

HRPK AC Meeting September 14th, 2021

Chair Jeffrey LeFrancois opened access to Zoom meeting for members and the public at 6:03p. Request is made to fill out the attendance form. Agenda is distributed.

Motion to approve June 2021 minutes. Motion adopted. Minutes are passed unanimously.

Housekeeping to kick off meeting. Attendance review will be presented at the next AC meeting. (Note: members who fail to meet the 50% attendance threshold will be identified per the rules dictated in the HRP AC By Laws).

Steven Thomson from Kasirer introduced Dean Shapiro, head of Development at Oxford Properties, the real estate arm of Ontario Teacher's fund. St Johns Terminal (550 Washington) is the largest project of theirs to date. Dean is a resident of GV. The project is close to completion. It's a highly unique site, NYC's version of the modern work place. Google is the tenant. Together, they "share the passion for having a building that is fundamentally connected to the community and is as low to ground as possible."

(Note: Google announced the purchase of 550 Washington from Oxford the Monday following the AC meeting).

The goal of the crosswalk north of Charlton is to create another connection to Pier 40 and HRPK from West Street though it certainly appears the crosswalk serves Google more so than the community. Oxford met with HRPK Trust, city and state DOT, and the solution is narrowly defined. CB2 is being brief later in October.

Rick Cook, architect of the 550 Washington development, provided historical context. Philip Habib, the development traffic consultant, represented findings of their traffic study.

Currently there are no crosswalks for 6 city blocks between Houston and Spring. The area to the south of Google is known as the Charlton passageway. The crossing would be created 60 feet north of curb cut of Charlton. It's close to the original site presented in the NYC DoT traffic plan presented to CB2 in Spring 2021.

The path is a little further north now. Traffic engineering is a leading component of the crosswalk placement.

Phillip Habib: picked a zone where they could work on crosswalk. Concern about trucks entering sanitation garage at north corner of Sanitation building, which is why the crosswalk is set at its current area.

Who is going to be using the crosswalk? Most peds are coming from the south, with objective to create a non-vehicle conflict crossing. It is expected that 600 persons per hour or 10 persons per minute will use the crosswalk.

A pedestrian refuge otherwise known as a bump out will be created on the east side of West Street to account for a waiting area.

Signe Nielsen - MNLA – is the designer of area of HRPK in need of a revision to accommodate the crossing. MNLA designed the Tribeca section of the park. Ultimately, the existing bike station needs to be moved north, create more visibility for cyclists entering the Greenway by creating better sight lines by removing trees and placing them elsewhere in the park. Pedestrians and cyclists will have clear line of sight from the new Citibike station and pedestrian holding area to provide a safer crossing of the Greenway. It's a plan that also makes it safer for people to get on and off bikes without brushing against pedestrians.

Better drainage and irrigation upgrades will be implemented, and the renovated area will preserve 2 sections of lawn.

There will 830 square feet total of added hardscape. Work will be done in off-season Winter 2022.

The West Street vehicular signal at the crosswalk at Google, just south of Pier 40, will be coordinated with the Houston Street crossing. 40 seconds are provided for crossing. Most people will be able to cross in 22 seconds.

How many tenant workers should the community expect in the office building, was asked. Google is in a place of planning and cannot provide an accurate number but guess is 4000 people per day when fully functional. Most are expected to be transit users, 75% to 80% will arrive by public transport. Ubers 12%. Pedestrians 4%, 6% cyclists. Most will be coming from the east.

Question was asked if more Citibike stations will be installed along park. Answer provided: not currently. By city ordinance, all office buildings are required to have

bike stations. Bike racks provided by Google on Charlton Passage will be set aside exclusively for the Google employees. A request was made to build more bike stands for bike owners in areas open to the public.

Washington Street area for Citibike station was reviewed briefly by Ofer Zer.

Another goal is to make Washington Street a more inviting thorough fare. Oxford working with Ellen Baer at Hudson Square Bid for enticing designs.

An 8 foot bump out aside Google will be added to gather the crossing foot and cycle traffic. The sidewalk will remain narrow except for the bump out.

AC members say there is high demand for more time to cross highway. Volumes of people including Google and Pier 40 users will exacerbate the already perilous crossing. The narrow crosswalk south of the crossing will be perilous with heavy foot traffic mixed with cyclists.

