



**Report to Hudson River Park Advisory Council
March 2, 2021**

Pier 76:

In February, staff and consultants from State Parks completed an inspection of Pier 76 in order to determine the scope of work for demolition of the Tow Pound building after sampling for hazardous materials that may be present on site. The NYS Office of General Services is currently conducting a procurement for the demolition and has already authorized abatement activities to commence. As previously noted, Governor Cuomo has identified opening the pier for recreation as a high priority, and State Parks is leading this effort so that the public can start enjoying the pier this summer.

Environmental and Sanctuary Initiatives:

Staff has sent the full draft Estuarine Sanctuary Management Plan to the Trust's Board of Directors and State DEC. It is a lengthy document so they obviously need some time to review it. We will see what feedback we get, but are hopeful that we will be able to issue the document for public comment in mid to late spring.

Fabrication of gabions, reef balls, textured piles etc. for the Tribeca Oyster Enhancements project is under way. Based on Billion Oyster Project's schedule, we believe initial deployment would start in summer.

Upgrades to the River Project's Wetlab space at Pier 40 to make it a more hospitable location for both research and education are still underway in preparation for the 2021 season. Current projects include updated educational and safety signage, refreshing the space with painting, and other facility upgrades. The goal is to open the Wetlab by July. Once open, the River Project would be happy to offer a virtual or small in-person tour for AC members if there is interest.

We invite you again to spend some time on our website when you can to explore our River Project teams's activities in more detail. We have all kinds of information posted about science in the park, school programs, field trips, virtual programs, Park Over Plastic and more. As always, we are happy to talk to you about any of our initiatives in greater detail. Here are links to several key pages that serve as information hubs: <https://hudsonriverpark.org/the-park/parks-river-project/> and <https://hudsonriverpark.org/the-park/parks-river-project/science/school-programs/>.

We're calling your attention to a couple of virtual programs happening this week. HRPT is part of the annual Girls In Science and Engineering Day that the Intrepid is hosting on Saturday, 3/6 at 12:30pm where we will be discussing how we measure fish populations in the River. We will also engage students in a live Q&A— see this link to sign up and for more information: <https://hudsonriverpark.org/activities/virtual-girls-in-science-and-engineering-day/>. We are also conducting a special "Live from the Field" program this week with a focus on the annual plankton bloom occurring in the Sanctuary right now using our new high-powered microscope – at present, we believe this will be aired on Instagram Live on Thursday.

We have begun reaching out to teachers who are frequent users of River Project programs to explore their interest in both virtual and in-person field trips this Spring. This month marks the beginning of this year's virtual field trips, and the River Project is currently offering programs that focus on fish ecology, plankton microscopy, oyster restoration, pollution and environmental justice. Broader outreach via email and mail to our contacts at the Department of Education and our full teacher and school list will be occurring shortly. If you know of schools that would benefit from our programs, please encourage them to be in touch with Tina Walsh at twalsh@hrpt.ny.gov.

As part of our Park Over Plastic initiative, HRPT committed to measuring our progress towards meeting plastic reduction goals through an independent research firm, Knology. While the challenges of Covid affected the researchers' ability to do in-person intercept surveys, they were able to conduct outreach with several audiences. A report summarizing the second year of the program was just posted to our website: <https://hudsonriverpark.org/examining-the-impact-of-park-over-plastic/>.

Design and Construction:

Staff is busy reviewing responses to several RFPs in preparation for bringing several proposed contracts related to the Gansevoort Peninsula and Pier 97 to the Trust's Board of Directors for approval at our March Board meeting. These include Pier 97 Shade Structures Fabrication and Installation, Gansevoort Peninsula: General Construction Phase 1 and Marine Construction. The Trust is going to be reissuing the RFP for Electrical Construction Phase 1 in an effort to increase the number of bid respondents, but this will not delay our schedule.

Staff also intends to bring recommendations for on-call environmental consultant services to the Board at the March meeting, and to make a selection shortly for the Parkwide Door Replacement contract.

We are beginning to work on an RFP for reconstruction of the three tennis courts thanks to funding committed by Corey Johnson.

Design progress continues on Chelsea Waterside Park Phase 2. We expect the first phase of construction to commence in early summer.

Pier 40 work continues to advance as previously described.

Public Programming:

HRPT is in frequent touch with the State and City about evolving requirements for permitted events and gatherings in the park due to Covid this year. At present, it seems that charity walks and runs with staggered start and finish times will be permitted. Otherwise, as we write this, for exterior spaces, there is still a cap of 50 people for exterior events, though we expect this will change. HRPT is endeavoring to stay flexible to the extent possible as the continuing effects of Covid sort themselves out. We continue to try to support schools, arts organizations etc. as they endeavor to make their summer plans, but they are in the same shoes everyone is with respect to planning.

Operations:

The Trust's Board will consider the proposed FY22 budget at its March meeting. As noted in last month's report, staff has prepared and posted its Preliminary Budget on the website for review.

After the February meeting, staff followed up with Bike NY to begin a conversation about what might be possible in the way of bike education. Bike NY was enthusiastic about the idea. Their programs focus primarily on topics like learning to bike, rules of the road, and bike care and maintenance. We will have a follow up discussion about the ambassador idea and will also talk with Transportation Alternatives.

We continue to be in touch with SDOT about the bikeway signage prohibiting motorized vehicles, bikes and scooters. The initiative is well under way, and SDOT is anticipating that these signs will be installed late spring. This corridor-wide regulatory signage work will likely be carried out in conjunction with other bikeway work, including the remaining striping, safety signage and signal activation at the new West 13th Street crossing. We expect SDOT to open this crosswalk after this work is done. SDOT is also continuing some bikeway security work at various locations along the corridor. We expect most of this work to occur during overnight hours.

We also continue discussion with Battery Park City Authority (BPCA) to understand the potential impacts from their proposed floodwall system along the eastern edge of the State DOT bikeway as well as expansion into the water area south of Pier 25 as part of their North Battery Park City Resiliency project. We are looking at the potential for additional flooding in the Park during a storm event, obstructed visibility to and from the park, safety of bikers, physical impacts of the wall, effect on utilities, etc. We are also coordinating with City and State

Departments of Transportation to understand their perspectives on the project on the bikeway and Route 9A crossing.

Assuming weather and other issues cooperate, lighting replacements will be occurring around the Pier 40 courtyard fields starting this week. Given the height of the fixtures, the Trust needs specialized lifts to reach the luminaires.

As promised after the last meeting, we opened the Pier 40 courtyard fields for snow play. We also started investigating options and costs for snow removal. We have a preliminary quote from an outside firm, but are also looking at what it would take to do with additional staffing.



Other Planning:

On January 15, 2021, the Trust commenced the Significant Action process for the proposed lease agreement between the Trust and the Intrepid Museum Foundation. The public hearing took place on February 17 and written comments are due March 19. The proposed lease and other materials are posted on our website here: <https://hudsonriverpark.org/notice-of-public-hearing-and-comment-period-for-proposed-intrepid-lease/>. Aside from the draft lease, summary materials on the lease and a presentation from the Intrepid are also available through that link.