



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

Please join us in wishing Kemraj Mangroo, our Assistant Director of Maintenance and the Trust’s longest serving employee, all the best on his retirement. Known as Mangroo, he worked for the park since before the creation of the Trust – 29 years and five months – was originally employed by a third-party contractor to the Hudson River Park Conservancy to support maintenance to the then-State DOT property. We will miss his near-limitless knowledge about the Park and its systems, although we know he is excited to get more time with this grandson.

Design and Construction

Pier 25 Playground Improvements

As we reported last fall, we are undertaking some repairs and improvements at the Pier 25 Playground, including to the water features and surfacing. The swing areas of the Playground with new, robust safety surfacing reopened for use on March 15th; the remainder of the Playground will follow this Spring now that we are able to advance some of the temperature sensitive work.

Pier 26 Science Playground

The contractor is expected to return in April to make minor repairs and modifications after the stress test of thousands of happy children. Short, intermittent closures are expected to facilitate the work.

Pier 45 Boardwalk Repair

As previously reported, after many years of service and heavy use, the Pier 45 wood decking has reached the end of its useful life and needs to be replaced. Construction advancing along the southern walkway and the Western end has reopened. Work is going well, despite some Spring rain delays, and should be complete by May 2024.

Gansevoort Peninsula

HRPT expects to have a temporary certificate of occupancy imminently from the NYC Department of Buildings for the restroom and concession building, with building finishes almost completed. JR Cruz will be returning this spring to replace plantings per warranty, complete permanent dog run striping, and install final paving treatments in areas around the building. In response to observations from the Trust and members of the AC last year, we are also installing additional lighting and signage for the sand bluff and south edge this month.

29th – 46th Street Landscape and Esplanade Design

The Trust held its kickoff meeting with Marvel Architects on April 1st and hosted a site walkthrough to familiarize them with the area. We are currently providing background information to the consultant team to inform future discussions.

Pier 97

We continue to see the open areas on Pier 97 being widely used on warm days. The Trust expects to open the remaining spaces including the Belvedere, Overlook, and Playground in late spring. Work on the new restroom/maintenance building is progressing with the roofing, windows, and wall insulation recently

completed. Trade contractors continue to install electric, plumbing, and HVAC inside the building. The contractor will begin installing the façade system the last week of March and bathroom finishes in early April. We hope to have the restrooms open later this spring with the remainder of the building spaces (maintenance garage and office) being completed in the summer.

Environmental and Sanctuary Initiatives

Federal Funding for Sanctuary Initiatives

We are pleased to share that the Trust is embarking on a procurement process to identify a lead environmental consultant with sub-consistent research area experts to implement and report on the Gansevoort Habitat Enhancement Research Program. The Trust is reviewing proposals and interviewing teams with hopes of selecting a lead consultant and entering a contract this spring. We then anticipate beginning research on Gansevoort's habitat enhancements this summer.

Seasonal Hiring & Pace Fellowship

The River Project team is also wrapping up seasonal hiring for roles focused on environmental education and field science. These roles support programming and research parkwide and work with us for terms that vary in length, including 12- and 30-week terms. This internship program is a great opportunity to strengthen our relationships with CUNY partners and other local institutions as part of this recruitment and hiring process. Connected to staffing our seasonal team, we are also pleased to share that we were selected to be a host site for the Pace University Wilson Center for Social Impact Fellowship. We will be working with Pace staff to identify a student to join our team this summer as a part of this program. Pace covers the staffing fees for this 10-week program, which we've participated in dating back to 2020.

Discovery Tank

We have begun themed months in the Discovery Tank to supplement the established educational games. March was oysters, and April is themed for migration with the Spring return of lined seahorses and shad, along with birds using the park as a stopover on their journeys. June will be fish to coincide with the reopening of the Wetlab Research Aquarium. Stop by to enjoy rotating hands-on STEM activities for all ages!

Public Programs

Public Programs is working on final preparations for our events season. We are excited to be partnering once again with local community groups including the Jazz Foundation, Ajna Dance Company, Dance is Life and Bike New York. Our classes with Bike New York have expanded to include trainings for NYC Department of Education teachers to better incorporate bike skills into their curriculum, in addition to our returning classes available for schools and groups and weekly classes available to the public. We look forward to collaborating with other community partners at West Side Fest, details to be announced in the coming weeks.

