

ESCR CAG Meeting -- April 24, 2025
(via Zoom)

CAG members present

Wendy Brawer Christine Datz-Romero Dov Goldman Dianne Lake Michael Marino Sam Moskowitz Robin Schatell Shaheeda Smith
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[Link to slide deck for this presentation](#)

ESCR Presentation

Desiree Gazzo, HNTB-LiRo

1. Upcoming Work With Us Event
 - a. Quarterly Information Session on May 12 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm
 - b. St. Mary's Church, 440 Grand Street
 - c. Meet organizations offering job/training opportunities, interview clothing assistance, resume services, and more
 - d. Register to attend at bit.ly/register_escr_sp2025
 - e. Let us know if you want flyers
2. Spring Fest at Corlears Hook Park took place last weekend
3. ESCR x NYC Parks Earth Day Celebration yesterday
4. Overview of Contracts (*see slide 8*)
5. PA1 Construction Activities (*see slide 10*)
6. PA1 Phase 1 Openings – May 26, 2025 (*see slide 12*)
 - a. Pathways
 - b. Ballfields 1 & 2 (with porta-potties nearby)
 - c. Delancey Street lawn
 - d. Delancey Street bridge
 - e. Nature exploration area
 - f. Basketball court
 - g. Picnic & BBQ
 - h. Multi-use turf (with porta-potties nearby)
 - i. South tennis courts
 - j. Fireboat House area to be open

- k. Exact limits of fence line to be finalized as we get closer to the May 26 opening date
- 7. PA1 Continued Phase 2 Transition - May 27, 2025 (*see slide 13*)
 - a. Ballfields 7 & 8 will be closed
 - b. E. 10th Street bridge closed
 - c. Access to Stuy Cove Park closed
 - d. Gate at bottom right corner of track will remain open
- 8. PA1 Continued Phase 2 Transition – July 1, 2025 (*see slide 14*)
 - a. Update: Field 6 will close (was originally supposed to close on August 1)
 - b. Area around the track will remain open
- 9. PA1 Rendering of E. 13th Street Flood Protection (*see rendering on slide 16*)
 - a. Flood wall at western edge of the FDR
 - b. Flood gate that goes across the FDR
 - c. Flood wall along the park
 - d. In future meetings will share more renderings of the flood infrastructure we're building as we move in to Phase 2
- 10. PA1 Preparation for E. 13th Street Flood Protection
 - a. Preparation for construction on floodwall and floodgate foundations taking place from E. 10th Street bridge to pinch point
 - i. Portions of the Greenway may be temporarily limited to ensure safety during removal of FDR Drive barricade
 - 1. Ongoing for about 2-3 weeks; near Riis Buildings 4 & 5
 - ii. Some nightwork will be required in FDR Drive
 - iii. [Advisory](#) and [What's Going On?](#) signage posted in the area and to website
- 11. PA1 Utility Crossing in Vicinity of E. Houston St.
 - a. Excavations are required to accommodate FDR Drive utility crossings into East River Park
 - i. Daytime work ongoing
 - ii. Nightwork began Monday, April 21, 2025
 - 1. Ongoing for about six weeks
 - b. Permits require nighttime working hours to reduce impact on FDR Drive traffic
 - c. Operation can be disruptive and loud due to roadway excavations (noise and air quality monitors in place)
 - d. [Advisory](#) and [What's Going On?](#) signage posted in the area and to website
- 12. PA1 Construction Photos (*see slide 19*)
 - a. Sewer work in Ballfields 7 & 8
 - b. Sewer work in E. 10th Street

- c. Water main nightwork south of E. Houston St.

