



**Report to Hudson River Park Advisory Council
June 1, 2021**

Little Island:

We are sure that you have all seen in the news that Little Island opened to the public on May 21. We hope that all of you will make time to visit this spectacular new public open space. As a reminder, while cared for and operated directly by Pier 55, Inc. (a non-profit organization) under a lease with HRPT, Little Island is also a public park pier. Beyond public park space, Little Island is being programmed to include many types of cultural programs. HRPT and the Little Island team have been working closely together to coordinate many areas of operational issues of interest to both organizations, such as coordinating security and access plans. Both organizations are aware that tweaks and modifications to certain procedures will continue to be needed as we learn more about visitation patterns etc. Due to Covid and the popularity of this new public space, Little Island has instituted a timed access system that is being deployed. Little Island is on the agenda for tonight's meeting so we expect more discussion later today. Hudson River Park is grateful to the Diller Von-Furstenberg Family Foundation and Mr. Diller specifically for his vision and generosity in creating this space for the public.

Day's End at Gansevoort Peninsula:

Just a couple of blocks to the south, Hudson River Park also welcomed another extraordinary gift to the public – the Whitney Museum of American's Art donation of *Day's End*, a large work of public art by the artist David Hammons. A dedication ceremony took place on May 17, 2021 at which time the Whitney formally donated the sculpture to Hudson River Park. *Day's End* is a skeletal structure that mirrors the dimensions of the former Pier 52 shed that once stood on the south side of the Gansevoort Peninsula. This article from the *New York Times* may be of interest:

From David Hammons, a Tribute to Pier 52 and Lastingness

Their artistic paths crossed like ships in the night. But at long last, two New York legends meet in "Day's End," an immortalizing homage by Hammons to Gordon Matta-Clark and art history.

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Pier 76:

State Parks continues to make swift progress on the process of converting Pier 76 to interim public open space. As Commissioner Kulleseid noted at the April 13th meeting, the Trust is

anticipating that HRPT will assume operating responsibility for the pier by the end of this month. Our understanding is that we will be operating the pier consistent with how we operate other park piers, including operating hours and rules. We expect the pier will open in early June.

Environmental and Sanctuary Initiatives:

Staff received the go ahead to commence the public review process for the Estuarine Sanctuary Management Plan (ESMP) and the public notice was released last week on May 27th. Advisory Council members and others have received the public notice associated with the comment period and review, and all of the required materials including of course the draft ESMP are posted on our website here: <https://hudsonriverpark.org/activities/esmp/>. The Trust will host a public hearing on it on June 29th from 4:30 to 6:30 pm. NYS Department of Environmental Conservation will of course participate given their oversight role over the Sanctuary. We thank all the members of the Advisory Council and TAC who have helped us reach this milestone.

The Park's River Project staff continues to offer virtual field trips to NYC schools as well as in-person opportunities for students and the public. This month, public in-person programs hosted by the River Project included a global BioBlitz program called City Nature Challenge at Pier 45, a shoreline cleanup organized in partnership with Riverkeeper at Pier 76 and Tide Deck tours at Pier 26. Other notable virtual programs that staff led were Ask a Scientist focused on water quality testing and pathogens, where partner teachers from the Billion Oyster Project network participated. This is part of an ongoing professional development grant with the National Science Foundation that HRPT works on in collaboration with BOP.

In terms of staffing, the River Project is currently accepting applications for 2021 seasonal science and education roles. Postings are listed on our website [here](#). This spring, the River Project has also been virtually hosting two high school interns from the Harbor School as part of a Department of Education paid internship program focused on research. Those two interns will be presenting their work with the support of our River Project staff, during the upcoming Youth Summit presented by the Intrepid Museum on Saturday, June 12.

To further support NYC teachers and connect them to local STEM resources, the River Project educators partnered with the NYC Soil and Water Conservation District to organize and present environmental programming at the 2021 NYC Outdoors Environmental Education Virtual Expo. This annual event virtually hosted 17 different environmental organizations, including NYS Parks, the Department of Environmental Conservation and the BioBus.

Last month the Park also celebrated an important milestone with the second anniversary of Park Over Plastic (POP), a Park-wide initiative to reduce single-use plastic and engage the Park community to take action towards sustainability. To commemorate the occasion, the Park shared successes and achievements of POP, hosted a virtual program teaching recycling best practices and posted video clips of community volunteers expressing their support of POP via digital media. Tenants have been a large part of the success of POP and participated in an

annual working group with Park staff in March to communicate needs, resources and goals for the coming year.

The Park's River Project staff will once again be participating in the Citizens' Water Quality Testing program (CWQTP) in collaboration with New York City Water Trail Association and dozens of other partners. The Park is a key processing lab and will be increasing the number of samples processed per week from 6 in 2020 to 10 in 2021, with four samples from Hoboken. Additionally, as part of a new study, the Park and other participants in the CWQTP will be taking water samples for analysis by Dr. Kate Good from CUNY John Jay College to investigate the presence of pharmaceuticals in local waterways.

