

Good evening and thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Capital Budget for 2026-2027 and Capital Plan for 2027-2033.

My name is Virgil de la Cruz Member of the Board of Representatives for District 2, Waterside, an environmental justice community.

I am here tonight advocating on behalf of the over 6,000 Waterside residents for funding to finally complete renovation of Boccuzzi Park as envisioned in the attached Master Plan eight long years ago. Constituents contact me periodically advocating and urging me to advocate for completion of the renovation. Attached is my latest attempt, a letter recently sent to Mayor Simmons summarizing the history of the renovation and advocating for funding to complete.

While renovation of Boccuzzi Park lingers for lack of sufficient funding, mobilization and demobilization of crews and equipment and inflation take their toll on costs. In the meantime, between fiscal years 2021 through 25, the City has managed to allocate \$16.14MM to other park projects. My constituents are entitled to fairer treatment, and a park consistent with the recently completed aspirations of the Citywide Parks Strategic Plan.

I think we can all agree that eight years is simply too long, and that proper funding should be provided to finally deliver what the Master Plan established so long ago.

Respectfully yours,

Virgil de la Cruz



BOCCUZZI PARK

From de la Cruz, Virgil <VdelaCruz@StamfordCT.gov>

Date Thu 11/6/2025 11:37 PM

To Simmons, Caroline <CSimmons@StamfordCT.gov>

Cc lorihyattlh@yahoo.com <lorihyattlh@yahoo.com>; Fox, Bridget <BFox@StamfordCT.gov>; Meyer, Lauren <LMeyer@StamfordCT.gov>; Burwick, Laura <LBurwick@StamfordCT.gov>; Freedman, Richard <RFreedman@StamfordCT.gov>; Fox, Bridget <BFox@StamfordCT.gov>; Rinaldi, Mary Lou <MLRinaldi@StamfordCT.gov>

Bcc salvatore@cmgbuilder.com <salvatore@cmgbuilder.com>

 3 attachments (14 MB)

Master Plan Preferred.docx; M L Rinaldo 1.8 million Boccuzzi Park 21062024.pdf; Phase 1 Funding Petition 06112025.pdf;

Dear Honorable Mayor Simmons,

After several sessions of meaningful community engagement, the attached Master Plan for renovation of Boccuzzi Park was completed in September 2017, over 8 long years ago. City work on the plan did not begin until the summer of 2021; it took the attached petition to the Martin Administration to get Phase 1 funded. The innumerable delays in starting and doing the work, mobilization and demobilization of equipment and crews, and inflation have escalated the cost of the work beyond any reasonable expectation. The first batch of work was completed in November 2023.

Eight months passed before the contract for the next batch of work, now in progress, was executed on August 7th, 2024, with a stipulated completion of no later than April 1, 2025; it is now November, and completion of this phase is nowhere in sight. The contractor works for a couple of days and disappears for a week or more. The toll of inflation on remaining future costs continues with this continuing passage of time.

Meanwhile our constituents are deprived of basketball, tennis, field sports, water access, and passive recreation in a perennial construction site, and inquire as to when they can have the park back. Some report going with their children elsewhere for these activities.

Now I understand that the remaining \$3.4MM, which includes the \$1.898MM National Park Service grant, is not sufficient to complete construction of the final phase as envisioned in the master plan.

It is worth noting that, in the interim, between fiscal years 21 through 25, the City has allocated \$16.14MM to other park projects. Just recently \$5MM was allocated for improvements at West Beach and Cummings Park, while Boccuzzi Park lingers.

My predecessor, John Boccuzzi, for whom the park is now named, over the years had managed to accumulate \$1.8MM for Waterside projects. Shortly after his passing, during the Martin Administration, those funds disappeared- allocated elsewhere (see attached). I tried to track and claw back those funds to no avail.

There is now a critical need to restore the \$1.8MM to Waterside, from whatever source,- particularly, given the planned trail connection to Binney Park in Greenwich. Our constituents would

be most grateful for your efforts to secure proper funding to finally deliver Boccuzzi Park to the community as envisioned eight long years ago.

In closing, I would very much appreciate your advice on how I may respond to our constituents.

Respectfully yours,
Virgil de la Cruz



BOCCUZZI PARK PREFERRED MASTER PLAN



SEPTEMBER 8, 2017

