

HRPAC meeting notes

2.13.23

Tammy Meltzer

6:33p

Dan called the meeting to order at 6:33

- o Thank you to Tammy Meltzer for Hosting in December
- o Thank you to Michael Wiggins for taking notes last month
- o Motion to approve the December minutes - Tom Fox
- o Seconded and Motion passes
- o Reviewed Agenda items for this evening
- o Tom Fox to Set the table for the HATS Conversation with William

NJNYHAT USACE Update - William Benesha, CB2/Tom Fox HRPAC

HATS STUDY Landing Page:

<https://www.nan.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Projects-in-New-York/New-York-New-Jersey-Harb-or-Tributaries-Focus-Area-Feasibility-Study/>

Tom Fox

- o HATS STUDY has impacts on many issues
- o Primary Concerns
 - o The Park
 - o The Estuary
 - o Accessibility
 - o Storm Water
 - o Route 9A – Micro mobility
 - o Resiliency – Future design of the piers, to host marine organisms to
 - o CSOs – Investment in sewage solutions
 - o Is this an opportunity to put these issues together?
 - o Maximizing economies of scale working across agencies
- o Recommendation to create a taskforce to coordinate future approaches to resilience on the West Side and the Estuary, Water Overflow
 - o sample text for 1st review put in chat and shown on screen
 - o REVISED WORDING FOR THE RESO/LETTER
The Advisory Council urges the Governor and Mayor to establish a Task Force, as they did to envision the Hudson River Park, to address the three major infrastructure challenges facing the future of the West side waterfront - enhancing resiliency, restoring the estuary, and redesigning Route 9A to accommodate changing transportation modes and reduced traffic volumes. All three projects are critical to the future of the Park and the desirability and value of adjacent communities and need to be coordinated.
 - o Just as they did in the late 1980s, the Governor and Mayor should establish a Task Force to craft a bold vision to complete West side revitalization by coordinating the efforts of the Hudson River Park Trust, US Army Corps of Engineers, and relevant city and state environmental and transportation agencies to capture this once in a lifetime opportunity.

William Benesch: I am the chair of Environmental Cmte. Community Board 2

- o Many may be deeply familiar with this study
- o Points that are germane to the West Side of Manhattan
- o Major asks from the start of the process were improved:
 - o extension of comment period is now March 6th
 - o Many Additional Meetings have been done with more engagement which is good.
- o CB2 has done a complex resolution with feedback on specific points on what is needed for that area.
- o There are many outstanding questions on what other items that are valued by the communities but are not included: ie View Corridors, Piers, playgrounds, Bikeway

Noreen Doyle - Confirmed there has been a briefing from USACE to HRPT Members of Staff, many concerns and notes still remain

- o Ability for them to ever get funding for this is extremely complex based on Act of Congress
- o Many of HRPT have the same questions as the other groups (CB1, Cb2, CB4 and more)
- o There is a very rigid framework on what they can and cannot do based on Congress.
- o Asked if there is a mix and match opportunities for different areas? While yes, they would have to do a cost benefit analysis on each change vs the walls.
- o For example: Plans around Gansevoort do not work as they have presented it due to the current HRPT build out and design- but engineering doesn't exist yet for new plans for that location.
- o Asked about the structures of the floodwalls in relation to the Piers which are unprotected but are still a structure that has had a great deal of public and private funds paid to rebuild them already. We are asking that other types of structures like the piers, etc are included not just the buildings on the East side of West Street.
- o The value of view corridors has not been included.
- o The needs of HRPT are extreme and the shore based measures do not take into account the types of uses that HRPT has and will have in the future.
- o They are willing to listen to feedback on the rubric and specifics of what is protected but it may be a long road.
- o The USACE mandate is to increase the resiliency options to reduce the losses that occurred similar to Hurricane Sandy.
- o Whatever they do will have a large impact on HRPT - they are open to hearing from us but many custom solutions will be needed and thus far not so many options are shown.

Rashi Puri

- o Encouraged that USACE were very open to listening to more details from HRPT on the effects and what is needed for items like the bikeway, environmental issues of wind/sound as well as the big picture.

Questions:

Tammy Meltzer: This seems that it will need a multi view approach and a task force of the local groups that can look more holistically at potential changes for best practices and work with agencies. The task force would be able to look at long term planning in those zones to create something new - moving utilities or redesign of the bikeway and 9a that could be most effective. Can we support a task force?

Erica Bates: Why is Ganzevort on the other side of the wall?

Noreen: They did not know we had started the project.

