



Joint Design/Sanctuary Committees Meeting

**August 21, 2020
2pm-3pm**

**Administrative Conference Room, Room 201*
Pier 40, 353 West Street
New York, New York 10014**

AGENDA

- I. Update on Tribeca Habitat Enhancements Project
- II. Update on Cambridge 7 Aquaria Exhibit Planning Process
- III. Update on Estuarine Sanctuary Management Plan
- IV. Update on Historic Vessels RFEI and Discussion
- V. Chelsea Waterside Park Design

*If you need accommodation to attend meeting, please call Julie Kubelka at 917-661-6846



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August 21, 2020**

MINUTES

Attendees:

Directors: Pamela Frederick, Leslie Wright (OPRHP), Patrick Foster (NYSDEC), Alda Chan (NYC Parks)

HRPT Staff: Madelyn Wils, Noreen Doyle, Christine Fazio, Kevin Quinn, Kate O'Malley, Alex Eng, Nicolette Witcher, Tina Walsh, Rashi Puri

NYSDEC Staff: Steve Zahn

After introductions at the commencement of the meeting at 2:00 pm, Noreen Doyle provided an overview of the Tribeca Habitat Enhancement Project to be located between Piers 26 and 34 that would include new biohuts, oyster gabions, textured piles and reef balls. Following the recent Negative Declaration issued by the Trust Board of Directors at the Board's July 23, 2020 meeting, staff filed permit applications with both the Army Corps of Engineers and NYSDEC. The NYSDEC application was found to be complete and is currently undergoing public review. The Army Corps is still reviewing the application. In addition, the Trust posted an RFP for construction of the various elements on August 21 with proposals due to the Trust on September 11. Ms. Doyle concluded that she will keep the two committees informed as the permitting and RFP reviews proceed.

Kate O'Malley then provided an overview of the Cambridge Seven Aquaria Exhibit Planning Process. Last September, following a meeting with several members of the Sanctuary Committee, staff was asked to undertake further study of the technical aspects of the future associated with the aquaria exhibits for live fish in particular. She explained that through a grant provided by NYSDEC, Cambridge Seven and its team worked closely with staff including former River Project staff now employed at the Trust, to determine spatial requirements and operational needs of aquaria tanks and systems to inform continued planning. The work included developing preliminary tank and species lists, exhibit themes and stories, and sizing tank life support systems and other building components on a conceptual basis. She emphasized that no decisions have been made on the design. The Directors asked a number of questions including about funding. President Wils stated that approximately half of the estimated construction budget of approximately \$30 million was available, and the Trust will continue to explore how to secure funding for the facility.

Tina Walsh then provided an update on the Estuarine Sanctuary Management Plan since the

Sanctuary Committee last met in February 2020. She explained that completion of the draft Plan was delayed due to COVID 19. Staff is currently providing updates to the Technical Advisory Committees and expects to provide a draft document to the Sanctuary Committee for review. Following such review, the Trust would commence a public review and comment period this fall.

Rashi Puri then provided an update on the status of the Historic Vessels Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) issued by the Trust. Ms. Puri summarized certain key aspects of the RFEI terms and provided the attachment. At Piers 25 and 26, eligible permitted uses could include educational, cultural, museums and excursions. At Pier 97, those uses, as well as appropriate food and beverage uses, could also be proposed. Respondents had the opportunity to identify which piers they would be willing to consider. A total of six proposals were received for all three piers. Ms. Puri explained that one vessel does not meet the selection criteria for the RFEI including because it is neither historic nor of historical significance to NYC maritime history and that two vessels have been announced for the Pier 25 berths (*Lilac* and *John D. McKean*) though the agreements have not been signed. The review for the berths at Piers 26 and 97 was ongoing as the RFEI process has neither been completed nor closed out.

Ms. Puri and Nicolette Witcher then discussed some of the issues regarding locating a historic vessel at Pier 97. One issue is that the water depth is very shallow on both sides of the pier: only five to seven feet on the northern pier edge and four to five feet on the southern pier edge. The northern edge is also next to an active Con Edison site that makes it more risky to dock a vessel on that northern side; in fact the previous pier had been hit by a Con Ed barge in the past. More importantly, only one of the two eligible proposals interested in Pier 97 has a shallow enough draft to consider anywhere at Pier 97.

