp will be installed during the second phase, which will begin in September.

The park, which is officially known as the George Washington Bridge Park, is operated by volunteers from the community group West 181st Street Beautification Project. It's limited to be used by children ages 2-5, and parents in the neighborhood have come to love the park for its shade, size and sprinkler.

"This is the best playground for children under 5 years old," Washington Heights mother Maggie Horkey told DNAinfo about the park last year.

The Port Authority and community volunteers will hold a ceremony honoring the park's 20th anniversary and unveiling the renovation designs this Saturday at 4 p.m.

State Sen. Adriano Espaillat, who called for repairs to the park in a letter to the Port Authority last August, hailed the renovation as "fantastic news" for the community.

"Dolphin Park is a terrific gem for the neighborhood that must be preserved, and it's fantastic news that the Port Authority agrees," Espaillat said. "The new improvements will make the park even more welcoming for kids and adults alike and bring it into ADA compliance. Our community had been pushing for these improvements and it will be a terrific improvement when completed."