Noreen: They need different treatments in order to protect Hudson River Park as parts flooded differently and are at different elevations.

RASHI: They are looking at all the options to ensure each has the proper treatment

Hector Vazquez: We need to advocate for more green space vs concrete so the water has an opportunity to go somewhere; walls only estimated to last 35 years - we need to consider other options.

Brandan Sexton: The Army Corp cannot value the views or the access/usage of the water - we need community groups like this to ensure that the thinking is included in the analysis.

Dan: This leads us to Tom's resolution

TOM: Read into the record and shown on the screen the resolution. Other than this, the project seems to be going about things backwards with a designed wall before the input of the public engagement has been considered. Let's take the time to ensure this is done the right way as we have a 2030 window.

William Benash:

- o The idea of having green is highly valued and preferred for the area. More green before gray to ensure we do not need to add pumps.
- o https://www.nan.usace.army.mil/Portals/37/NYNJHAT%20Presentation_Jan2023_for_upload_1.pdf
- o Page 10 of the link is new. It shows a more detailed timeline
- o There are enhanced engagement opportunities throughout the process including through construction.

Isaac: Is there a benefit and bandwidth for a new group or can we use the existing groups?

Tom Fox:

- o Is this an opportunity to not prescribe that but use the groups that we have.

Wendi Paster

- o This an opportunity to repeat success from the past and look ahead with a Task Force

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Just as in the late 1980s, the Governor and Mayor should establish a Task Force with meaningful community participation to craft a bold vision to complete West side revitalization by coordinating the efforts of the Hudson River Park Trust, US Army Corps of Engineers, and relevant city and state environmental and transportation agencies to capture this once in a lifetime opportunity

Daniel: Vote was called and seconded; passed unanimously

Mary Habstritt, LILAC introduced the team from the Schooner Apollonia - Captains Sam Merrett and Brad Vogel

- o Started presentation
- o Sailing Schooner is not a historical project - looking to currently move cargo and in the future.
- o We started during the pandemic.
- o Demonstrating real, sustainable, humanscale transport of goods by sail.
- o Sustainable Delivery - Sail Freight 101

- 96% sailing (wind power)
- First and last mile is with solar powered e-bikes and trailer
- Part of our Mission is to create life on the NYC waterfronts - Pier 16
- We work with the local schools and the Fulton Stall Market
- Spin on the CSA model of getting goods from Hudson Valley
- mix of nonprofit and for profit elements
- Creating Green Jobs on the water (Hudson and Harbor)
- 20 Port Partners
- Since 2020 -moved over 110,000lbs of cargo such as: peppers, coffee, wood, mulch, flour, bulk grain products, pumpkins
- Possibilities at Pier 26
 - We do not have a place to berth on the West Side so far
 - We provide tangible programming at the water's edge (see slide)
 - Looking for 4 potential visits in the season
 - Partner with SS Lilac on supply chain transparency
 - Fall Pumpkin Family event with Sloop Clearwater

Dan Miller: Thank you for the presentation; it is inspiring to see sustainable things happening behind the scenes.

Richard Corman: This is so important to see things like this happening on The Hudson. How do you see fiscal sustainability and the opportunities to ensure this is a viable long term project? Have you been in touch with the Harbor School in terms of training and partnership?

BRAD: This is not a pet project but working with a diverse group of partners that has allowed us to grow 60-65%. Due to the cost of gas and other prices - this is a much more viable alternative for many of their partners. Started out not considering they would turn a profit until after year 3 but they have outpaced the expectations.

SAM: We do not cost more than it costs to ship by truck. Partners have to create a revenue stream that is targeted to this and not just use the idea as a marketing note. We have reached out to the Harbor School

Mary Habstritt - Areas like North Cove are not viable on the west side due to the extraordinary costs. The piers on the West side in the park are perfect for these types of public uses.

Tammy Meltzer: The North Cove is owned by a Public Benefit Corporation and perhaps a separate dialog about lower costs and uses for something like this could be had.

TOM Fox: This is another opportunity to do something special in HRPT and they can pay rent as they have a for profit arm.

MARY: They are already talking to Terri Robel and Rashi about the possibilities .

DAN: Mary, please write the resolution to support them. Asked the AC if there were any objections or recusals, all in favor.

7:50 PM

Noreen D: Trust Report.

