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COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

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Greenwich Village ❖ Little Italy ❖ SoHo ❖ NoHo ❖ Hudson Square ❖ Chinatown ❖ Gansevoort Market

January 24, 2020

Madelyn Wils
President & CEO
Hudson River Park Trust
353 West Street, Pier 40, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10014

Dear President Wils:

At its Full Board meeting on January 23, 2020, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

A Resolution In Support of the Design for the Gansevoort Peninsula section of Hudson River Park

Whereas:

1. The design process for Gansevoort Peninsula, the 5.56-acre space in Hudson River Park located between Gansevoort and Little W. 12th Streets, is being run by the Hudson River Park Trust and its hired consultants, James Corner Field Operations; and
2. This design team has met with the community on multiple occasions to date, starting with introduction at our committee meeting on March 6, 2019, followed by a Community Input Workshop on March 26, 2019, followed by a presentation of design concepts on July 24, 2019, and an updated presentation on September 10, 2019 and now what they believe to be the nearly final designs on January 10, 2020; and
3. The design team has also provided an online system to receive community input contributions; and
4. This January meeting marked the end of the schematic design phase of the project. Final design and construction documents are planned for Spring of 2020. The current schedule calls for construction to begin in Fall of 2020 and to be completed by 2022; and
5. Our committee held a meeting in May, 2019, to gather public opinion in a forum independent of the Trust and the design team and wrote a resolution at that time regarding the design process; and
6. The design concepts and preliminary plan presented at the meeting on July 24, 2019, and discussed at our September 10, 2019, and January 10, 2020, committee meetings included renderings showing an upland beach and the David Hammons *Day's End* art installation on the south side; a lawn with seating just north of the beach; a sports field; a dog run; an adult fitness area; three one-story building with restrooms, concessions and maintenance storage; a salt marsh to the north of a required FDNY access road; and a promenade with trees, picnic tables, and lounge chairs on the western edge; and

7. Many who attended our meetings in July and September expressed that they were pleased by the development of the park design, admiring its beauty and the efforts of its designers to balance the interests of different constituents, but community members in attendance also requested that additional considerations be addressed as the design was further refined; and
8. Architects and Field Operations presented alterations and further design refinements that have been made since our September meeting. These include the following:
 - a. Redesign of the southern edge of the peninsula: A reduction in the amount of riprap, while keeping an area for tidal pools on the SE corner; tiers of stone ledges that invite visitors to sit on them on the water's edge; a graded ramp leading to the water, designed in consultation with the kayaking community, that is ADA accessible and that will be constructed of aggregate covered with a rubber surface and that will permit kayakers to rest boats on it; and
 - b. Alterations to the northern edge: An area with equipment designed for adult fitness; a shortening of the dog run, which will now be approximately 22' x 200'; expansion of the salt marsh area; and
 - c. Added resiliency measures: A height of the center of the playing field raised to 12.9', up from 7', which will produce a 1% slope from its highest point to its edges, which the designers say is standard for playing fields and will aid in drainage; where possible, elevation of some areas on the esplanade and perimeter of the park, but of limited amounts in order to preserve cohesion with heights of existing structures, such as the FDNY building on the NW point, and to minimize grades so as to keep the area ADA-compliant; dry and wet storm-proofing on the utility buildings; engineering to divert rainwater and prevent it from entering NYC DEP's sewer system; and
 - d. Paving of the truck turnaround: Use of stone pavers, that will be smooth but will nonetheless have seams between the pavers; and
9. In addition to these changes, the designers provided additional details:
 - a. Utility buildings: The roofs of the three utility buildings will be covered with sedum. The buildings themselves, which will be nearly windowless, will have exterior LED lighting and a colored, perforated metal rain screen over the exterior, giving them a light and open feel and helping with way-finding. The north building will house mechanical and electrical infrastructure; the center building will house the bathroom and provide storage for maintenance equipment; the south building will include a small refreshment concession. A canopy will provide dappled shade in the "porch" area outside the buildings. There will be four stalls in the women's restroom, and two stalls plus two urinals in the men's. Bathroom gender policy will be the same as has been in use since the park's inception, i.e. that visitors may use the bathroom that suits their gender identification. and
 - b. Bleachers and seating: Two-tier bleachers will be installed outside the fencing on the fields's north and south sides. The north side will also include a picnic table. There will be bench seating outside the utility buildings. There will be two water misters in the park, one by the field and one on the southern side; and
10. In response to questions raised at the September meeting, the designers explained the following:
 - a. Installing infrastructure for a future bubble was explored but rejected by the design team and HRPT because of the high cost of footings, a pad for generators, auxiliary equipment, and a lack of storage for when the bubble was not in use.
 - b. Design specifics are still being determined for locations of three planned water fountains/bottle filling stations; seating types; exact specifications of fence, though it is planned to be high; location of gates providing access to the field; storage spaces for field users.
 - c. There is no expectation that the utility buildings will be expanded in the future. In response

to community interest in educational facilities, HRPT plans to provide those opportunities at the future Estuarium and at Pier 57.

11. Additional comments and responses are noted here:

- a. Trees cannot be planted on the south side of the peninsula because an easement for the Spectra pipeline prevents this. The installation of the *Days End* sculpture has had no bearing on the design of the Gansevoort Peninsula.
- b. The accumulation of river garbage around the perimeter of the peninsula is impossible to control. HRPT continues to investigate technologies that would suit the strong tides of the Hudson River.
- c. Design of the foul-ball overhang will consider the height needed to prevent injury.
- d. Field lighting will be engineered to minimize light spill. Technical advances in lighting are such that four field lights are deemed sufficient. Bulbs will not be visible from outside the park.
- e. There will be signage on the south shore of the park to warn of water danger, but this will be limited to the extent possible.
- f. The option of a heating system under the field was not explored. It is presumed to be prohibitively expensive and environmentally wasteful. HRPT's policy is not to clear snow from its fields; and

Therefore, Be it Resolved that CB 2, Manhattan:

1. Approves the design of Gansevoort Peninsula; and
2. Is grateful to HRPT and its design team for the responsiveness it has shown to community input; and
3. Seeks to continue to offer input in the event of significant changes to the plan;
4. As stated in its resolution of September, 2019, requests that the operation of this area and other permitted areas in the Park include a means for the public to access information about which fields are occupied by permit and when, so that unreserved fields can be used by anyone on a first-come, first-served basis.

VOTE: Unanimous, with 41 Board Members in favor.

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Carter Booth, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Richard Caccappolo, Chair
Parks & Waterfront Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

CB/JT

c: Hon. Jerrold Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NYS Senator
Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NYS Senator

Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NYS Assembly Member
Hon. Gale Brewer, Man. Borough President
Hon. Corey Johnson, NYC Council Speaker