The Park has also conducted a high frequency, enterococcus sampling survey around a rain event this spring in order to provide Dr. Wade McGillis from Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, Columbia University with the data necessary to generate a model to estimate pathogen contamination from CSO discharge within the Park. This model will be incorporated into HRPT's River Project's efforts to produce a water quality dashboard with help from human-centered design firm Cantina that we plan to launch on the Park's website later this spring.

In preparation for the Tribeca Oyster Enhancement Project, several baseline research surveys have been conducted in the restoration area in order to characterize the benthic and epibenthic communities to provide a baseline for the study. Over the past year, the Park's River Project coordinated with Dr. Alison Fitzgerald (NJCU) and Drs. Jim Lodge (HRF) and Ray Grizzle (UNH) to execute epibenthic and benthic surveys, respectively. Their reports, being finalized in May, will be shared with the TAC in early June. Concurrently, HRPT visited the BOP Red Hook facility to review progress on the enhancement structure fabrication plan and tour the seeding process. To date, over half of the gabions have been fabricated, and all reefballs have been received with plans to seed mid-June. Should everything go according to plan, all restoration structures should be deployed by early August.

Design and Construction:

There is a great deal happening at the Park in this realm.

As reported in April the Trust's Board has approved three contracts to date for the Gansevoort Peninsula totaling approximately \$28 million thus far. The surcharge operation was completed in April and there is now approximately 10 feet of soil atop the center of Gansevoort. As previously noted, the fill will prevent future settlement and will be reused on site once the compaction is completed. The Marine Construction and General Construction Phase 1 contractor has mobilized and the goal is to complete the in-water portions of the marine work by November. The contractor is starting with constructing the salt marsh on the north side of the site.

On May 14, the Trust received bid submissions for the General Contractor and Pier 97 Requests for Proposals. Staff is has vetted the responses and is bringing the two contracts to our Board

of Directors for their June meeting later this week. The contract for fabrication of the shade structures was approved at the last meeting.

On May 13, staff attended CB4's Waterfront Committee meeting along with the Construction Manager for Chelsea Waterside Phase II, which includes the long awaited comfort station, expanded field and dog run areas, picnic area and more. We expect to issue the first RFPs in late spring.

See the notes above for progress on the Tribeca Habitat Enhancements Project.

At Pier 40, work is either complete or close to completion on five of the seven phases of pile repairs, and we are expecting the sixth phase to be complete this summer. We will be bringing the proposed contract for the seventh phase to our Board of Directors for approval this week. Meanwhile, façade repairs on the eastern and northern sides of the building are just about complete and the contractor has begun demobilization. We are coordinating western and southern façade repair plans at this time. On the southern portion of the roof, we have experienced some unexpected delays because more repairs to the roof were needed than anticipated.

Public Programming:

As previously described, our Public Programs department has planned a hybrid program of virtual and in-person program offering beginning next week.

Highlights this season include dance, (Bollywood & Bhangra, Batingua Arts and Sunset Salsa); an eclectic group of performers at Sunset on the Hudson including returning favorites Manhattan Samba and High & Mighty Brass Band; Jazz at Pier 84 in Partnership with the Jazz Foundation of America; a virtual Blues BBQ festival featuring The World Famous Harlem Gospel Choir; RiverKids family entertainment, and in-person Healthy on the Hudson exercise programs all summer long. You can go to our website or Facebook Live to view programs.

All in-person events will either require advance registration or will have other controls to ensure capacity is aligned with continuing social distancing and COVID 19 safety guidelines. As previously announced, the Park is also hosting several school graduation ceremonies and many walks and runs for charity.

We have been receiving many inquiries for guest events including at Pier 76. In May, we attended the Waterfront Committee of CB4 to announce that we have approved the use of a portion of Pier 76 for the Tribeca Film Festival's pop-up season this year. Pier 76 will host ticketed by free screenings and related lectures from June 9-June 20. As with other Park piers, as permit requests are received for Pier 76, we will consider guest events that balance the public's overall use of the pier with activities that generate income and/or that make good use of the Park's unique open spaces.

Thanks to one of our Advisory Council members, HRPT will be hosting a temporary art display on the heliport fence in Chelsea by NYC Salt. Their mission is to engage, inspire, and empower underserved youth in New York City to reach their full potential through photography, video and an understanding of the visual industry. We expect the art to be mounted this week.

Operations:

HRPT staff coordinated with the City Department of Transportation, in tandem with contractor EJ Electric, to address 82 light poles that have been out along the bikeway, spanning from Harrison St. up to 59th st. Due to limited accessibility and the difficulty of navigating the safety bollards, this project was delayed and needed to be executed manually by means of traditional ladders and safety traffic controls. This project has been on the agenda since the fall of 2020 and we are happy to see that progress is finally underway. As of today, 70 of the 82 lights have been replaced, resulting in a brightly lit bikeway path that is safer for all park patrons and cyclists.

The restaurant concessionaire at Pier 84, Hook'd, is nearing completion of necessary work including utility connections, and we expect Hook'd to open very soon.

