



August 4, 2021

East Side Coastal Resiliency Community Advisory Group  
c/o Pratt Center for Community Development  
Attn: Paula Crespo

Via email

**Re: ESCR CAG letter to NYC Parks dated June 17, 2021**

Dear Members of the East Side Coastal Resiliency Community Advisory Group,

Thank you for your letter and continued involvement in the East Side Coastal Resiliency (ESCR) project.

**Compost Yard**

The City looks forward to welcoming the Lower East Side Ecology Center (LESEC) back to East River Park after the completion of ESCR construction, with an educational community composting program comparable to its current one and in a similarly sized space. In order to advance construction on this project to reconstruct portions of the Lower Manhattan waterfront to make the Lower East Side and East Village more resilient to climate change, East River Park will be rebuilt at a higher elevation. This reconstruction will require LESEC to relocate from its current education and compost facilities to spaces in Seward Park and on Rockway Avenue, respectively. NYC Parks has prepared the Seward Park Parkhouse to accommodate LESEC's public programming for the duration of ESCR construction and to ensure that LESEC continues to have a presence in the Lower East Side.

The 2017 design for the reconstruction of the compost facility referenced in your letter was based on the existing low-lying topography of East River Park. Upon completion of ESCR, the topography of the park at large and the existing compost area specifically will be different due to elevations for resiliency. The preparation of the site to welcome back LESEC's educational community composting program comparable to the current one and in a similarly sized space will be funded by the City and account for the new site conditions. The site preparation work will commence after ESCR construction is completed. The City is committed to working with LESEC, the CAG, and local stakeholders as ESCR construction advances to flesh out the details for LESEC's return to East River Park.

**Fireboat House**

DDC is working to advance the structural stability and resilience of the Fireboat House, as the City committed to in its November 4, 2019 commitment letter. The goal of this work is to shore up this historic structure so that it is structurally stable, resilient, and weatherproof.



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This work to advance critical building upgrades will encompass structural repairs to the marine structure the building sits upon, as well as wet floodproofing of the building itself. This includes:

- Installation of damage resistant materials and finishes, and pipe hardening for relevant service conduits below the Design Flood Elevation (DFE)
- Flood vent installation on first floor level
- Relocation of electrical panels and related conduit to above the DFE
- Electrical rewiring of the building utilizing existing electrical service
- Relocation of new boiler and related equipment
- Heat and hot water services

The City's approximately \$8M investment in the Fireboat House flood resiliency project is targeted towards critical upgrades that ensure that the Fireboat House remains structurally sound and functional in the face of a changing climate. Items beyond critical structural and resiliency upgrades are not part of the funded scope of this project.

### **Programming during ESCR construction**

As noted in the 2019 commitment letter, NYC Parks is providing an alternate location for LESEC's programming at Seward Park Parkhouse during ESCR construction. This will allow LESEC to continue to provide free public programming to the LES community at a site they requested. NYC Parks completed upgrades to the Seward Park Parkhouse in Fall 2020 and hosted a walkthrough of the upgraded parkhouse with LESEC and CM Rivera's staff on November 6, 2020 to ensure that the space was being upgraded to meet their public programming needs.

NYC Parks has prepared one large multipurpose space, two small side rooms, and a bathroom for LESEC's use in the Seward Park Parkhouse.

- The main room is a spacious conference room sized space that has room for displays, workshop tables, and programming like educational workshops, volunteer trainings, meetings/presentations. The room has been repainted and outfitted with new lighting (12 LED ceiling lights) and electrical wiring and outlets (15 4 plug outlets) to support programming and public use of the space. Parks also installed 6 large ceiling fans (purchased by LESEC)
- The two small side rooms have been upgraded to be fitted with new LED lights and outlets.
- The east side bathroom in the rear has been repaired.
- An additional exit door has been restored on the northside of the building.
- NYC Parks also repainted the entire interior, repaired windows, and repaired the roof.



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In order to complete these upgrades and prepare the space for LESEC, NYC Parks staff vacated and cleaned the space by removing Parks personnel and storage and deploying internal resources to make these upgrades in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Parkhouse is situated in a bustling and dynamic park and is well-positioned to engage members of the public. NYC Parks has been prepared to sign a license with LESEC to make their presence at Seward official for the duration of ESCR construction. We look forward to welcoming LESEC and their programming at Seward.

### **License Agreement**

NYC Parks looks forward to entering license negotiations with LESEC regarding their return to East River Park after the completion of the ESCR project. LESEC's most recent license agreement and extension expired on November 4, 2020 and there is no legal mechanism for extending an agreement that has lapsed. The City also has no legal mechanism for signing license agreements with indefinite terms. NYC Parks has been prepared to sign paperwork to continue our partnership with LESEC by making their presence at Seward Park formal; we look forward to LESEC's engagement on that agreement.

Sincerely,

Sam Biederman  
Assistant Commissioner for Community  
Outreach and Partnership Development,  
Chief of Staff, and Senior Advisor  
NYC Parks

Gregory Anderson  
Deputy Commissioner for Policy and  
External Affairs & Chief of Staff  
NYC Department of Sanitation