

ESCR CAG Meeting Summary - 8.6.2020

DDC Presentation

- The budget is committed and the project is on time.
- DDC is still waiting for the granular schedule from the contractor.
- The construction plan will include air quality and pollution etc.

Current Project Status: (Desiree Gazzo)

- Early Package will begin Fall 2020 (date when shovels will hit the ground is dependent on contractor schedules).
- DDC is coordinating with the Mayor's Office, DSNY, and Parks on the relocation of the compost yard operations. Once that takes place, the DDC Contractor can formally begin the interim lawn space and tree transplants.
- Project Area 2 (PA2) Contractor is in the final stage of selection. Once the contractor receives the notice to proceed, they will submit a schedule for review and once approved, the schedule can be shared.
- Staggered timeframes for construction will allow some parks and play areas to remain open
(John Lynch)
- Work from 14th street to 17th street would happen in 2022.
- Project Area 1 (PA1) work is within CB3
- Project Area 2 (PA2) work is within CB6

Christina Romero - In regard to relocating the compost yard: there are no details on when to expect that. She urges the City to be in contact with the ecology program. Her organization really needs a date. She would like someone from DDC to be responsible for communicating this information.

-Q to relay information to her.

Communications:

- The website will be a place to find out travel advisories, community updates, etc. and will launch sometime around September.
- There will be a web-based inquiry tool for the public as well.
- The Community Construction Liaison team will receive questions/concerns from the public and pass them along to the correct people
- There will be several community construction liaisons and 2 have been hired and are being onboarded
- There will be a Construction Fence Art Program where the public will be able to submit artwork for the construction fencing. More details on this program will be shared at the next meeting

Update on M/WBE (Trang Bui):

- Identified 3 key areas where there will be M/WBE REpresentative Representative areas.

- Over a dozen M/WBE firms have already been brought in, but they're continuing to increase this number.
- The project is receiving HUD funding and is subject to Section 3 hiring requirements
- DDC is also talking with local nonprofits regarding outreach

Q&A

Trever Holland - What is the plan for getting real local hires?

- Plan is still in development. The City has been talking to NYCHA REES ([Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability](#)) Program folks and coordinating with them, as well as coordinating with HireNYC and Workforce 1 to help connect to local firms. The city has also reached out to local nonprofits about this, including Henry Street Settlement.
- Holland - There needs to be a separate conversation on this offline

Ayo Harrington - Part of the problem between NYCHA and every other agency, is that NYCHA is never at the table. When it comes to hiring POC and hiring low income people, NYCHA should be there.

- Q says there is already a meeting planned with NYCHA TA's from the area.

Damaris Reyes - Her organization does a lot of training, which might be helpful in preparing local residents for hiring.

Nancy Ortiz - REES doesn't do the outreach they need to and rarely comes to the table. We have had numerous residents apply through REES as part of Section 3 and a lot of them do not get called.

- Tara says we will circle back and see if there is a way to make sure everyone knows about the hiring opportunities.

Evelyn Cruz (Rep. Velasquez): You have to reach out to every CBO about jobs and hiring, and do better with outreach. Section 3 should be its own presentation.

****Pratt to circle back to hiring/training at a future meeting.****

Damaris Reyes - When you plan this meeting, you should also think about what the project is prepared to do in terms of resources and preparations for folks. There are constantly new OSHA guidelines. If we are trying to meet the maximum number of people, we need to be prepared with the resources.

Richard Hayduk - How many jobs will this create over the course of the project?

- Further information is being developed, and we will know more once the contractor is on board.

Charles Krezell - Are there stipulations that require contractors to hire locals?

Evelyn Cruz (Rep. Velaquez)- There should be a specific meeting just for all the hiring stuff

- Hiring liaisons from NYCHA could also be part of the plan. Looking at Red Hook as an example.

Damaris Reyes - I don't recall talking about these presentations in other languages. At all levels of community engagement, they should be in English, Spanish, Cantonese, and Mandarin. Otherwise a whole sector of the community cannot ask questions or know what's happening.

- Web-based tools will be in other languages and they remain conscious of this.

Damaris Reyes - The people in the centers should be able to speak other languages in person.

- The liaisons hired thus far speak Spanish and Chinese.

Dianne Lake - Someone asked about how many people are expected to get hired from the local area. The letter that the City signed says that they will be using M/WBE at 25%.

- Q says that they are still committed to that, and more if possible.

Damaris Reyes - Is the Fence Art Program a done deal? Is it about the park surrounding the fence or what? Is it mostly just about making the space look decent or is it also used to communicate what's going on inside the fence?

- These community projects are part of the larger community engagement. DDC is planning now, but would welcome community feedback. It will feature local artists/students/etc. It will be portions of the project's construction fence. There will be 3 different sets of mesh and fences. One might be art, another might be project pics, and the third would be the standard DDC informational panels. The biggest component will be local art.

Damaris Reyes - How can they use the process of creating art and how can we read any communication from across the street? DDC needs to think about how to commission art to show what's taking place. She already has a contact doing coastal resiliency art who might be helpful to contact.

Jeff Gillers - Contractors are submitting their plans, etc. Is part of that their staging plans/areas where they are storing materials/other "off site impacts"?

