



**NOTICE OF POSITIVE DECLARATION, INTENT TO PREPARE A
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT, LEAD AGENCY
DECLARATION, DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK, AND PUBLIC MEETING**

Project: Mid-Island Bluebelt Drainage Plans

CEQR No.: 07DEP063R

April 12, 2010

Caswell F. Holloway
Commissioner

Angela Licata
Deputy Commissioner
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In accordance with the requirements of the New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) process as set forth in Executive Order 91 of 1977 and its amendments and Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law establishing the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) as set forth in 6NYCRR Part 617, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection is hereby issuing a Notice of Intent to Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), a Lead Agency Determination, a Draft Scope of Work for a DEIS, and a schedule for a public meeting to receive comments on the Draft Scope of Work.

Public Scoping Meeting

One public scoping meeting will be held to receive oral and written comments on the Draft Scope of Work. This meeting will be held on:

Wednesday, May 12, 2010

7:30 PM – 9:30 PM

Staten Island Community Board #2 Offices
Seaview Hospital, Community Services Building
460 Brielle Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10314

Written comments on the Draft Scope of Work will be accepted until May 31, 2010, and a Final Scope of Work, incorporating changes based on relevant comments received, will be issued.

Project Description

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP), on behalf of the City of New York, is proposing new drainage plans for three watersheds within the Mid-Island (South Shore) area of Staten Island (see Figure 1). The proposed action would cover the following watersheds or drainage areas: Oakwood Beach (see Figure 2), New Creek (see Figure 3), and South Beach (see Figure 4). Each of these watersheds has surface water features, such as streams, ponds, and other wetlands, which would be used for stormwater management. For the purposes of this action, Mid-Island is defined

as the portion of Staten Island's South Shore between Great Kills Park on the west and the Staten Island Expressway on the east. The northern boundary runs along the higher elevations of central Staten Island and includes portions of the mapped, but not constructed Willowbrook Parkway right-of-way. The eastern boundary is defined by Staten Island Greenbelt Parks including LaTourette Park, Richmond County Country Club and Reeds Basket Willow Swamp. The southern boundary is defined by the Raritan Bay shoreline.

The proposed action would amend the existing drainage plan for these three watersheds with new designs for the collection, conveyance, and management of stormwater to work with local topography and natural features. Under the proposed action, stormwater runoff would be collected and conveyed to stormwater management features, or Best Management Practices (BMPs). In total, the proposed action includes 27 BMPs, which would be contained within the Bluebelt system for each watershed on land that NYCDEP has acquired or is in the process of acquiring. The NYCDEP Bluebelt program on Staten Island preserves wetland acres to perform their natural functions of conveying, storing and filtering stormwater. Although most of the area is already serviced by sanitary sewers, the proposed action also includes new designs for additional and upgraded sanitary sewers, which will be a completely piped system, conveying sanitary waste to the Oakwood Beach Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP).

This action proposes to create drainage plans that not only protect, but enhance existing natural resources through the preservation and improvement of existing streams and wetlands. Key to this plan is the use of special man-made drainage facilities, or BMPs, which are located at every storm sewer outfall in a Bluebelt wetland. These facilities, such as an outlet stilling basin or a constructed wetland, would minimize the impacts of urban stormwater discharges into natural areas. In addition to providing environmental benefits including natural resource protection and enhancement, the proposed action is generally more cost effective than conventional, piped stormwater infrastructure. The proposed action would also preserve and restore wetlands without the wholesale filling required for subsurface storm sewers, and therefore would comply with State and Federal permitting requirements.

In addition to the proposed BMPs, this action would include three new outfalls to Raritan Bay. These outfalls are proposed to convey stormwater runoff out to the bay for the purposes of reducing local flooding in the lower elevations of the watersheds. The proposed outfalls include:

- A new outfall and tide gate connection downstream of BMP OB-1 between Kissam Avenue and Fox Lane in the Oakwood Beach Watershed;
- An outfall downstream of BMP NC-10 between Jefferson and Hunter Avenues in the New Creek Watershed; and
- An outfall from McLaughlin Street associated with BMP SBE-1C in the South Beach Watershed.

