

## ESCR CAG Meeting Summary -- September 14, 2021 via Zoom

### CAG members present

|   |   |                                   |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Christine Datz Romero<br>Trevor Holland<br>Michael Marino<br>Dov Goldman<br>Wendy Brawer<br>Frank Avila Goldman<br>Robin Schatell | Martin Bennett<br>Alberto Roldan<br>Charles Krezell<br>Dianne Lake<br>Ditashiah Kohn<br>Sam Moskowitz | Damaris Reyes<br>Camille Napoleon |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|

### DDC presentation of updates

1. *Pre-construction and Construction Phase Updates* - Desiree Gazzo, HNTB-LiRo

Link to presentation slide deck with more information:

[https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/escr/downloads/pdf/20210914-ESCR-CAG-Meeting-13\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/escr/downloads/pdf/20210914-ESCR-CAG-Meeting-13_FINAL.pdf)

- a. Overview of Contracts
- b. PA2 (Project Area 2) Schedule and Phasing
  - i. DDC response to CAG questions
    1. The contractor moved into Stuyvesant Cove Park and began September 10th, 2021. Floodwall work will continue to the end of 2022.
    2. Solar One blacktop area should be temporarily restored by Spring of 2022.
    3. Sinkhole in Stuyvesant Cove Park is an EDC project but DDC is in discussion with EDC to incorporate into ESCR work.
    4. PDC slides found on ESCR website answer questions on Berm
- c. PA2 Anticipated Construction Activities for September (see slide 8 for details)
- d. PA2 Bicycle Signage
  - i. The contractor is working on updating new signage
- e. Environmental Reporting
  - i. An air quality fact sheet will be available soon and revised air quality data will be found in the next quarterly report.
- f. July Air Quality Update Report
  - i. Air quality numbers in July surpassed normal levels due to wildfires out west.

- g. PA1
  - i. Local detours and access routes are to be established with DOT once PA1 phasing is approved.
  - ii. Amphitheater, the city is working on registering the funds to continue the design team's scope.
  - iii. NYC Parks Department's response to CAG questions on composting can be found on ESCR website.
- h. Call for Art
  - i. The deadline is September 30, 2021. Is open to students and local artists
- i. Q&A
  - Martin: Stuyvesant Cove Park will not be available until fall of 2024?
    - Desiree: No, Stuyvesant Cove Park is not available till February 2024, Murphy Brothers Playground is until fall of 2024.
  - Martin: In the next two and a half years, can we expect the whole thing to be closed down?
    - Desiree: No, the park will be closed down in phases, Phase I and Phase II.
  - Martin: The Solar One floodwall and gate in the north part of the park, what had been the blacktop, still won't be available till after January 2023?
    - Desiree: Yes, I believe so.
  - Martin: So Solar One is closed after until after that point and then can start building the second phase of their project?
    - Desiree: Solar One blacktop area should be temporarily restored by Spring 2022.
  - Trever: Do other construction sites throughout the city shut down when there is bad air quality, such as from fires?
    - Desiree: They do not
  - Trever: If the PEL level is high, are you looking at a number that is above that for construction purposes, or that level is already set, and construction will not raise the level?
    - Desiree: In general, when air quality is poor, if it is poor in the entire area of the city, then both air quality readings will read in general as high.
  - Trever: Typically, large projects like this throughout the city do not shut down because there is bad air quality?
    - Desiree: Correct, construction continues regardless of the air quality reading.
  - Wendy: Construction does add to air quality numbers and readings?
    - Desiree: It can if not mitigated.

- Wendy: How tall is the wall in slide number 9 (Solar One floodwall)?
  - Desiree: The wall is about 8 ft.
- Wendy: Is Stuyvesant Cove to the east of that point being elevated?
  - Desiree: No, the bulkhead of Stuyvesant Cove is remaining at the same elevation. Section with the landscaped area will be raised berms.
- Wendy: Idea L12, from the March 2018 Value Engineering Study, was to build a wall on the west side of the highway. In 2019, EIS details the floodwall of the west side of the park but not the west side of the highway. Do you know why that is?
  - Tara: We will forward that to HNTB-LiRo/DDC after the meeting.
- Frank: In the explanation for air quality in July, when the city is above a threshold for air quality, if the construction in the park is adding to the threshold is there a range that helps understand how to tell if construction is related to air quality in addition to the overall city?
  - Desiree: I have to get back to the group on specifics on determining increased levels during overall poor air quality from environmental impacts. However, Desiree noted that regardless of what leads to it, if levels exceed Alert Levels, Contractor monitors work activities, reviews mitigation efforts. Normally, if levels are construction related, they will go down with mitigation. If unrelated, the levels will not. Construction activities have been standard for past few months so they are aware of what kind of levels they should be expecting.