As such, 50 people crossing during busy biking will create chaos and injuries without a proper safety plan in order. Recommendation to install signal light for Greenway traffic because signage is not slowing heavy, motorized and electric bikes from riding on the Greenway.

Response by PH: Bike volumes on the Greenway are growing. Pedestrians have the right of way. The comment about bike volumes growing came as no surprise to AC members. Assuming cyclists will stop to provide right of way to pedestrians is presumptuous, given the current situation requires pedestrians to time their crossing not to conflict with fast moving cyclists and motorized and racing cyclists.

Comment: a visit to the Greenway will show that most bikes do not yield to pedestrians. They speed through crossings.

When asked if the crosswalk provides direct access to Google, the response was: crosswalk is not placed at a particular important entrance to the building. No major entrance planned on west side.

Other concerns include: I worry about bikes crossing from the Greenway sharing a narrow sidewalk moving south to the Charlton Street area. Families living east, Soho for instance, will use this crossing.

Question was asked if a Ferry stop would be provided for Google employees, much like the dock created exclusively for Citibank near Pier 26. Response: remains a possibility but no discussions that can be made public.

Again, members reiterated the need for new bike racks, more private bike racks.

Mary Habstritt – Lilac, provided a brief update on the state of Historic Vessel tours. The HRPK PR group got ahead of plans to promote the program before discussing the programs with the operators. Idea is to schedule tours through EventBrite, but the link was not working. HRPK Trust will be working via their operations department (Rashi Puri) to create ticketing for these educational programs.

Safety was the next issue. Getting out of the water is a major concern; not a lot of ropes and rings for rescue efforts. Deb Kustka from HRPT replied that life rings are placed in the park and year over year they have been successful for water rescues. A request was made to start testing ladders. The response, each pier and bulkhead is different and require unique approaches.

There is no safety requirement per law. There are a fair amount of water rescues in HRPK. Many are repeat offending swimmers, some of whom are experiencing emotional distress.

Some volleyballers go into the water after their balls. It's really hard to get out of the water to the pier deck of 25/26. Repeated recommendation to install a ladder.

The reason there is repeat offenders is because swimmers get harassed by the police but they not issuing tickets. So no harm (no ticket), no foul, and they return again and again.

Michael Wiggins, Chair of HRP AC Equity Group, provided a presentation assembled by the members of the working group. Overall, the park is doing a good job as it relates to equity diversity and inclusion. Variety of programming is encouraging.

We failed, however, to invite relevant Trust staff members to AC meeting early on but we are in partnership to improve engagement with everyone who is on this call. Please review the link below to understand the acronym EDI - smart goals, bound by time are achievable. EDI stands for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion.

<https://hudsonriverpark.org/visit/events/event-encores-2020/>

The definition of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion equates to people with different identities that feel they have agency and that they belong. The park is a beautiful resource that needs to be shared with everyone. Questions about opportunities to expand EDI were reviewed. Preliminary, scaffolded process. Use “how” as in How can we invite more people of color to attend our meeting rather than If we...

Group is at the evaluation phase so we are seeking data to isolate areas of improvement.

How will we get the data to make the plan more complete? HRPK does not have resources to dedicate to getting meaningful metrics.

Recommendations: we should intentionally invite members who have diverse backgrounds. How do we get relevant groups to come to our meetings so they can discuss their challenges and ways to police bad cycle behavior on the Greenway?

Hard to get groups to come participate (like Transportation Alternatives).
Comment: many groups that should attend don't attend even after coordinated efforts to reach out.

Kids and educational organizations should participate. Use Submerge Festival as a place to start recruitment.

HRPT does not collect data from organized programs; limited resources for surveys. Note that HRPK stewards see different things at different places. Noreen will share what they know and what they don't know.

What are we looking for when it comes to diversity? How to determine metrics of diversity; one such area of exploration is language access; what is being offered needs to be inherent in the language with attention to socio-economic diversity.

Plan is to bring EDI concept to EC of HRP AC. JL concurred.

HRPK update Information is in the report. Given the amount of time left, we will ask members to review the docs:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GDzxwnGzb9ZWPQxdD1EMZfPWDbEfZr5X/edit>

Meeting adjourned at 8:33p.