



**Report to Hudson River Park Advisory Council  
January 9, 2024**

**Design and Construction**

*Gansevoort Peninsula*

Both the dog run and the Bloomfield Street promenade opened in December 2023, with the building almost complete and scheduled to open later this month, including the public bathrooms. The contractors will return this spring to replace or complete some plantings, as well as finish painting of the dog run surface, which are all weather dependent work.

*Science Playground*

The Science playground is scheduled to be complete by the end of next week, weather depending. The only remaining work is installation of fencing panels, which were delayed due to supply chain and fabrication issues.

*Estuarium*

Following the late October community engagement meeting, the project is in the early stages of schematic design. The designers are further developing all aspects of the building, landscape, exhibits, water intake and mechanical systems. They will be studying exterior materials and fenestration, while further developing the interior layout and overall building appearance. We look forward to returning to the community with updates later this year.

*29<sup>th</sup> – 44<sup>th</sup> Street Landscape and Esplanade Design*

HRPT Staff will recommend a design team for Board consideration and approval at the next January Board meeting, with the community design process anticipated to begin early this Spring.

*Pier 97*

We were pleased to be able to begin providing limited public access to Pier 97 at the end of December, including much of the southern esplanade. The Belvedere, Overlook, and Playground remain to be completed and the Pier is expected to open this Spring. Work on the new restroom/maintenance building is progressing with all exterior walls, waterproofing, and roof slabs completed. Trade contractors have commenced installing electric, plumbing, HVAC, and walls inside the building and the contractor is continuing to install supports for the aluminum composite façade system.

**Environmental and Sanctuary Initiatives**

After a robust naming contest, please join us in welcoming Gulp, our Wasteshark! Thank you to all who voted and helped spread the word.

*2023 End of Year Successes in Education & Research*

Our River Project team continues to connect New Yorkers to our local waterways through inspiring and engaging environmental programming. Throughout 2023, we educated over 35,000 people in over 400 programs. Of that total, more than 3,000 participants were NYC students from all five boroughs of NYC, including 50% of schools outside of Manhattan. In addition, our field trip programs continue to serve Title I audiences, with more than half of our partner schools holding Title I status. This year we also introduced a brand-new educational gallery and classroom, the Pier 57 Discovery Tank, which has attracted over

20,000 visitors since April. We also had a record number of attendees join us to celebrate the end of the Wetlab season during Release of the Fishes and sustainability at Pumpkin Smash. All of this work was possible because of our expanded River Project team and our 24 high school, college and early career professionals that participated in field research and STEM communication internship opportunities in the Park.

Additionally, the River Project continued work on its seven Trust-led research projects which focus on fish ecology, environmental DNA, pathogens, plastics, oysters, wetland restoration and river conditions. 2023 was also a very successful year for the Visiting Scholars program, with 20 researchers from 14 different institutions conducting research in the Park. This year also saw the first small grant opportunity for two CUNY scholars to conduct research on key topics that are highlighted in the Park's Estuarine Sanctuary Management Plan, funded through a grant the Trust received from the CUNY Office of Research. We are also pleased to share that our Tribeca Habitat Enhancement Project concluded with its Phase 2 installation, which brought an additional 4 million juvenile oysters to our waterways, bringing the Parkwide total installed to 35 million oysters.

Looking ahead, we are excited to ring in 2024 with lots of ambitious plans on the horizon that continue to support the Estuarine Sanctuary through research, habitat restoration and education.

#### *Winter Programming: Field Trips & Public Events*

With the addition of our Pier 57 Discovery Tank, the Park has its first year-round programming space, expanding both our field trips and public events through the winter months. For the first time, NYC schools can book a series of hands-on winter field trips in the Discovery Tank classroom focused on climate change, pollution, environmental justice, and plankton. The classroom's high-tech elements help support our educators in teaching these themes and creating an exciting experience for students visiting the Park. There's still space for other classes to sign up for programs, please feel free to share with your networks or visit [hudsonriverpark.org/fieldtrips](https://hudsonriverpark.org/fieldtrips).