Our team has been re-energizing water features in playgrounds and at water fountains. At Pier 25, a part is on back-order so the play features are being turned on manually at present. At Pier 84, some necessary pavement work needed to occur within the display fountain area. Phase 1 of that work is complete, and we will be working this week to turn the fountain on partially while the second phase of pavement work is completed.

HRPT staff and contractors are undertaking repairs to assorted pavers.

Staff has been in close touch with Pier 57 and City Department of Transportation about construction activities that are affecting the bikeway and walkway. We will be prepared to discuss the work and the schedule this evening.

There have been several concerning security issues in and near the Park of late. The Park's investment in security cameras and related infrastructure has been supporting HRPT's efforts to work with NYPD on these incidents. HRPT is working with City Parks to hire several additional seasonal PEP officers that were approved as part of our budget this year.

Planning:

HRPT has no updates this month regarding BPCA's planned resiliency project.

HRPT staff has been working with Chelsea Piers and HRPT Board members on a proposed new lease for Chelsea Piers. The current lease predates Hudson River Park. A new lease will enable Chelsea Piers to more readily finance costly repairs to all of the piles supporting the three piers and will comport with the Trust's current lease provisions. We are still in negotiations, and

expect that we will be presenting to the Advisory Council and of course Community Board 4 soon, along with the required public review process that would be required assuming we proceed.

The Federal Railroad Administration, New Jersey Transit, Port Authority and Amtrak recently issued the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Gateway Tunnel project. The project involves construction of a new two-track rail tunnel connecting New Jersey to Penn Station under the Hudson River along with new railroad infrastructure in New Jersey and New York connecting the new rail tunnel to the Northeast Corridor as well as rehabilitation of the existing Northeast Corridor tunnel beneath the Hudson River. Construction of the new tunnels will involve the use of a tunnel boring machine below the Hudson River, including through the historic bulkhead at around 29th Street. Construction of the Hudson Tunnel will thus impact Hudson River Park in the area of the Heliport, including the public walkway and adjacent bike way, for approximately 18 months. We are currently reviewing the Final EIS and can report to the Board more at the next meeting. We do not have a date when construction of the Hudson Tunnel portion in Manhattan will begin, but it will not be before 2022. The FEIS also includes a Programmatic Agreement under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act that the Trust reviewed and concurred on and the Trust is pleased that the Programmatic Agreement provides specific measures for protecting the historic bulkhead.

HRPT has been asked to attend the June Waterfront Committee meeting of Community Board 4 regarding the current legal status of the heliport.

The historic Fireboat McKean will be coming to the middle berth on the north side of Pier 25, next to the retired US Lighthouse Tender Lilac in June. Both the McKean and Lilac were selected in 2020 following an RFEI that the Trust issued for long term historic vessel docking. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the McKean was not able to come into the Park in 2020. The McKean will operate as a museum with free admission, offer limited sightseeing excursions along with publicly accessible educational and cultural programming.

The Advisory Council helped secure commitments from ferry operators in the Hudson River to maintain a safety zone of 100 yards from the pierhead line in order to prevent long term wake damage to in-water infrastructure and reduce impacts on human powered boating and on environmental restoration efforts. At the Trust's Annual Water Safety meeting on May 7th, representatives from both NY Waterway and Hornblower described the protocols that they each plan to take to maintain this distance including adequate training for captains, demarcating the 100-yard distance in their route maps, and monitoring water travel channels. Each commercial ferry vessel is fitted with an Automatic Identification System (AIS) transceiver that can be tracked through third-party navigation services. NYCDOT uses a ferry navigation system that can monitor boat traffic in real time or through recorded footage for all vessels fitted with an AIS transceiver. The Trust is working with NYCDOT to exploring utilizing their system to get reports that would help us monitor vessel traffic.

At the request of the Advisory Council, the Trust worked with NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to organize a “Shared Waters” meeting between the NYC Ferry operator (“City Experiences” by Hornblower) and the non-motorized boating community in October 2020. As a follow up to that meeting, an in-person boat tour aboard a NYC Ferry vessel that traveled from the Battery Park City/ Brookfield Place ferry landing to Pier 79 and back was organized on May 12th by the EDC NYC Ferry team in coordination with the Trust. The meeting included City Experiences team, representatives from all of the Park’s boathouses, NYC DOT Ferries, NYC Water Trail Association represented by Rob Buchanan, and HRPT. The NYC Ferry team provided an overview of the upcoming St. George route (anticipated start this summer, date TBD). City Experiences discussed training methods, route guidance, lookouts, and other safety features aboard their vessels. While on the vessel, boathouse representatives each provided a description of their typical operations, travel patterns and previous issues related with ferry traffic. They were also invited into the wheelhouse to ask the captain any questions that they might have. As a next step, each boathouse was invited to provide their “regular routes” (with an understanding that these are not exclusive) to NYC Ferry so that the City Experiences captains can be made aware of frequently used areas in the water by non-motorized vessels. City Experiences plans to engage the boathouses through their “Captains and Kayaks” program in the next few weeks. They have created a contact form on their website <https://ferry.nyc/contact/>, which can be filled out by anyone to report a “Shared Waters” issue, which will go directly to their marine operations team.