



**Report to Hudson River Park Advisory Council  
September 13, 2022**

**Environmental and Sanctuary Initiatives:**

Since Doug Israel with BMCC joined the Advisory Council, the Trust has revived conversations about collaboration opportunities to increase engagement with BMCC students and faculty. In August, the Trust and Doug organized a Park tour and discussion for BMCC leadership, including Provost and Senior VP of Academic Affairs Dr. Erwin Wong. The tour explored shared interests and goals across the two institutions and highlighted Park resources, programs and research projects that are primed for partnership. Since the meeting, the Trust has started sharing Park communications including relevant updates and event announcements with BMCC's Public Affairs team. In addition, BMCC plans to support the Park's SUBMERGE Marine Science Festival by being an exhibitor and organizing students to meaningfully participate on both Friday and Saturday. The Trust and BMCC's Director of Research Programs, Dr. Odaelys Pollard, are also actively connecting CUNY's Research Scholar Program to Park research and registering CSTEP student groups for fall Park field trips. Later this fall, the Trust plans on presenting to BMCC natural science and social science professors to explore new research projects that can build upon faculty expertise.

Recently, the Trust began a five-year research project entailing monitoring performance of the features installed as part of the Tribeca Habitat Enhancement project. The monitoring focuses on four research areas, including oyster health & performance, estuarine community utilization, enhancement feature performance and water & sediment properties. In July we launched the mobile species survey through Rutgers University and are checking traps to understand finfish population dynamics. We also surveyed the reef balls and gabion structures with the Hudson River Foundation and were incredibly pleased to see that the oysters had grown about 2 inches in the last year. We will survey the habitat structures again in the fall and plan to report on the first season of monitoring this winter.

Following a successful summer season which welcomed thousands of NYC summer campers to engage in hands-on environmental education programs, we are excited to announce the start of our fall field trip season. Teachers can book a wide range of field trip programs focused on shoreline ecology, fish ecology, plankton, water quality, climate change, environmental justice and more. Information about those programs and instructions on how to book can be found directly on our website. We welcome you sharing information about our programs with anyone in your networks.

As we had mentioned at the start of the summer, we received some funding from the City to conduct basic surveying in the Park this summer. With our prime consultant HDR, we created both an intercept survey and online questionnaire for Park users which we hope will help us learn more about our audience and the ways that people use the Park. We have had a number of intercept surveys happening throughout the Park during the summer. Additionally, we have been spreading the word about the online questionnaire through in-Park signage and our communications channels. We would love for the AC to also help spread the word – we will follow up to share more about how you can support in distributing this online questionnaire to the community.

We are excited to announce that our WasteShark ROV arrived this month! This is a remotely operated piece of equipment that is designed to collect floating debris in the water while simultaneously gathering geospatial and water quality information. It will also engage volunteers and students in the collection of this plastic debris and contribute to the Park's ongoing research. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation awarded us with a grant to further community engagement and education connected to plastic pollution. We will be testing the equipment throughout the fall to understand its operations constraints and needs.

### **Design and Construction:**

At Chelsea Waterside Park, the site contractor has completed salvage, removal, and earthwork operations, and is presently installing footings, curbs, walls, salvaged granite elements and site utilities in the Central Area, Overlook and Dog Run. In the Dog Run, the new walls, curbs, concrete mounds, asphalt pavement, tree plantings, water spray features and basin, electrical, plumbing, and irrigation work are complete. The tiered seating, color seal coating, and fencing are in progress, and we are still on track to open the larger, improved dog run by the end of the month. The building contractor has completed the comfort station's foundation, subgrade utilities, exterior walls and roof, and is in the midst of installing the building's exterior granite cladding system and interior walls and utilities.

Work is proceeding well at Gansevoort Peninsula. Trevcon Construction completed installation of submerged habitat, including oyster gabions and reef balls, in late July. Steven Dubner Landscaping continues to install the south edge rip rap, seating areas, and kayak landing. The north side salt marsh soils, plants, and riprap were installed this month, with overlooks and seat steps currently being installed. JR Cruz continues subsurface utility installation and has relocated a portion of the bikeway in anticipation of beginning the reconstruction of the Bloomfield Street entrance this fall. The 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue Promenade landscaping and paving is largely complete, with railings and site furnishings to be installed shortly. Pine Grove tree plantings are partially complete, with site furnishings installed. Vehicular rated boardwalks have largely been completed, and grading for the large sloped lawn was completed this month. EJ Electric is installing lighting for the rest of the peninsula. Padilla Construction is advancing construction of the restrooms, concession, and M&O space, with all footings and foundations in place.