## 2. *Parallel Conveyance* - Desiree Gazzo, HNTB-LiRo

- a. Parallel conveyance overview (see slides 18-25 for details)
- b. Q&A
  - Wendy: The blue line in the park around 10th street. Is that water flowing in the community?
    - Desiree: No, that water flows into another pipe system that eventually flows into Newtown Creek. Arrows represent infrastructure, not surface water.
  - Wendy: The water that flows into the park's 45 acres flows into the river?
    - Desiree: I cannot tell you what the drainage system in the park is at the moment.
  - Wendy: The whole western side of the park slopes downwards to the FDR? Is excess water flowing towards the neighborhood instead of towards the river?

- Desiree: The high point of the park is that at the back end of the park, the water is flowing downward to the river.
- Jeff: We need to get clarification on the details of the drainage plan for the parallel conveyance.
- Wendy: Why is the combined sewage system not being separated?
  - Paula: Can we please talk about this after the meeting?
  - Wendy: Sure.
- Christine: What is the extra capacity of parallel conveyance, given record rainfalls within the last three weeks? How many inches per hour falls on the city that the system can handle?
  - Desiree: I will get back to you on that.
- Diane: Could you direct us to one or two presentations on parallel conveyance to understand better?
  - Desiree: I will find out if there are more detailed presentations, and I will share them.

### 3. *Section 3: M/WBE* - Trang Bui, BuiStudio

- a. Overview of quarterly goals for hiring for ESCR project
  - i. Data for current staff on ESCR project (see slide 27 for details)
  - ii. Update on PMCM/PA2 staff by residency, current Section 3, and current MWBE percentages (see slide 28 for details).
- b. Ongoing outreach update
  - i. Hosted information session in July, lots of responses for positions posted after the session
  - ii. Working with Henry Street Settlement, Workforce1, and other partners to target employment opportunities for lower-income individuals.
  - iii. Ongoing coordination with unions for local and low-income individual hires.
  - iv. Lower East Side and Park tabling outreach and plans to coordinate with local officials
  - v. Coordinating in-person hiring resource fair
  - vi. ESCR website: has job positions available
- c. Q&A
  - Damaris: Is there a number for how many local hires will come from Community Board 3 and Community Board 6?
    - Trang: Local hire and Section 3 hires sometimes overlap. In the past, I interviewed local individual referrals from HireNYC, but they were not qualified for the positions.

- Damaris: Why would you not count on the Lower East Side Employment Network?
  - Trang: The majority of the staff were hired before the project started, and new higher numbers are low trying to make an effort to hire local, but minimum technical requirements are barriers. Not exclusively working with Workforce1 or HireNYC, using everyone that we can. The new batch of resumes is made up of local applicants.
  - Wayne: DDC is committed to finding opportunities on the workforce and MWBE side. Taking a long and short-term approach to preparing applicants for this project and future projects.
- Damaris: Do MWBE also have Section 3 requirements?
  - Wayne: MBWE does not have specific Section 3 requirements but has MBWE goals related to Section 3.
  - Trang: Depends on the size of the contract, but there are flow-down provisions related to Section 3 requirements.
- Frank: Do the training programs pay? Are the training programs designed so that people can be trained for the following stages of ESCR? Is there a specificity to have this training invested in the local community?
  - Trang: We have started these conversations with Wayne's team on the details about this.
- Frank: Is there anything the CAG can do in local hiring and training opportunities?
  - Wayne: In the outreach effort will be looking towards community partners and getting the word out about hiring opportunities.
- Trever: We have seen before in other projects; it is difficult getting local hires? If I am twenty years old, with no experience, and looking to work on ESCR, what do I say to get a union apprenticeship job?
  - Trang: Best resource is the Workforce1 website, where you can explore career paths.

### **CAG-only portion**

1. *Preservation Presentation*- Laura Sewell, Richard Moses, and Deborah Wye, Lower East Side Preservation Initiative (LESPI)

Laura: LESPI is participating as Section 106 consulting parties on the ESCR project. We are seeking support for the LESPI proposal to preserve and fully renovate the Track House and Tennis Center's Comfort Station which are slated for demolition. LESPI has suggested that the buildings have been overlooked and

should be included in ESCR. LESPI proposal considers the project scope, timeline, and budget.

Deborah shares a presentation on behalf of LESPI with photos of the Track House and Tennis Center Comfort Stations. The presentation shows the building's art deco elements and the redesign proposal they proposed.

Richard: We have been pushing for a comparative analysis for the Track House and Tennis Center and have not heard back. The City has estimated preservation will cost \$200 million. LESPI can share a two-page summary of the issue and speak further on it with individuals of the CAG.