13. PA 1 Construction Photos (*see slide 20*)

- a. Benches and sod installed at Nature Exploration Area
 - i. 2.7 acres of sod installed in Phase 1 so far
- b. Trees blooming near Delancey Street Bridge
 - i. 590 trees planted; 21,000 shrubs, perennials, and grasses planted

14. PA 1 Construction Photos (*see slide 21*)

- a. Planting bed and small lawn near Picnic and BBQ Area
- b. Coal bins and garbage receptacles near Picnic and BBQ Area
- c. Bike racks installed near Delancey Street lawn

15. PA1 What We've Heard

- a. Graffiti management: contractor will remove graffiti before Memorial Day openings
- b. Parks M&O (Maintenance and Operations)

Luc Alicea, District 3 Manager for NYC Parks

1. We're coordinating with DDC on amenities such as porta-potties.
2. Hours will be 6 am to 1 am, matching East River Park's historical open hours and what is in place for the northern section.
3. The Delancey Street bridge will not be locked after-hours.
4. Lights will be on at night, like in other parks.
 - a. They're a combination of DOT lights and solar lighting.
5. Responding to a question about Parks having the space and access they need to pick up trash and handle other maintenance tasks: DDC will put in a few office trailers and some storage immediately north of Fields 1 & 2. Workers will be able to walk from the temporary facility to take care of the area. We're still finalizing the plan, but right now it's looking like our normal team that starts at 6 to do unlocks. Then a team comes at 7 to monitor the park until 3:30. Then there's coverage until 9 pm, which changes as the season changes. We also have someone to manage the tennis courts, including the deconflict issues. None of this is permanent; we're going to adapt it if needed.

16. PA1 Environmental Monitoring Locations (*see slide 24*)

- a. As we move into Phase 2, these locations will change.

17. PA1 AQM March Update (*see slide 25*)

- a. At Montgomery to Jackson Streets, we had two PM 2.5 alerts

- b. Many of the alerts on this chart were due to dust, vehicle traffic, and construction activities. Dust suppression techniques were applied.
- c. There were a couple of longer-duration alerts in the E. 6th Street to E. 10th Street area. It was likely due to the activities that were happening on that day, and dust suppression techniques were applied.

18. PC Construction Activities (*see slide 27*)

- a. Location 1 – Jackson St. & Water St. & Corlears Hook Park
 - i. Daytime road closures at Jackson St. for utility relocation in preparation for deep sewer installation
 - ii. Curb and sidewalk restoration on Water St.
 - iii. Road restoration on Water St., Gouv. Slip E, South St.
 - iv. Utility relocation
 - v. Drill well points
- b. Location 2 – Delancey St. S & Lewis St.
 - i. Utility relocation
 - ii. Test pit
- c. Location 3 – Delancey St. N & Baruch Dr.
 - i. Utility relocation
- d. Location 4 – E. Houston St. & Columbia St.
 - i. Electric relocation
 - ii. Sewer installation
 - iii. Bus stop shift and parking limitations on Columbia St.
- e. Location 5 – Avenue C & E. 18th
 - i. Con Edison Gas relocation
- f. Location 6 – Avenue C, E. 20th to E. 23rd
 - i. Test pit
 - ii. Utility relocation

19. PC Work in the Vicinity of Water St. (*see slides 28 and 29*)

- a. Restoration of Gouv. Slip E.
 - i. Ongoing for roughly next week
 - ii. Access to Lot 5 via South Street
- b. Restoration of Water Street
 - i. Will require intermittent sidewalk closures on north side of Water St. (**access will be maintained**)
 - ii. Most restoration up to Lot 6 is expected to conclude within the next month
- c. Restoration of South Street
 - i. Expected to begin end of May
 - ii. Will require closure of South Street for 3 days (**access to parking lots will be maintained**)
 - iii. Formal advisory to come
- d. Jackson Street sewer work ongoing, in coordination with Con Edison on timeline

20. PC Work in Vicinity of Water Street – construction photos (*see slide 30*)

- a. Concrete base for Water St. road restoration
- b. Pedestrian ramp installation on Water St.
- c. Sidewalk restoration on Gouv. Slip E

21. PC Construction Photos (*see slide 31*)

- a. Diversion chamber in Jackson St.
- b. Well point drilling in Jackson St.
- c. Gas main relocation in E. 18th St.

