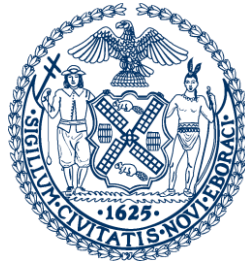


**BENJAMIN J. KALLOS**  
COUNCIL MEMBER, 5<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

244 East 93<sup>rd</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10128  
(212) 860-1950 Voice  
(212) 980-1828 Fax  
www.BenKallos.com

BKallos@BenKallos.com



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January 27, 2017

Dear Resident,

Thank you for taking the time to reach out to me with your position on the Queensboro Oval. We have been working with the community on this issue for years and hope we can work with you so that even more people can enjoy the Queensboro Oval as a City park.

With the expiration of Sutton East's lease, the City and community are considering various options for the land, including operating public tennis courts where season passes are \$200 and day passes cost \$15. I hope that you will join the conversation to help us determine how to effectively open this City park to more New Yorkers.

Community Board 8 has held numerous public meetings to discuss the future of the Queensboro Oval with members of the community dating back to January 7, 2010, with more than ten meetings since I was elected from December 4, 2014 through January 12, 2017. These meetings were publicly noticed through the [Community Board website](#) and email list, publicly posted with paper signs on lamp posts, featured in a full length cable television show, covered by the press and prominently featured in my own emails and letters to residents.

At these meetings, members of the public have continually expressed concern that, while the Upper East Side has among the lowest amount of public park space in the City, Sutton East Tennis sits on City park land, but is not accessible to most community members with rates as high as \$225 an hour that most cannot afford. Sutton East Tennis Club was notified and was represented at many of the meetings, though no one has spoken in favor of continued privatization of this public space. Dating back to 2008, Community Board 8 has objected to the privatization of public land at the Queensboro Oval, and in the last 12 months alone, the Parks Committee and Full Board have passed four resolutions calling for the City to make the Queensboro Oval a year-round public park, which could include tennis courts accessible to more New Yorkers.

On June 25<sup>th</sup> of 2016, members of the community met at the Oval for a rally, calling for the park to be returned to public use. The rally was covered by [The Daily News](#), [Manhattan Express](#), and [DNAinfo](#).

Some of the concerns raised were:

- The Queensboro Oval sits on 1.25 acres of public parkland, not private land.
- Sutton East Tennis has high fees with a minimum of \$80 to a maximum of \$225 an hour.



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NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER  
DISTRICT 5, MANHATTAN

- Sutton East Tennis is renting 1.25 acres for only \$2 million a year, very far below market rate.  
Nine months out of the year the land is completely closed off to the public without any benefit to the community.
- Each year when the tennis bubble is removed for just two and half months of summer, the land is left in almost unusable condition.

Community Board 8, with input from members of the public, has been transparent and unequivocal in its decision-making process regarding the Queensboro Oval. We have also received over one hundred petition signatures in support of opening the Queensboro Oval to the public.

Please note that there are 12 HarTru tennis courts available just a 5 minute Tram ride away from 59<sup>th</sup> Street and Second Avenue available at the [Roosevelt Island Racquet Club](#) where rates are a fraction of those at Sutton East Tennis and where we have partnered with the [New York Junior Tennis League](#) to provide free tennis classes to children ages 5 to 18 every Saturday and Sunday morning from 6am to 8am through the winter and free tennis camp through the summer.

The [Riverside Clay Tennis Association](#), a non-profit that currently maintains 10 red clay courts in Riverside Park, has also presented at Community Board 8, and is interested in providing the same services to these courts making them public tennis courts operated by the New York Parks Department. Season tennis passes would be \$200 for adults, \$20 for seniors over 62 and \$10 for children under 16, and day passes for \$15.

How much do you currently pay per season at Sutton East Tennis? Would you be interested in working with a non-profit like Riverside Clay Tennis Association in order to maintain this amenity as a New York City Park Department public tennis court where you could pay for a season what you currently pay per hour?

Please let Community Board 8 and my office know, so that we can include your voice in how we use this park to benefit the public.

Sincerely,

Ben Kallos  
Council Member