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Coney Island's Luna Park expanding with log flume ride, zip lines and ropes course

The 150,00-square-foot expansion also includes new food and arcade games.



Coney Island's Luna Park will receive a new log flume ride, pictured, as part of its 150,000-square-foot expansion. The project also includes zip lines, a ropes course, food vendors and arcade games. Photo Credit: NYCEDC

Coney Island, already known for its thrills and chills, is about to get a little more adventurous.

A sprawling log flume ride, zip lines and a rope course will be constructed on vacant land between Surf Avenue and the boardwalk, between West 15th and West 16th streets, amNewYork has learned.

Pedestrian plazas featuring food, arcade games and seating are set to rise on two other streets near the boardwalk.

Central Amusement International, the operator of Luna Park, was picked to develop the property under a 10-year lease agreement with the city. The adventure park is expected to open next summer, with the water ride to follow in 2020.

Alessandro Zamperla, president of Central Amusement International, said developing the city-owned sites will expand Luna Park by 50 percent from 300,000 square feet to 450,000 square feet.

“We are adding new and more exciting attractions, but also enhancing the atmosphere by adding more places where you can just sit and relax and enjoy some shade,” Zamperla told amNewYork.

The city's Economic Development Corporation solicited proposals last year for the property between West 10th and West 16th streets, which totals 150,000 square feet. Three of the parcels were city-owned and two were purchased from private owners.

EDC officials said there was a strong response to the request for proposals from both local and international companies. The city went with CAI because of the quality of its proposal and good track record in Luna Park.

“The Coney Island Boardwalk is both a cherished summertime destination and an important economic engine for South Brooklyn,” James Patchett, president and CEO of the EDC, said in a statement. “These exciting new attractions will build on unprecedented investments in this historic community, create new job opportunities and ensure the area remains engaging and family-friendly for future generations.”

EDC officials said they could not disclose how much rent CAI will pay to the city under the terms of the lease.

Zamperla called the custom-made log flume a “magnificent attraction” that rises 40 feet high with spectacular ocean views and colorful lights. And then there’s the 30 mph drop from the peak.

“Blow it up big like the Jersey Shore, now you’re in business,” said Donnie Manetta, 35, of Staten Island, while visiting Coney Island on Wednesday. “You can’t stop — keep growing!”

His eight-year-old daughter, Gianna, was excited by the rendering of the log flume.

“I want to go on that!” she exclaimed.

“Definitely a water ride I think is needed,” said Long Island resident Cindy Marquez, 36, who said she brings out-of-town family members to Coney Island when they come to visit.

The ropes course will be open to people with different skill levels, Zamperla said. The most ambitious can scale 34 feet and then descend on a zip line.

Alexandra Silversmith, executive director of the Alliance for Coney Island, which represents businesses including Luna Park, said the new rides could attract new visitors.

“There are a lot of people who are thrill seekers,” said Silversmith. “We are missing some of the more adventurous rides and experiences here.”

Silversmith also said developing the parcels eliminates an eyesore and provides a more seamless experience for visitors.

“We’re pleased they were chosen, because they were successful with Luna Park,” said Eddie Mark, district manager of Community Board 13, which includes Coney Island. “The plans look very nice and should fit into the area.”

City Councilman Mark Treyger said he was happy to see empty lots being used and that the renderings show CAI using historic Coney Island style in its designs.

“As you walk through the amusement district, you see these areas of inconsistency,” Treyger said. “You see areas that are lively and then these areas that are derelict and collecting dust.”

A self-described “foodie,” Treyger said both local residents and visitors have been looking for more food options in the area.

“I’m a fan of pedestrian plazas and where families can walk around and enjoy the area,” he said.

Zamperla said the company is focused on honoring Coney Island’s storied past.

“We want to re-create the magic of Coney Island and bring it back to its heyday,” he said.

With Allegra Hobbs