22. PA2 Construction Progress (*see slide 32*)

- a. Asser Levy Playground is open.
- b. Stuyvesant Cove Park is open, but the North entrance at E. 23rd St. is closed for EDC Solar One construction work.
- c. Murphy Brothers Playground is open.

Q & A

Dianne: What is the reason for closing part of the bridge and part of the path in the area where Field 6 meets the esplanade?

Desiree: The fence line near the embayment is approximate. We're still working this part out, and we'll come back with more details about how that closure is going to look.

Luc: I'll add to what Desiree said. This is a rough rendering. We're still having discussions, and we need a no-nonsense schematic level drawing of the exact fence line. I agree that if we don't have an articulatable reason for why we have a dead-end condition on that path, then we'll push back on that. In my mind, it should either be the whole bridge or none of it. We'll advocate for at least an explanation if not just having a full flow of traffic.

Dianne: In terms of safety and traffic flow it would make more sense to me to cut it off a little further south so that people can circle there. Also, I just wanted to point out that the date of the closing, August 31, is the Sunday of Labor Day weekend. I'm assuming the construction workers would rather have the holiday weekend rather than coming to shut the gates before it's over.

Desiree: Got it; thank you.

Wendy: Regarding the E. 13th St. rendering of the flood protection (*slide 16*), you have shown us the elevations in the future park, and just south of here the elevations are three and five feet. The lowest elevations in the park are along the FDR, just on the other side of the floodgate. Why is that?

Desiree: It usually has to do with where the underground flood protection is, but I'd have to go back and take a closer look at that to be able to answer that more specifically. If the park's grade near the floodwall continues to be higher closer to the water, then that will act as a wall which allows the grade near the FDR to be lower because it's protected by the higher elevations around the park.

Wendy: That's where the park and Riis Houses are at the same grade; it's an area of concern. Is that a new wall on the west side of the drive?

Desiree: I'd have to confirm that; we'll take that back.

Wendy: How many years will the work on the E. 10th Street bridge take?

Desiree: I believe it will go into 2026 as part of the final areas that's finished.

Wendy: I was just in the park and was very surprised to see a crane lifting a boat out of the water at Houston Street. Is that boat part of the construction?

Desiree: To be honest, I don't know.

Wendy: If we have a lot of smoke conditions this year I hope when air quality is bad, it would be really nice if we didn't have more construction adding to air quality issues in the community.

Desiree: We'll look into all of these questions and provide responses.

Robin: It's too bad that Field 6 will close in July; that means there will only be two ballfields in the park in the middle of the summer. Also, is the multi-use turf field permissible, or will it be open for use by anybody?

Luc: It wasn't a casual decision to close Field 6 in July; it was very deliberate. The contractor really emphasized the need to avoid delays. The multi-use turf field will be permissible. Kids soccer is probably the best use case, but we'll permit it.

Robin: Is the approach to permitting it going to be thoughtful given the issues we've had in the past of outside groups coming in and using our fields?

Luc: Parks as a whole has pushed for a change to prioritize youth non-profit leagues over for-profit and adult leagues. Priority goes to non-profits with longstanding leagues and permits, but if we see that a specific league that represents the local community isn't getting the appropriate game time, I can dig into why that is the case and advocate for anyone who's been neglected due to slipping through the cracks.

Robin: What changed with the contractor that they pushed up the date to close Field 6?

Desiree: We try to communicate what the next steps for the closures are as early as possible. It's a fluid process, and we're able to make certain changes. The contractor is trying to prioritize getting the deep sewer work done so they can do the fill, let it settle, and build on top of it. The contractor thought they'd be able to go until August, but they found that having the extra month would really benefit the work flow process to get that area completed quicker and more comprehensively. Nothing is set in stone, and we're trying to come to you with the most information possible in advance at each of these meetings.