At Pier 97, work is proceeding well with the first dirt for the lawn arriving earlier this month. Many of the concrete walls, planters and curbs have been poured and granite veneers are being installed. Granite veneers for the Sunset Deck seat steps and Flexible Gathering Area bleacher seating are complete. Cast-in place concrete work is ongoing for planter walls and curbs. All granite veneer fabrication is complete, and material is in route to NYC by barge. Drainage mats and geofoam fill are continuing to be installed around the Pier. The steel cantilever framing and floor slab for the Overlook have been installed and the roof slab will be installed soon. Plumbing for the play area water feature has been installed. 20 drilled caissons for the new comfort station foundation have been installed and foundation slab installation will begin in the next few weeks pending coordination of all utility penetrations.

At the August board meeting, the board authorized HRPT to enter a contract with Pioneer Landscape and Asphalt Paving to reconstruct the tennis courts just north of Spring Street. Construction is anticipated to commence in the next 2 weeks and be completed in late fall, weather permitting.

Trust received 27 proposals for the Estuarium and has been interviewing respondents. Trust staff hope to bring a recommendation to the September Board meeting. The RFP requires expertise in design as well as operation of aquaria systems, and includes significant community engagement as part of the design process.

In July, the Trust issued an RFP seeking a construction contractor for the Pier 26 Science Play Area based on the design prepared by the OLIN Studio and is currently reviewing proposals. The play equipment will include a 90-foot long Atlantic sturgeon and 49-foot long Shortnose sturgeon with educationally themed painted interiors, an 18-foot tall eel grass play structure, slides, climbing nets, and a shrimp and oyster shell play area, among other features. The Trust plans to recommend a contractor for board approval by the end of this month, with the goal of starting construction by the end of this year.

Trust staff is also coordinating with the construction and development team for 550 Washington Street on the construction plan for the new crosswalk to the Park. Work began in mid-August on the northern portion of the site. Construction of this area is expected to be complete by the end of October. The fence will then shift south to the area nearest the tennis courts. The entire project should be complete by the end of December. Work to Route 9A and the bikeway started on September 7 and is being completed overnight in accordance with the SDOT issued permits. Single lane closures of the bikeway will be necessary overnight (10pm- 6am) while work is occurring to the bikeway wall and buffer. During any bikeway lane closures, the contractor will have signs and flaggers directing bicyclists. The Trust continues to work with Citibike on the temporary relocation of the dock to the Morton Street entrance, and is exploring alternatives to reduce the current three month disruption later this year. We attended a Parks and Waterfront Committee meeting of Community Board 2 to discuss the plans, which voiced support for keeping Citi bikes available in the Pier 40 area during construction. The dock will return to the new entrance once the construction is complete.

Last week, the Trust attended a Waterfront, Parks, and Environment meeting of Community Board 4 to discuss the introduction of interim Pickleball courts within the current Service Yard just south of 34<sup>th</sup> Street. The Trust is in process of grading and repaving a section of the Service Yard, and has the opportunity to accommodate four courts while final plans for the area are being developed. The Trust is working towards hiring a design team for the area between 29<sup>th</sup> Streets and 44<sup>th</sup> Streets, and will be engaging in a full community planning process at that time. The Committee was very supportive of the idea, and the Trust hopes to have the courts operational in 2023.

### **Public Programs:**

Labor Day marked the end of many of the daily events in the Park. This season was especially significant as it marked the return of beloved free events that had not been offered weekly since 2019. With the help of our sponsors, including Hudson River Park Friends, the Public Programs department was able to offer a full calendar of activities for Park regulars and visitors alike.

Healthy on the Hudson provided active respite and weekday wellness classes, presented once again by presenting sponsor lululemon with additional support from Hudson River Park Friends. Attendance soared this year, with more than 5,000 people joining these workouts. We were proud to extend the reach of these classes, integrating varied workouts for all levels. Kids were also offered the chance to get

active in the Park by learning Bike Skills 101 in partnership with Bike NYC. We look forward to extending these offerings as new areas of the Park are completed.

The summer once again showed that dance lovers know to come to Hudson River Park to participate and enjoy free dance performances. Hudson River Dance Festival, presented by Hudson River Park Friends, and in partnership with the Joyce Theater, returned to Pier 63 after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. World-renowned dance companies Calpulli Mexican Dance Company, Dorrance Dance, Martha Graham Dance Company and Ronald K. Brown/EVIDENCE thrilled the audience of more than 4,500 people. Our participatory dance lessons enjoyed a warm reception at new locations, Piers 76 and 84. Sunset Salsa kicked off the season at Pier 76 before we moved up to Pier 84 with Bollywood and Bhangra led by Ajna Dance later in the summer; we look forward to bringing even more dance to the Park next year.

Pier 76 also hosted the Blues BBQ Festival, bringing more than 13,000 music and BBQ lovers to the Park – the largest event Hudson River Park has hosted! We are excited to continue building on the success of this year, bringing more restaurants and activations for attendees to enjoy in the years to come. Music continues to be a draw for Park-goers. This fall Pier 76 will be host to a number of events, including the return of the NYC Food and Wine Festival.

