

**Hudson River Park Advisory Council  
Minutes from March 9, 2021 Zoom Meeting**

**Jeffrey LeFrancois began the meeting at 6:04pm with a motion to approve the February 2021 meeting minutes. The minutes were adopted and approved.**

Housekeeping was first order of business and the Advisory Council (AC) welcomed Kimani Calnek as a DUSC alternate to Isaac Daniel Astrachan. It was noted that Noreen Doyle was unable to attend due to her daughter's birthday.

In Noreen's absence, HRPT Report was presented by Tina Walsh, who provided an update on water quality and water life which can also be found on HRP's Instagram report. One interesting point was how plant plankton produces a greenish color in the river as seen from under a microscope. Water quality and water life was also included in a broadcast report by NY1.

In absence of on site visits, the Trust is employing virtual field trips. A 2 day training session will occur during Spring break with the goal of planning and providing water education to more students in the park.

Tom Lindon provided an update on events in the park, emphasizing more inquiries from event producers. AC requested a spreadsheet of inquiries. Tom mentioned that until March 31, no more than 50 can gather in the park for a permitted event. Come April, up to 200 people will be allowed to congregate at a permitted event which includes permitting walk/runs. However, only 50 people at one time can run/walk together. For outdoor recreational areas, all fields are open and we should see more activity as we move from Spring into Summer.

Kira Levy provided a report on programming, which remains virtual. If you were to tune in online, you'll find different disciplines of fitness programs. Also on the docket are virtual concerts, amounting to 10 and 12 weeks of concerts. HRP will host a virtual Blues BBQ day. Consider it a condensed festival online. One thought is to align with food delivery service companies, have food delivered to participants, where a special menu is served to individuals. Children's programs will remain online to keep them safe. Jazz concerts at Pier 84 will likely resume soon, as long as they can be managed with social distance in place. Pumpkin Smash in person.

Tina expounded on a virtual "Live from the Field" which covers updates on field science and other research happening in the park. "Ask a Scientist" focuses on the waterways. Check out the link provided below to learn more about the online programming:

Plankton Bloom Microscopy: <https://www.instagram.com/tv/CMAiHtrp7ky/>

Girls in Science and Engineering Day event:

<https://www.facebook.com/HudsonRiverPark/videos/3861539410561506>

The hope is to finalize dates for in-person events; for instance, to resurrect an in person Submerge event. May is the deadline for Submerge.

Carrie Roble spoke about sustainability with a description of the “Park over Plastic” program.

<https://hudsonriverpark.org/examining-the-impact-of-park-over-plastic>.

POP by Anna Koskol<https://tnoc->

[festival.com/wp/microtalks/?vimeography\\_gallery=3&vimeography\\_video=510059822](https://festival.com/wp/microtalks/?vimeography_gallery=3&vimeography_video=510059822)

An AC member requested the creation of Walking Tours of the Park with an emphasis on the history of the waterway as more information should be shared with the public. Tina Walsh raised the purpose of the Virtual History program which has walking tours serving 33% of typical tour size to make it possible to offer in person. Nicolette Witcher agreed that the Park would like to provide more on historic tours. Nicolette plans to reach out to AC member Tom Fox to assist in developing a plan to invite historians to participate in new programs.

And here's a link to the booklet on the GV walking tour:

<https://hudsonriverpark.org/app/uploads/2012/03/HRPK-Greenwich-Village-Walking-Tour-2020.pdf>

Central Park has an Open Culture application that provides a walking history sponsored by the Central Park Conservancy program. HRPK should consider something similar.

Turnstile Tours is another organization that can assist in the development of meaningful historic tours. Augustus has a lot of historical information. Erica Bates of Chelsea Piers said she too has historical documents to share. North River Historic Ship Society requested inclusion in any history programming.

Deb Kustka opened safety and maintenance review by hoping for no more snow. A plan is in the works to improve communication to play on fields for free snow play. “Got some signs out there. Maintenance people knew that fields were open for play. Use of the field does weigh on the snow and compacts it. Which makes it more difficult to remove. Continue to research on how best to remove the snow in advance of next season.”