Boating Safety Day

Safety is our first priority, and this year we are kicking off the season – and May as Boating Safety Month – with a Boating Safety Day on May 4, 11AM to 1PM at Gansevoort Peninsula. The day will feature demonstrations of the River Project's waste shark and on the water kayak safety with Downtown Boathouse, along with demonstrations and tabling expected from the Coast Guard, Manhattan Community Boat House, Manhattan Kayak and more.

Operations

Staff performed a parkwide lighting audit, including an inspection of the bikeway. Park lights will be repaired internally while all bikeway lighting issues will be communicated with NYC DOT.

Facilities

Our Facilities staff began to reenergize water systems to the drinking fountains and irrigation parkwide from April 1 through April 15. All display fountains and splash park features in the playgrounds will be turned on in May, in time for Memorial Day weekend.

Horticulture

The Park is beginning to bloom, with the 40,000 bulbs we planted with Friends, community gardeners and many volunteers last fall coming up across all four miles. A few warm days in the next couple of weeks will see even more of our plants leaf and flower.

We will begin aerating all the lawns this month to reduce soil compaction while increasing drainage and water absorption going into the Spring season. The Pier 63 lawn bowl expected to reopen next week from its Winter rest. With Park use increasing as the weather warms, the maintenance team is deep cleaning and pressure washing many areas of the park – including some esplanade sections, dog runs and other features.

With Friends, we are hosting 14 volunteer events in April, including two Saturday Green Teams. On March 23, the horticulture team worked with River Project to host a compost workshop for the first time at Pier 57. We will plan to do this again in the fall or next winter.

Public Safety

The eclipse brought thousands of patrons to the Park for the peak around 3:25PM yesterday. In advance of the event, the Trust posted signage at high visibility locations throughout the park, posted information on the website, and sent out an email blast encouraging people to plan their viewing ahead and safe viewing tips.

To continue the effort mentioned in last month's report to address incidents of dogs in prohibited areas of the park, PEP has spent several months warning violators and educating people on park rules and regulations regarding dogs on lawns, in plant beds and being off leash. They have been and will continue to issue summonses for these offenses. We have also expanded the visibility of dog rules on our website and dog park pages.

Public safety maintains regular communication with NYPD personnel from the 1st, 6th and 10th Precincts who have all agreed to continue to conduct joint education and enforcement operations at strategic points along the bikeway. With the arrival of Spring and anticipated increase in traffic on the bikeway, these operations will resume shortly.

Real Estate and Planning

Pier 76

As noted in the last report, Community Board 4 approved a letter to State Elected Officials about Pier 76 at its March 6 meeting following its public discussion in January and February that built on the work of the Pier 76 Task Force. A copy of the letter can be found [here](#). Materials from the Pier 76 Task Force which were previously circulated to the AC can be found [here](#).

Battery Park City Resiliency Project

Trust staff met with Battery Park City Authority and members of their design and engineering teams to discuss the Authority's design plans for the portions of their resiliency project that will impact Hudson River Park's southern border. Since planning began, the extent of construction in Sanctuary waters and along the bikeway has been very significantly reduced, and the Trust appreciates BPCA's efforts to address Trust concerns. The resiliency project is nevertheless very complicated, including with respect to the need for new subsurface infrastructure regulated by DEP that will require closures and detours in the southernmost section of Hudson River Park. Both BPCA and the Trust agree that there are opportunities for improved physical connections to and from our Parks as well. Our Design & Construction team is currently reviewing a number of drawings received from BPCA and discussion about the project continues.

Park Concessions

As the weather is getting warmer, various Park concessions are beginning to open for the 2024 season. Restaurants in the Park including Grand Banks, Drift In and Frying Pan will start operations within the next two weeks. The Park's boathouses are gradually beginning their public programming starting in April and May. The Pier 62 Carousel has already reopened, and Pier 25 Marina will start operations from May 1.

Finance

At the March Advisory Council meeting, a question was asked about the Trust's budgeting process. The Trust follows the process established by law and has a fiscal year that extends from April 1 to March 31 every year, meaning that HRPT's Board must approve the budget at its annual March meeting. Staff annually posts the preliminary proposed budget on its website and in physical locations throughout the Park in advance of the March meeting, and then posts the adopted budget on the website as well. The Trust has a broad array of financial information available on its [website](#), and is available if there are specific questions for the budget that has now been adopted.