Ms. Witcher explained that over the years of the Trust trying to attract historic vessels, more vessels have submitted proposals with commercial operations as a way to fund themselves. President Wils also explained that it is important to know specific locations of historic vessels since based on the Trust's experience at Pier 26, adding the sewage and other utility lines for long-term docking costs approximately \$500,000. Ms. Doyle stated that there has been discussion by the Hudson River Park Advisory Council regarding increasing opportunities for historic vessels to dock in the Park, including dredging to increase the permitted depth, given shallow waters. Ms. Doyle also flagged a need to update the Trust's Historic Vessel Policy adopted by the Board in 2003 as some of the information is outdated: for instance, the current policy has Pier 54 identified as a location for historic vessels but that has since been moved to Pier 26 and the current policy does not identify the historic vessels at Pier 66A.

The Directors then discussed that they appreciated the careful and thoughtful review the Trust was undertaking with regard to the RFEI. All the Directors raised concerns about the concept of dredging, including its high cost, the current outlook for public funding, the complicated permitting process that it would entail, and the expected environmental impacts. The Directors also thought that prioritizing finishing the Park was more appropriate at this time with the Park's mission. They agreed that a working group should be formed to revisit the Historic Vessel Policy, including consideration of (i) permitting, visual and programming connections to the piers from a Park patron's perspective, (ii) achieving an appropriate balance between various aspects of Park mandates, and (iii) costs.

Kevin Quinn then provided an overview of the Chelsea Waterside Park Design using a power point presentation similar to the presentation recently provided to Manhattan Community Board 4. He explained that the core project elements were driven by the Community Board including expanding the dog run, creating a permanent picnic area, and building a comfort station. In addition, other design goals are to remove more of the impervious surfaces, expand the turf field to eliminate the underutilized "Overlook", add new fencing and stroller parking by the playground, construct a new comfort station, and with funding from City Council Speaker Johnson, redo the turf field. The Directors appreciated the review of the new design.

The joint Committees' meeting adjourned at 3:35 pm.

RFEI for Long Term Historic Vessel Docking at Hudson River Park’s Piers 25, 26 and 97

Premises: **Pier 25:** Two berths on the north side; **Pier 26:** One berth on the south side; and **Pier 97:** One berth at a location TBD as part of ongoing Pier 97 design process. For Pier 97, the RFEI noted several challenges associated with having historic vessels at Pier 97 including very shallow water depth and operational proximity to Con Edison vessels. It specified that the reason Pier 97 was included in the RFEI was to assist with ongoing Pier 97 design planning, and preliminarily identified the assumed vessel location as the north side, though the RFEI also stated that HRPT could change parameters as needed.

Water Depth: **Pier 25:** 10-15 ft. western end to 7-10 ft. eastern end; **Pier 26:** 10-12 ft. western end to 8-10 ft. eastern end; **Pier 97:** 5-7 ft. northern pier edge and 4-5 ft. on south pier edge.

Term: Initial terms may vary between 3-5 yrs.; extension options available for a total NTE 9 yrs.

Permitted Uses: Long term historic vessel docking and programming. Subject to the particular pier location, uses may include the below and other uses approved by the Trust.

	Pier Location		
Permitted Uses	Pier 25	Pier 26	Pier 97
1. Educational	X	X	X
2. Cultural	X	X	X
3. Museum	X	X	X
4. Excursions	X		X
5. Food & Beverage			X
6. Limited Catering and Events	<i>The Trust may consider occasional incidental private events, subject to Park programming and the nature of the events, but will not consider any vessels whose primary activities include these uses.</i>		
Availability	Spring 2020	Spring 2021	2022

Evaluation Criteria:

1. Conformity with the Park’s Criteria for Historic Vessels as per its Historic Vessel Policy at <https://hudsonriverpark.org/app/uploads/2020/07/Historic-Vessel-Policy.pdf>.
2. Planned operations and maintenance, including vessel condition and restoration needs;
3. Extent to which the proposal will enhance the public’s experience at Pier 25, 26 or 97, including providing diverse historic maritime experiences for Park patrons, and complementing existing pier uses, aesthetics and atmosphere;
4. Quality, consistency and community benefit of proposed maritime, environmental, educational and/or recreational programming, and if applicable, respondent’s commercial offerings;
5. Organizational capacity and experience, including ability to deliver proposed programmatic elements in a timely and professional manner, and any experience as a City or State tenant, if applicable;
6. Financial capacity; and where fee proposals are submitted, the amount of the proposed base and percentage fee will also be considered.