State DOT has provided more signs for the Greenway that articulate “NO motorized vehicles, bikes or scooters.” Half dozen signs are now installed with 80 signs to be eventually implemented. Deb reiterated, “All motorized vehicles at this point are not allowed.” There was a question to include pedal assisted as permissible as long as they don’t go beyond 12 mph. Throttle bikes should not be allowed nor should heavy messenger delivery bikes. These bikes are heavy and travel at dangerous speeds, their drivers trying to meet deadlines for delivery.

(ESMP) Estuary Sanctuary Management Plan will undergo a public review this spring. Once again, the AC has asked that plans be provided for discussion at the AC prior to public

discussion. Otherwise, the AC's voice is muted by the process. Question was raised, will the AC be able to review prior to public presentation? Carrie responded, plan is for DEC to review and then once reviewed, feedback will be given and then the public process will begin and funnel all feedback through that process. It was understood that the AC will not have access to the plan prior to public presentation. The plan is currently in internal review. Members of the AC voiced exasperation that the Act was not being followed appropriately by not including the AC prior to public presentation. There are experts within the AC that could help fine tune if given the chance.

Tom Fox voiced the concerns by stating, "We (the AC) are not the public, and we should be consulted before it goes to the public."

A formal request to create interim steps that include consulting with AC before the plan is made public was made. The Chair to follow up with a letter. This has been an ongoing issue with the process whereby the AC is left out of the process. A representative for the Trust explained, "The Trust has a Technical Advisory Committee, of which there are 10 AC members, each of which is privy to the plan, and has created a draft. That plan has not yet been solidified yet."

Robert Pirani, who sits on the Technical Advisory Committee, disagreed with the Trust's explanation and has questions about Estuary Sanctuary Management Plan. AC wants to be part of the draft plan. AC wants to be part of the formulation, rather than react to something that's already been made public.

Graeme Birchall, executive director and founder of Downtown Boathouse on Pier 26, was "not enthused by current state of management plan and would like more participation BEFORE it is presented to public."

HRPF - Tony Simone testified at City Council Parks Committee asking for city to streamline annual funding to city parks in general, a motion supporting park allies. During pandemic the open street program is essential to mental health. Need to keep parks clean and sanitized. Keep the funding. With more vaccinations, more people can congregate in parks. Tony champions corporate partners in parks, and anticipates such with Pier 76 plan for development. Promote much needed park space before commercial entities come aboard.

By Laws Committee went back to committee to revise comments presented at February 2021 AC meeting. 20% of whole will be tenant members, "to ensure balance and diversity of membership no more than 20% of the full Council membership shall be composed of Park tenants. Current membership of tenants is 11 and the new By Laws asks for 10."

A member noted that consideration should be paid to proximity park.

Michael Wiggins, Little Island's representative, asked "why can't an outside community sit on the AC?" This will bring

Susanna Aaron commented, "The AC is designed to represent organizations surrounding the park that have an interest in the park." This comment was seconded by Tom Fox and is also

evident in the original By Laws that govern the AC. To gain membership on the AC, the Membership committee makes the determination whether the group is defined in the park.

Wendi Pastor, chair of the By Laws committee, stated that the AC opened up 2 seats, those belonging to the Public Advocate and Comptroller. For the AC to work, it requires community users who have an interest in park safety, programs, and development such as environmental groups and other stakeholders who are AC members. Anyone who uses the park is a stakeholder as long as it is an organization that uses the park.

Other stipulations include that all members of the Hudson River Park Advisory Council shall reside in the state, and shall be representatives of local community, park, environmental, civic, labor and business organizations, and elected officials representing communities neighboring the park.

By Laws revisions were approved unanimously.

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Dan Kurtz presented the Trust's position on the 30 year lease proposed for Intrepid. In summary, they will be conducting significant action process, whereby the HRP BoD will vote on March 25th. If you have an issue, send comments via the HRPK website. The lease holds for 30 years, rent is \$1, and the condition is the Intrepid must operate a museum. In turn, the Intrepid will expand the Pier deck, increasing it in size by 4000 sq feet. This open space expansion comes at a cost of \$6m. Intrepid will also be responsible for all maintenance. For HRPT and DOT, the Greenway lanes will be eliminated. Esplanade will be expanded. Substantial benefits provided by Intrepid, in exchange for \$1, which translates to a major public benefit, maintenance and other improvements, and that is why HRPT agreed to extend the lease for 30 years.