- Access points into the parks and how they are going to conduct sewer work will be part of the submission's site safety plan.
- Fill will be brought in by barge to minimize access points and street use.
- Two bridges [Corlear's and Delancey] are going to be replaced, so they are working with DOT and trying to think of innovative ways to install them quickly. These plans will be shared.

Frank Avila-Goldman - The construction fence art project is for the general public or a nonprofit? Will there be a jury from DDC or is there another jury being pulled in for this process?

- It will be open to the public with a portion for students and then a portion for anyone.

- DDC will not be judging, but CBOs will be pulled in to work on that.

Pat Arnow - I thought the plan was to avoid overnight construction. Why can't we close lanes of the FDR during the day and keep construction during the day only?

- Work inside the park will happen as double shifts just because there is so much fill.
- For the closures of FDR Drive, that has to be worked out with DOT and their requirements. They'll only allow for a single lane at night.

Christine Datz Romero - Are you also requesting contractors have a plan for how the construction workers will reach the project site? Are they driving here in cars? What kind of planning is being done for that?

- Staging will occur within the project's work zone, not outside. It is a means and methods question for the contractors which will be worked out with the contractor once they're selected. Contractor's will create a plan, then HNTB/LiRo and DDC will review, comment and approve.

Damaris Reyes - Some of us are already living in a construction nightmare. Depending on when it begins and ends—they could be living in a construction nightmare for 5-6 years. How is that fair and equitable to live on the waterfront. Noise pollution has a huge impact on your health and wellbeing.

- This has been considered in the EIS, and there are city rules and regulations in place which contractors are required to follow.
- We have to remember the end goal which is the flood protection.
- Many ways to reach the project's community engagement team which includes DDC at CAG meetings, community board meetings, the community information center, inquiry tool and website, etc. if there are problems.
- There will be 10 noise monitoring stations for PA2. If they exceed the maximum, it will be addressed.

Ayo Harrington - When and how often is air quality being checked. Have there been any considerations for sound protection at the amphitheater? We already have really great CBOs like Loisida and ?, so let's keep them in mind.

- Amphitheatre: Unless it's completely enclosed, the canopy will only help so much. Most of the noise control will be operation-related.
- Air testing: The contractors will have to comply with certain requirements and to monitor day to day.

CAG members are "strongly suggesting"baseline testing, so that they can compare to what it is during the project.

- DDC to circle back.

Dianne Lake - How can the CAG track the budget and how it's being spent and approved each year? How do we know the funding is really committed?

- This is partly federal funding, which is secured 100%.

- The city funding is still secured. Once a project goes through ULURP, it must continue. It is secure.

Dov Goldman - Regarding the “double shift” mentioned by John Lynch, ESCR Construction Manager, what does that mean time-wise? Also, what about the rat problem?

- Double shift means work during day and night.
- Part of the construction site safety plan focuses on rats. They will create a mitigation plan if there is a problem.

Dov Goldman - How will this project and the Williamsburg Bridge clean up repair overlap/impact traffic?

- DDC is working with DOT for traffic plans. No concrete plan yet, but can have a better idea once the contractors are on board.

Frank Avila-Goldman - Discussing the amphitheatre, it’s really referring to impact on Vladeck Houses, and Stuyvesant, so I really hope they get priority.

Christine Datz Romero - Echoing concern about baseline air quality monitoring. Besides the amphitheatre in design phase, the Firehouse is also in design phase with no update on what’s happening with the building. What is the process of keeping them updated and having input on these plans? Very unclear how the space will be designed and she can’t get a straight answer from Parks. They spent a lot of money creating a plan and now nothing.

- DDC will discuss with Parks.

Charles Krezell - In the environmental impact study, none of the issues raised mattered. Because it’s a city project, the understanding is that the city is “waived” from city regulations. Is that the case in this project?

- DDC will look into this but are not exempt from requirements.

Formalizing the guidelines:

Due to time constraint, voting for final CAG guidelines will be done via remote voting - Pratt to send form and instructions

Items up for vote: Public vs CAG Member Only meetings, Allowing Elected Officials to observe meetings, Quorum and Voting percentages

Pat Arnow - Community members should be able to join, or at least be able to listen in. Two points: open meetings and speaking with the press.

- You can speak to the press on behalf of your organization, but no representation of CAG in the press.

Trever Holland - Would like to look at other models such as Essex Crossing so that we aren’t reinventing the wheel? We’re trying to be transparent here, so look at other models.

Charles Krezell - Concerned that these aren't open to the public, especially if elected official people can sit in on the meeting.

- We're asking you if elected officials should be part of these conversations.

Damaris Reyes - I can't control my members and what they'll say to who. Unclear what we can and can't do.

David Wiley (Rep. Velasquez) - Suggested the CAG from Gowanus as an example of a model (www.gowanuscag.org)

Susan Steinberg - Wants meetings to be open to the public.

Michael Marino- Stated that the first vote needs to be how decisions are being made going forward.

Frank Avila-Goldman - He is concerned about the term "transparency," and also about the fact that many residents can't even access zoom.

Ayo Harrington - Asked if any CAG members present would oppose deciding on how to vote right now?

- Nancy Ortiz Opposed
- Pratt Center indicated a vote on these items will be done before the next meeting via remote means