Christine: Thank you for this informative presentation, Desiree. I'd like to better understand the thinking behind the floodwall (*on slide 16*) because at one point we were told there was going to be a flyover bridge that would be built right after ESCR was done. Now the thinking has changed from building something over the FDR to around Con Edison. I'm curious how this all fits together and why we have this wall now. It would be helpful to have more details about this, including an estimated timeframe. Also, about the lack of bathrooms in the southern part of the park, I have two questions. When will the tennis building open?

Luc: I don't think it's in the next round of proposed openings. We've been talking to DDC about some kind of structure for a person to work out of and manage the tennis areas. It wouldn't include a bathroom.

Christine: I'd like to advocate for something better than porta-potties. When Domino Park first opened up, they had bathrooms in sturdy structures that were nice. Maybe we should shoot for something like that; porta-potties just get so gross so fast. Also, I was pleased to hear about the space around the Fireboat House being kept open; can we reactivate the bathrooms in the Fireboat House? I know it might be a stretch, but I want to throw it out here.

Desiree: I believe the utilities in the Fireboat House aren't working, but we'll bring all of the comments we've received tonight to the greater team. Thank you for your thoughts.

CAG-only Portion

Paula: Does anyone have anything to raise or flag about what you heard tonight? (*No one responds.*) OK, then I'll turn it over to Dianne who wants to raise a question about the pinch point and discuss it with the CAG.

Dianne: We don't understand what's going to happen at the very northern end of the park because we're changing from the flyover bridge to the over water greenway. Is there interest in exploring with DDC if that very northern part could stay open? This would leave the connection and esplanade open along the areas that are going to close. Until the contractor is able to work with DDC and figure out what is going on up there, I don't see the point in demolishing everything and having it just sit there as a giant pile of dirt until DDC figures out the timeline for the greenway extension around the Con Ed dock. A few people outside of the CAG have been talking about this, and I wanted to see if the CAG wanted to advocate for it.

Wendy: I'm interested because I've walked across the pinch point and Avenue C to get up there, and there's construction there, it's messy. And right when you get to Stuy Cove Park, there are a bunch of runners. So, with the track closing, it's an important area to keep open for them. Also, I was looking at that area where they're going to build out an extension into the river, and there are boats that come in there. Are they going to make a big hill to walk up and over, or are they going to make a drawbridge? I'd like to get more information on what their plan is as well; maybe they haven't started thinking about it. My last point is: could there be a dog space in the north end of the park?

Michael: There's no harm in asking for anything, but don't I think we're going to get it. We can ask them to keep the northern end open. And I'm not opposed to asking them for a dog area, but that's definitely not going to happen. The park has already been designed, and they're not going to change that.

Wendy: Except in this case, they haven't designed it yet; they keep saying that, so we're early rather than mid-way.

Paula: Are there other responses to Dianne's proposal?

Christine: I think it would make sense to push them a little more because this seems half-cooked. They should make a case for why they have to demolish this and close it. Their answer is always to close it, and they don't think about how that affects the community.

Paula: I'm hearing agreement about these asks. Should this be done in the form of a letter? Or I could raise it when we meet in two weeks.

Wendy: It might save some time to send the letter in advance so they're ready to respond to it when you meet with them. Also, the letter gives it more weight.

Michael: Yes, I think they feel obligated to respond to letters. Or you could give them the heads up when you meet with them that a letter is on the way.

Paula: OK; sounds like a plan. Are there any other topics people want to raise?

Wendy: There are gravel piles building up at Houston St. There's so much more to do; it's shocking to see how much more has to come in to the park right there.

Michael: I'm amazed by the entryway toward the new Corlears bridge. I know it had to be raised for compliance but it's a much steeper incline than I thought it was going to be.

Wendy: It will be interesting to see how people in wheelchairs manage it.

Robin: The Delancey Street bridge is very long the way they have it now. Once they open the other end, we'll see how you can enter the park there. Also, I think we should ask for everything we want to ask for.

Wendy: Would they respond if we asked for updated budget review? Have they needed more money?

Christine: I would like to see an updated Gantt chart to compare to what they have presented in the past.

Paula: I can include that in the letter

Meeting ended at approximately 5:33 pm.