

# BIG PARK PLANNED AT SPUYTEN DUYVIL

**Play Area and Yacht Basin  
Will Adjoin Manhattan's  
Last Woodland.**

## LINKED TO CANAL PROJECT

**New Center Must Wait Two  
Years Until Straightening of  
Harlem Is Completed.**

In about two years, if present plans go forward as rapidly as expected, there will be ready for New York a vast playground on the bed of the old Spuyten Duyvil Creek, it became known yesterday. The Federal, State and city governments are combining forces to develop for popular use Manhattan's last bit of wild woodlands.

The filling-in of the cove representing all that is left of Spuyten Duyvil Creek, where Henry Hudson anchored his Half Moon in September, 1609, will mark the passing of the last bit of natural waterfront around Manhattan Island. Towering above the playground site is the heavily forested tract which the city bought ten years ago to develop as the 166-acre Inwood Hill Park, topped by a rocky promontory.

The playground will be reached easily from the new Henry Hudson Bridge, 144 feet above the Harlem River ship canal, which will carry the Henry Hudson Parkway across Inwood Valley and relieve the traffic congestion formed at the bottleneck where Broadway crosses the old drawbridge at 220th Street. This parkway, linking Riverside Drive and the Saw Mill River Parkway, will be opened early this Fall.

### Moses Prepares Blueprints

Park Commissioner Robert Moses has had surveys and blueprints made for the development of a playground on the site, comprising roughly fifty acres and costing several million dollars. A large Park Department blueprint showed provisions for a spacious parking area, a field made up of three baseball diamonds, another large field for games appealing to various age groups, and a public yacht basin.

The old creek, which once wound around like the figure 8 to form the only access between the Hudson and Harlem Rivers, has for many years sheltered boat yards, yachting clubs and house boats, and the latest incumbent, the Isham Park Yacht Club, has received notice from Mr. Moses that it must move out by Oct. 15, it was learned yesterday.

Ousting of the yacht club also has been made necessary by the War Department's project, to be started this month, for straightening the Harlem River ship canal. The work, which will cost \$782,179, will entail the removal of 214,000 cubic yards of rock and 271,000 yards of mud and other material.

Elimination of the present sharp bend in the 26-year-old canal, a hazard to navigation, is expected to take until the latter part of 1937, although the contractor, the Arundel Corporation of Baltimore, has until May, 1939, to finish the job, War Department engineers here said yesterday.

While the new section, 400 feet wide and about 1,000 feet long, is being cut through land deeded to the Federal Government by the State, the old channel must be maintained, so it will not be until late 1937, at the earliest, that the city Park Department will be able to proceed with its plans for the playground.

The public yacht basin would be formed from part of the present channel and the adjoining play area would be laid out upon fill to be taken there by the city. Several acres already have been formed from debris dumped there between 1927 and 1929 during construction of the Eighth Avenue subway, whose northern terminus at 207th Street is only a few hundred yards distant.

The Columbia University crew house, below Baker Field, will not be affected by the change, as the new canal cut is just north of it.

### To Untangle Two Boroughs

Straightening of the canal will remove a geographical anomaly in New York. The islet known as Crescent Island, used as a base by the Isham Park Yacht Club and really no longer an island because of the subway fill on the east side of it, has been officially part of the borough of the Bronx, with parts of Manhattan to the north and to the south of it.

The official determinant was the course of the old Spuyten Duyvil Creek, which curved north from the Harlem River to take in part of what is now Marble Hill and wound around in a U shape to go south of the island. The Marble Hill district, not a part of Manhattan Island and lying northeast of this islet which soon is to be swallowed up, is within the borough of Manhattan.

If the Park Department's present plans are followed, the vast play area, with a large part of it devoted to parking for motorists, will bring the first automobiles to the base of this forest park, which is replete with wild life, glacial pot holes and Indian caves, tall trees, including tulips, chestnuts and elms, and other evidences to substantiate the Dyckman Institute's belief that Spuyten Duyvil and the rocky bluff that towers over it formed the earliest dwelling of mankind on the Island of Manhattan. Officials of the institute and other interested organizations who were interviewed felt, however, that the city had no intention of making changes that would spoil the natural beauty of the park.

Reginald Pelham Bolton, a trustee of the Dyckman Institute and a leading figure in movements to preserve Inwood and the few other re-

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maining natural areas and landmarks of New York, said he had viewed the plans for the Spuyten Duyvil playground and felt "hopeful" that they appreciated the virginal character of the park and adjacent land.

Mr. Bolton and Miss Florence N. Levy, volunteer secretary of the School Art League, both said it would be a fine thing if the city came into possession of the Inwood Pottery, off the Spuyten Duyvil Cove, as it would make an important addition to the public school system. At the pottery work in ceramics is now carried on by high school pupils, in connection with the School Art League's program, and there are also classes for Hunter College students and students working under the direction of the Works Progress Administration. Copies of Indian specimens, many of them found on this site of an Indian village named Shorakappok, are most popular with the pupils, whose ages range from 3 to 80.

**The New York Times**

Published: September 13, 1936

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