If approved, implementation of the proposed action (installation of sewers and BMPs) would commence in fiscal year 2013 (between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013). Installation of storm and sanitary sewers would be complete, throughout the three watersheds, in approximately 30 years. Thus, construction of the proposed action would be completed by 2043.

After receiving comments on the Draft Scope of Work, NYCDEP will issue a final scope of work that will address all comments on this Draft Scope raised at either the public hearing or submitted in writing to NYCDEP. NYCDEP will address those comments and then modify this Draft Scope of Work in response to comments, and a Final Scope of Work will then be issued and used as the basis for the preparation of a Draft EIS (DEIS). Once that DEIS is certified as complete, it will be circulated for public review. A public hearing on the DEIS will be scheduled, with a similar period for submitting written comments. This will be followed by preparation and circulation of the Final EIS (FEIS), which will include written responses to any public comments made on the DEIS. It is anticipated that the DEIS will be issued in late fall 2010 and an FEIS will be issued toward the spring of 2011. Additionally, Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) applications will be filed for the future street demappings, tree removal and topographical modifications under the proposed action.

Required Approvals

New York City

- Department of Environmental Protection (Lead Agency)
- Department of Parks and Recreation (involved)
- Department of City Planning (involved)
- Department of Design and Construction (involved)
- Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (interested)
- Department of Transportation (involved)
- Landmarks Preservation Commission (interested)
- Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination (interested)
- New York City Transit Authority (interested)
- Office of the Staten Island Borough President (interested)

New York State

- Department of Environmental Conservation (involved)
- Department of State (involved)
- Department of Transportation (involved)
- Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (involved)

Federal

- United States Army Corps of Engineers (involved)
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (interested)
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service (interested)
- National Marine Fisheries Service (interested)

Statement of Potential Significant Effect(s)

On behalf of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, the Bureau of Environmental Planning and Analysis has determined that the proposed action is a Type 1 action

and that it may have potential significant effects on the environment. Based on preliminary analyses, the Department has concluded that an environmental impact statement should be prepared to fully disclose the complex issues associated with the proposed action.

Lead Agency Determination

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection believes that it is the appropriate lead agency, since it has been mandated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the New York State Department of Health to directly undertake and fund the proposed project. NYCDEP wishes to undertake a coordinated review with all involved agencies. Please notify the contact person listed below within thirty (30) days from the date of this notice if there are any objections to NYCDEP assuming lead agency status. If no objections are heard within that time frame, NYCDEP will continue to act as lead agency for the purposes of this environmental review.

Contact Person

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Angela Licata
Deputy Commissioner

Attached: Draft Scope of Work

CC: James Molinaro, Staten Island Borough President
James Oddo, NYC Council-District 50
Vincent Ignizio, NYC Council-District 51
Frank Morano, Staten Island Community Board 3 Chairperson
Charlene Wagner, Staten Island Community Board 3 District Manager
Dana Magee, Staten Island Community Board 2 Chairperson
Debra Derrico, Staten Island Community Board 2 District Manager
Robert Kulikowski, NYC Office of Environmental Coordination

Michael McSweeney, NYC City Clerk and Clerk of the Council
Robert Dobruskin, NYCDCP
Jackie Harris, NYCDCP
Wilbur Woods, NYCDCP
Len Garcia-Duran, NYCDCP
Dana Gumb, NYCDEP
James Garin, NYCDEP
Stacy Radine, NYCDEP
Erin Morey, NYCDEP
Narayana Venugopalan, NYCDDC
Hervé Carrié, NYCDDC
Joshua Laird, NYCDPR
Ellen Hartig, NYCDPR
Tom Paulo, NYCDPR
Gina Santucci, NYCLPC
Amanda Sutphin, NYCLPC
Naim Rasheed, NYCDOT
George Stafford, NYS Department of State Coastal Zone Consistency
Steve Watts, NYSDEC
John Cryan, NYSDEC
Joe Pane, NYSDEC
Adam Levine, NYSDOT
Ruth Pierpont, NYSOPRHP
Stacey Jensen, US Army Corps of Engineers
Sandeep Mehrotra, Hazen & Sawyer
Robert White, AKRF, Inc.