Mike Onysko, representative of the Intrepid stated that the mission of HRPT and Intrepid are aligned, both serving the public with education with the public in mind.

[https://hudsonriverpark.org/app/uploads/2021/02/Intrepid-Museum\\_Community-Benefits-2-17-2021.pdf](https://hudsonriverpark.org/app/uploads/2021/02/Intrepid-Museum_Community-Benefits-2-17-2021.pdf)

A question was raised on how we can make Pier more inviting to the public?

Appraiser looked at other large historic naval vessels to find out how much they were paying in rent and adding to public education. Comparing areas like South Street Seaport varied a bit, but most of those institutions the rent was a dollar in exchange for the public benefit of housing a museum. The Missouri did not have the maintenance obligations and paid far more than \$1. Intrepid are responsible for bulkheads and esplanade, a significant financial commitment.

Port of San Diego paid \$250k for a museum there. Also not nearly the overhead costs that the Intrepid is assuming.

Jeffrey, the AC Chair, commented that CB4 values the park and it cannot be maintained without multiple streams of revenue. \$190k market rate rent was inclusive of capital spend that Intrepid

must maintain. CB4 considered it a fair share. It leaves tens of millions of dollars on the table over the course of a term of 30 years. CB4 recommended that the Intrepid should give \$1 for 3 years and then reassess the situation. Per CB4 letter can be read here: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HEw5fvrcvRugEcsqpT6sB\\_XiDPJn7SJX/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HEw5fvrcvRugEcsqpT6sB_XiDPJn7SJX/view)

Tom Fox commented that this is the perfect example of why we need to find another source of revenue for park. The inboard community should consider a NID.

Intrepid is a big attraction, which has taken years to build attendance. 1.1 million on security repairs, and maintaining pier to date. Adding more costs could have a detrimental effect on attendance as some programming is free and cost includes many variables.

Pedestrian traffic management should also be an important consideration given the congestion at the site.

The cost of maintaining the ship should not be left out either. A recent assessment of USS Lexington, which has suffered a lot of deterioration, this aircraft carrier museum in Charleston, the cost to rehabilitate was \$40 million.

Tom Fox, “what seems to be missing in this discussion is any appreciation of the value of teaching history. A society that does not teach history would be like a society that does not teach ethics, or civics.”

A macro perspective was introduced. Pier 76 will require commercialization to meet demand to build it out.

Other revenue stream suggestions were made. “Why not put out signage where visitors can provide funding.” History suggests visitors of the park do not contribute donations because a sign asks for donations.

The AC voted on whether to adopt the CB4 language into an AC resolution or letter. At this point, many AC members had left the meeting. A vote on the 30 year lease was raised.

Motion did not pass. Failed on abstentions. Final Tally: 14 abstentions, 3 no, 8 yes

Once again, the AC admonished the Trust for not raising this issue to the AC in previous meetings. Had the Trust brought in the AC in earlier regarding this issue, we could have had a more robust vote. The AC strongly urges the Trust to include the AC earlier in the process.

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The last issue on the agenda included Pier 79 errant bus enforcement. The EDC, NY Waterway, City DOT are in the process of figuring out a solution on where to put buses. NY Waterway is operating at 10% capacity. Finding a solution is difficult. Only 10 buses. 37 boats reduced to 7 boats in current operation. Hopeful it will come back. The Trust would support any opportunity to make a point about the bus parking to NYC DOT to solve the issue.

AC responded, since they aren't using the space, the onus is on them to find another solution for bus parking in HRP.

It was recommended that we bring the matter of free bus parking to Hank. Now that we are designing a public park at Pier 79 it is time for the bus parking to leave. AC will write a letter to the DOT chair to make this a priority.

Last meeting of business is to create an Equity Committee, with recommendation to be chaired by Michael Wiggins, which will be voted upon by the AC EC at its next April meeting, a process defined by the By Laws (establishment of new committees).

Meeting adjourned 8:24p.

Minutes by Dan Miller, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair, HRP AC.