- Celebrating 25 years since HRPT was formed - looking for partners and sponsors

- o Thank you to those who attended the frosty and cold ground breaking for the Sturgeon Playgrounds.
- o There have been press reporting/opinion articles on Gansevoort Peninsula Beach that has taken off greatly.
- o Received today from Ted for a public meeting we are hosting a virtual meeting with CB1 to discuss the options for the Estuarium on February 27th.
- o RFP Upcoming soon for Comprehensive Designs for new designs of the area between 29th Street to southern border of the Intrepid but Omits Pier 76
- o Budget applications through Fed Elected officials for a variety of programs to see \$750K Grant from NOAA for Environmental Enhancements and Research - waiting to see the process to secure that.
- o \$1mil for Safety Improvements for new bollards, safety lighting, changing surface treatments but cannot be used for Cameras.This will be a FY 2025 project
- o Rashi is our RFP procurement for Boathouses guru
 - o RASHI: Process is still ongoing: 7 proposals received for 4 locations; including options of sharing between respondents;

Chris McGann:

- o A few incidents lately - expanded life rings - these continue to be a cost to maintenance but they are used so it is a cost worth having.
- o Water is cold now, and the current is dangerous so we will add more and replace them. We used many of them this summer and fall.
- o Had 6 incidents of younger kids on bicycles on Sunday nights harassing people (knocking people over and taking bags). Worst incident was on NY Day, escalated by the person who got hit.
 - o Most of the time they harass the peps officers versus park users
- o Person identified to PEPS based on feedback from Dog Run users about an aggressive person who was causing issues in the dog run.
- o For all of those types of things - report it when it is seen and Noreen mentioned they are looking to get some more senior PEP staff in the season.

Robert A:

- o Horticultural staff working hard and also with a professional pruning contract to reduce the tree coverage for safety and views
- o Festive holiday lights are being removed - plants will be left behind and will be transplanted in the spring in the park. This is a good process to use in future years.
- o Identifying opportunities to replace gas powered equipment with electric: Leaf blowers, generators, cars, etc..
- o Noreen notes: There are massive supply chain issues that exist for electric forklifts and others that are affecting us in the park.
- o Graffiti continues to be an issue in the skate park, Pier 26 and they are exploring options to deter through paint and improved lighting.
- o State DOT has finally told us the bikeway resurfacing starts in March for 9 months - all work will happen overnight. Looking to get more information. The 1st task is bollard removal and putting in temporary safety measures. Bollards will be the same as those there - it is not in the budget to create new ones or fund permanent for the temporary.
 - o Noreen: we will take advantage to ask for changes during this time
- o CPR and AEDs training for staff and other training usually done in the Winter time is ongoing.

DAN: The floor is open for questions.

Brett (Volunteer at the Boathouses): Very important that the respondents that are put together at each boathouse are able to work well together. This is for public safety standpoints.

Erica Bates: Can you clarify the “nighttime” hours on the DOT Bikeway project?

ROB R: This will be done in sections and done overnight. 10pm to 6am; the project is run by DOT and the notifications will be coming from them. This is scheduled mid-March. Noreen asked if they would have a community liaison.

Tammy M: Please forward the contact details of the Liaison for the project and the mapping/timeline for each section. Can they present the plan to the AC?

DAN: The area south of Pier 97 and Pier 76 absolutely needs to be done but ROB said they may not be redoing that section.

MARY H: Why is the Congressional Grant not happening until 2025 and is this infrastructure only?

NOREEN: FY 25 but we are hoping we can spend it in the calendar year 2024 and we will see what the details are when we get them.

Connie Fishman FHRPT:

- o We wrapped up our volunteer programs and had robust community service engagement with new companies.
- o Looking to increase the seasonal staff for 2023 so we can boost more than 1 volunteer group a day or double up as we had to offer this year.
- o Working with the trust to add video content to the new bloomberg app. Providing the staff who are helping with content, and happy it lives permanently in the app while you add new items.
- o Working on increasing sponsorships and launching new PR resources for the 26th Anniversary
- o 400k added to become part of the seasonal events.
- o Holding small winter and cultivation events now during the slow season.
- o 2.5 months away from the Annual Luncheon held at Chelsea Piers again this year.

ROB R - responding to Rob P. - Work is being done at the sections near Circle Line /42nd street to improve the Bike Lane.

Committee Reports: Mary: No new reports

Dan Miller - Patrick from DEC has agreed to come to the March 14th meeting. Please provide your questions in advance so he can ensure what he can and cannot answer in regards to Pier 98, The Hudson River and any other relevant DEC questions. Thank you Traci & Noreen for giving them a nudge to come.

Old business - none

8:29 PM Tammy moves to adjourn

Dan seconds the motion to adjourn.

Meeting called at 8:29 PM