In addition to school programming, we're also looking forward to offering public-facing programs in the Discovery Tank this winter including our popular Painting Nature, Ask a Scientist and Story Collider events. Painting Nature invites you to channel your creative side as you learn to paint local wildlife during a workshop led by a teaching artist. Ask a Scientist and Story Collider are lecture-style events that bring storytelling and STEM together as local experts share more about their research and connection with the natural world. And beyond those special events, starting in February, visitors of all ages can visit us during our regular Guided Gallery hours in the Discovery Tank from Wednesdays to Saturdays. During those gallery open hours our educators also highlight a series of rotating educational exhibits to learn about fascinating aspects of our Hudson River ecosystem. More details about upcoming events can be found on our website at [hudsonriverpark.org/events](https://hudsonriverpark.org/events).

#### **Public Programs**

Planning for the 2024 season is well under way and we look forward to the return of popular signature events like SUBMERGE and Blues BBQ, along with some new and exciting offerings!

Our sports fields are enjoying a robust winter season that kicked off on December 4, 2023 and permitted Gansevoort Field for the first time. We were able to both expand time for current users and welcome some new groups, with 41 different groups permitted for 4,250 hours on our fields this season. We've received overwhelmingly positive comments about Gansevoort's field and are already getting inquiries

for Spring permitting and beyond. The Spring season kicks off on March 11 and runs through June 16, and applications are due on January 15.

## **Operations**

### *Holiday Décor*

This past holiday season, staff installed holiday decorations throughout the park. Decorations were placed around Christopher St. fountain, Tribeca Dog Run, Leroy Dog Run, Pier 84 Dog Run, and Chelsea Waterside Park. We are looking for a sponsor to help financially support our decorations next year, so please let us know if you know of a corporation or business that is interested.

### *Bikeway Lighting*

Several City DOT operated lights along the bikeway are out, which we have either observed or which have been reported to us. We have shared the outages with City DOT, which is aware of some existing lighting concerns and is working on remedying issues. If you see an out light, please report it to 311 and/or call the 24/7 Operations Desk at 212-242-6427 or send an email with a description of the location to [info@hudsonriverpark.org](mailto:info@hudsonriverpark.org) so we can address any that the Park's or report it to the appropriate agency.

### *Snow Maintenance*

Staff are prepared to handle any upcoming winter snowstorms. Equipment and supplies have been strategically staged throughout the park and are available for use as needed.

## **Horticulture**

The Park's highly successful volunteer program is made possible through support of Hudson River Park Friends, and significantly contributes to the beauty and maintenance of the Park. In 2023 we had over 3,000 volunteers at 115 volunteer events – resulting in more than 9,000 volunteer hours to keep the Park green and thriving. With Friends and our volunteers, in 2023 we planted more than 40,000 bulbs, over 6000 plants, and 15 new trees. We also processed 120,000lbs of food waste in from our community drop off sites to make compost for our gardens. We are incredibly grateful to Friends for the effort and coordination it requires to make this program such a success.

## **Public Safety**

We previously reported that we have been in contact with NYPD personnel from the 1<sup>st</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Precincts and have agreed to conduct joint education and enforcement operations at strategic points along the bikeway. On Friday, January 5, PEP partnered with the NYPD 6<sup>th</sup> Precinct and together issued 9 summonses for motor bikes on the Greenway. As a result of current events and demands placed upon the NYPD, scheduling these joint operations has been difficult although we will continue to try to get them scheduled.

On December 17, 2023, just before 2:00 AM PEP officers on routine patrol observed a robbery in progress at the western end of Pier 84. Three perpetrators fled the scene as the PEP officers approached. After a brief pursuit, the PEP officers caught one of the perpetrators near the dog run. As the officers were attempting to take the perpetrator in to custody, a second perpetrator attacked the officers from behind, kicking and punching them in an attempt to free their partner. One Perpetrator was apprehended and turned over to the NYPD Midtown North Precinct and two perpetrators fled the scene un-apprehended. Neither the PEP officers nor the two victims sustained serious injuries. We were able to provide substantial video evidence of the crime to the NYPD.