Our expanded Jazz at Pier 84 series, presented by Hudson River Park Friends in partnership with the Jazz Foundation, brought together more than 2,000 fans for free concerts featuring music greats. Our Friday night concert series, Sunset on the Hudson, on Pier 45 provided a variety of genres for the public to listen to each week this summer, and our Mirage pop-ups sparked joy in unconventional places for music and dance as well.

This fall also brings the return of SUBMERGE Marine Science Festival to Pier 84 on October 14 and 15. The first day offers local schools and student groups to have a hands-on learning experience with field trips coordinated by our team. The public will be welcomed to the Festival on Saturday, with science-themed performances, learning and activities – all free, with no registration required. Pumpkin Smash will also be hosted on Pier 84, Saturday November 5. We look forward to a smashing good time, helping the public learn about our Community Composting Program at the same time as providing some live pumpkin crushing activities.

### **Operations:**

The past few months have been an extremely busy season for our operations team. Our usual summer spike of visitors means more trash, more graffiti, and the summer heat means our plants need extra time and attention. The lack of rain has been a particular concern for our plants, and we have been watching some trees that have been struggling closely. Friend's has secured an \$8,000 grant through the Green Acre foundation that will allow us to replace some of plants that have been stressed due to drought conditions. We are proud our operations team has kept up a beautiful, well-maintained park for another high season.

The annual gathering of Pride Sunday which occurred on June 26 was a big success with thousands of people densely packed in the Pier 45 and 46 area. The section of the Park around Christopher Street reached capacity around 5:30- 6:00PM and was subsequently closed by NYPD to additional visitors. NYPD and PEP did an excellent job maintaining safety throughout the day and evening. Our staff and Doe Fund

staff did a tremendous job cleaning up and restoring the Park to normal operations by 6:00AM the next day.

In August the 18 moorings and the service floating dock of the Pier 40 Mooring Field were replaced. We hope to have public mooring operations back in service for the 2023 boating season.

In August the sewage pumps and control panel at Pier 26 that service the Pier 26 boathouse and City Vineyard were completely replaced. We thank Downtown Boat House and City Vineyard for their patience and assistance during the work. All systems are operational.

During the summer, we have seen an increase in thefts on and around the Pier 40 field. Most of the thefts involve unattended backpacks and scooters. All permit holders and users of the fields have been reminded to secure their valuables and not leave their property unattended. One individual responsible for the thefts was apprehended by NYPD with the assistance of PEP on July 21. The Senior Director of Public Safety maintains regular contact with the NYPD over the status of this case.

On July 13, NYPD apprehended the perpetrator responsible for the homicide of a homeless person sleeping in the Park overnight.

The Trust and Friends remain engaged with volunteer events throughout the Park. We have hosted 56 volunteer groups. This includes community groups such as Green Team, educational groups and corporate groups. There were 1394 volunteers with these groups giving about 3700 hours of service.

So far in 2022 Trust staff has processed 109,000 lbs of food scraps. Of the 10 drop off sites in the park, the #1 drop off site is Chelsea Waterside Park with 17,000lbs year to date.

Also note that Trust maintenance staff spent 300 hours cleaning graffiti in July and August. 62 of those hours were spent cleaning the skatepark at North Moore St. and concession building after it was vandalized in August.

Following up the AC's conversation last year on the proximity of ferries to the pier headline, the Trust has requested cost proposals from Wartsila for its Automated Information System (AIS), which would allow for the tracking of vessels in and adjacent to park. We are continuing to explore the capabilities of this system and how it might support park operations.

As New York City adjusts to new commuting patterns, the Trust is monitoring the bus traffic the frontage of Pier 79 and has been in communication with EDC to reiterate concerns we have heard from community members.

#### **Other Park Updates:**

Over the summer, the Mayor appointed Deputy Meera Joshi as the Chair of the Trust Board of Directors, and Michael Pastor as a new member of the Board. We are excited to welcome our new Board Members, who bring significant expertise to the Park. We thank former Chair Vicki Been and Board Member Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk for their work in support of the Park and their service on our Board.

In August, the Trust received a Notice of Claim against the Trust, Consolidated Edison and the Department of Environmental Conservation from the City Club regarding Con Ed's use of Pier 98. Both

the Notice of Claim and accompanying New York Times article have been circulated among the AC. Last week, the Trust joined a meeting of Manhattan Community Board 4's Waterfront Parks and Environment committee to discuss the concerns, and will be addressing it again at the AC.

Over the summer, Downtown Boat House had its 500,000 kayaker - a tremendous accomplishment. The Trust was thrilled to be able to help publicize this achievement, and we hope you will join us in extending our congratulations. Read more about it [here](#).