Michael: Corlears Hook Park facilities are not protected the same way the two buildings you are talking about, correct?

Richard: Correct, the Corlears Hook Park building was cleaned up, and these buildings can look the same way if properly restored. We believe these buildings are in good condition as well.

Trever: Clarification on the CB3 position: we did support the old bathrooms if there was not a delay in the project. Be careful in describing the new bathrooms, a number of people from the neighborhood did support the new bathrooms.

Laura: The bathrooms are not clean or safe for the average park-goer; maintenance is a priority. We do not hear from the community that they do not want the bathrooms to be preserved.

Trever: We want to be careful about our position that this does not delay the ESCR project.

Laura: We do not believe that this will delay the project.

Deborah: There is nothing in our community that compares to the ornamentation found on these buildings.

Damaris: Bathrooms need to be remodeled, but this can be done by maintaining the facade. Cleanliness and safety will be an issue -- no matter the comfort station -- if NYC Parks does not commit to maintenance. What are the barriers to making preservation of the bathrooms a possibility?

Laura: Exactly - what we are asking for the city to clarify?

Richard: We had professional architects, engineers, and cost estimators work for us. We would like to understand where the estimated cost of \$200 million is coming from for something that we estimate could be \$10 to \$15 million to do. We are disappointed that the buildings on the National Register are set to be demolished.

Damaris: Do you foresee a scenario where the project is too cost-prohibitive? Would you be open to the preservation of the facade?

Richard: We are open to ideas that are creative and sensitive to the original buildings. These buildings speak to the Public Work Progress Administration and are in a situation very similar to that. These buildings teach a social history lesson. We would be willing to look at any proposal and open to any discussion.

Laura: The buildings do not have to be exact to renderings. We are illustrating what is possible. Very much open.

Damaris: I feel confident that something can be preserved.

Frank: Is there room for the potential for the buildings to accommodate greater growth and additional community use options?

Laura: Yes, the design is adaptable and incorporates the programmatic requirements of the city's proposed new buildings for the park.

Richard: The buildings can take new additions if they are designed sensibly. The trick is to get a sensitive architect.

Robin: Now, there are architects that are looking at non-gendered bathrooms. Just remember that there are those who do not abide by rules for men and women.

Damaris: What would you like the CAG to do?

Laura: We are feeling stuck; we have done all the research that we can do, and everyone agrees the buildings have merit, yet they are still slated for demolition. We would love to meet with anyone who wants to learn more and am happy to hold a rally with the community.

Michael: I propose that we draft and submit a letter on this item to the city.

Richard: That would be very helpful.

Michael: We cannot vote at these meetings, right, because people need to go back to their organizations?

Tara: Generally, if there is enough interest, we would want to draft a letter and then take a formal vote once the letter is drafted.

Michael: We can probably use a letter that Laura and LESP have drafted already.

Laura: We can send you our text and materials from today.

Richard: We are asking for the city to provide the analysis and the CAG would be able to review: demolition vs. restoration, what the options are. Analysis needs to be done in an objective way.

Michael: Since Diane brought this issue, is she willing to spearhead drafting the letter with the folks from LESPI?

Diane: Yes, Laura - you and I can follow up about drafting something.

Paula: Diane, please get in touch and let me know if you need any help to expedite this.

Diane: Will do.

Frank: Is there an actual rationale why the city is not entertaining preservation?

Laura: The City has not deviated from their path; it has always been decided.

Richard: We have not received any official word, but the study the city issued seemed very biased against historic restoration.

Laura: The City does not want to deal with this.



Richard: These buildings are on the state National Register and need to be paid attention to.

## 2. *Closing and next steps*

Tara: We will work on getting the draft letter and circulating it around. We did want to have a conversation on the by-laws, but we will not have time in two remaining minutes to do so. Paula, how do you want to proceed? Table it for the next meeting or try to have conversations between now and our next meeting to discuss by-laws?

Paula: A little bit of both, the bulk of the discussion should be saved for the next meeting two weeks away. If people want to start discussions online, they are encouraged to.

Michael: I do not want to use email to discuss a document. Can we do a Google doc or shared document?

Trever: Regarding questions that come from the CAG or from individuals, do we have guidelines on what the CAG asks and what actually comes from the CAG? I would like this to be studied, to know what questions are coming from the CAG or individuals.

Paula: Are you suggesting that we relate that to the by-laws? Or are you bringing it up more generally?

Trever: I do not know if it's a by-law item, but it is a discussion point, just items from the CAG.

Tara: Our next meeting is on October 7th. We will prioritize the protocol around submitting questions. Please email additional items a week ahead if needs to be prioritized by the City agencies.