### *Code Blue*

During the colder months when unhoused persons that frequent Hudson River Park and use our facilities are more vulnerable to the elements, PEP implements the City's "Code Blue" policy. Between November 15 and March 15, when the temperatures drop below 32 degrees or during inclement winter conditions (i.e. strong winds, forecasted precipitation for more than two hours, extended periods of cold, sudden cold after a warm period) known locations are visited during each tour and unhoused persons are checked for wellness including, hypothermia, frostbite, and/or any other cold-stress related issues. These visits can result in people accepting medical assistance, other services, moving to safer locations, and/or moving off park property when the park is closed to the public. PEP works directly with the Department of Homeless Services on outreach.

### **Real Estate and Planning**

#### *Pier 76 Planning – Next Steps*

The last meeting of the Pier 76 Task Force meeting was held in November 2023. While the Trust did not ask Task members to vote or take other formal actions to conclude the Task Force process, Trust staff created and distributed three separate documents to synthesize and memorialize information discussed throughout the Task Force process. Together, the documents are intended to support next steps related to advancing solutions for Pier 76, including broader public engagement and potentially future legislative solutions. Task Force members had an opportunity to provide feedback on the documents and Trust staff has now incorporated such edits into the attached versions.

The three documents can be found [online here](#) and are:

- 1) *Summary of Need*: Provides an overview of the current physical status of Pier 76 as well as background information that will inform the planning process.
- 2) *Statement of Principles for Future Planning at Pier 76*: Represents an effort to compile key planning principles to inform future planning with an eye towards ensuring that multiple goals for the Pier including limitations for future commercial uses.
- 3) *Use Matrix*: Summarizes uses that were presented to and discussed with the Task Force, focusing on opportunities and constraints for both public open space and commercial uses for each. It was prepared with input from the two consultants that supported the Task Force effort: Field Operations (which focused on landscape and open space considerations) and HR&A (which focused on economic considerations). The matrix does not reflect any designed solutions for Pier 76, and is not organized by priority or any other "ranking."

The Task Force documents should not be seen as final plans or proposals, do not represent the views of any individual member of the Task Force, and have not been adopted by the Trust Board of Directors as policy. Future planning for Pier 76 will reflect the ongoing community discussions and engagement, and updates to any and all of these documents could still occur as the planning process continues with the broader community.

To that end, please join us for a discussion about Pier 76 at Community Board 4 's Waterfront, Parks & Environment Committee on Thursday, January 11, 6:30-9PM. Details on how to join can be found [here](#).

#### *Pier 40 Marine Uses RFP*

As we reported last fall both to the AC and to Community Board 2, the Trust's permit with the marine operator at Pier 40 (Hornblower) was expiring and, in accordance with State procurement guidelines, the Trust was issuing an RFP for a new operator. The use is an important revenue generator at Pier 40, and helps support the ongoing care, maintenance and operations of the overall Park. Notwithstanding the

importance of generating revenue, any operator must also be a good neighbor to other Park uses and the community. The Trust received nine proposals by the submission deadline; Hornblower did not submit a proposal. A selection committee has been thoroughly reviewing the applications and conducting interviews. We expect to bring a selection to the Trust's Board of Directors later this month and hope the AC will join us in welcoming the future operator into the Park community. We have committed to bring the selected respondent to Community Board 2 and will be sure to share with the AC when that is scheduled.

#### *Pier 57*

We are pleased to be able to share the news that in December 2023, Pier 57 received its third significant preservation award – this time, from the Preservation League of New York, which recognizes people and projects that champion the essential role of preservation in community revitalization, sustainable economic growth, and the protection of our historic buildings and landscapes. Previously, the pier has also received the New York Landmarks Conservancy's Lucy G. Moses award as well as recognition from the NYS Office of Historic Preservation. We are proud of the role that Hudson River Park – and of course our private sector partners at RXR, Young Woo, Baupost, Google, Jamestown, and City Winery – played in bringing this unique building back to life for the benefit of the community and Park overall.