

ESCR CAG Meeting -- February 22, 2024
(via Zoom)

CAG members present

Christine Datz Romero
Kathryn Freed (subbing for Wendy Brawer)
Trever Holland
Dianne Lake
Michael Marino
Tony Rivera
Robin Schatell
Susan Steinberg

DDC Presentation of Updates

Desiree Gazzo, HNTB-LiRo

[Link to slide deck for this presentation](#)

1. Hiring compliance
 - a. Virtual information session about joining unions on March 13 from 10 to 11 am.
2. Overview of Contracts (*See slide 6*)
 - a. Much of the info. remains the same for PA1; work began at ballfields 3, 4, & 5, and restoration of fields 1 & 2 is in progress
 - b. For PA2, the site restoration south of E. 20th St. is complete
 - i. Greenway is open; gates 7 & 8 to be installed in March and April respectively
 - c. Parallel Conveyance
 - i. Corlears Hook Park
 1. Prep work for interceptor gate chamber and building construction
 2. Utility relocations in progress
 - ii. Houston and Delancey Streets
 1. Subsurface investigations in progress
 2. Utility relocations in progress
 - iii. Avenue C (E. 18 - E. 23) locations
 1. ConEd abatement in progress
3. PA1 Construction Activities (*See slide 8*)
 - a. We updated the map to show the parallel conveyance work in Corlears Hook Park.
 - b. We're expecting the full closure of the passive lawn this month for the staging of the Delancey Bridge.
4. PA1 Photos of the esplanade construction (*See slide 9*)
5. PA1 Photos of the Delancey Street Bridge foundation reinforcement and bridge pier (*See slide 10*)
6. PA1 What We've Heard
 - a. Fireboat House updates
 - i. Section 306 Analysis of Alternatives is ongoing

- ii. CAG written questions are being reviewed by City Hall, and we will share responses with CAG once City Hall provides them
 - 1. City Hall will decide how to proceed with the Fireboat House based on the alternatives analysis.
 - 2. Consulting parties, but not the public, will have opportunity to comment on alternatives analysis and programmatic agreement.
- 7. PA2 Construction Progress – Stuyvesant Cove Park (*See slide 13*)
 - a. Area #1 – open
 - i. North entrance at E 23 St. closed for EDC Solar One construction work
 - ii. Greenway remains open
 - b. Area #2 - open
 - c. Greenway connecting to East River Park is open
- 8. PA2 Construction Photos of Flood Gate 8 east column framework and floodwall reinforcement and form work near ConEd plan (*See slide 14*)
- 9. PA1 AQM | Monitoring Locations (*See slide 16*) – 16 air quality monitors for PA1
- 10. PA1 AQM | January 2024 Update (*See slide 17*)
 - a. Most of the alert durations were fairly short; the exception was one on 1/29 that was of long duration, but dust suppression techniques were applied. As usual, many of them were in the Montgomery to Jackson Street area.
- 11. PA2 AQM | Monitoring Locations (*See slide 18*) – Four air quality monitors for PA2
- 12. PA2 AQM | January 2024 Update (*See slide 19*)
 - a. Fewer alert durations than in the past, and they were relatively short. A few were due to unknown off-site activities, and for the on-site ones, dust suppression techniques were applied.
- 13. PC (Parallel Conveyance) Construction Progress (*See slide 21*)
 - a. Location 1 – Jackson St. & Water St. & Corlears Hook Park
 - i. Utility relocation
 - ii. Prep work for excavation for south interceptor gate chamber
 - b. Location 2 – Lewis St. & Delancey St.
 - i. Utility relocation
 - c. Location 3 – Baruch Dr. & Delancey St.
 - i. Utility relocation
 - d. Location 4 – Houston & Avenue D
 - i. Test pits
 - e. Location 5 – Avenue C & E.18th
 - i. ConEd abatement work
 - f. Location 6 – Avenue C, E.20th to E.23rd
 - i. ConEd abatement work
- 14. PC (Parallel Conveyance) Construction Photos (*See slide 22*)
 - a. Staging and installation of tree guards in Corlears Hook Park
 - b. 5-inch conduit installation in Jackson Street
 - c. Manhole installation on Delancey Street N.

Q & A

Dianne: Is the esplanade comping up level to the parapet, and will a railing be installed on top of it?

Desiree: Yes

Dianne: So it will be like it is now but higher?

Desiree: Yes, I believe the same rail will be continued from PA2.

Dianne: How long will the esplanade be south of the fireboat house?

Desiree: For the next CAG or CB3 meeting we can make a diagram that shows the esplanade and where we are with the parapet installation.

Dianne: Great. We're also hoping that in the spring the construction team can give you more insight into what amenities will open when in the south end. We get a lot of questions about when the walking paths and those types of amenities will be open.

Desiree: I don't know if we'll have that information for next month, but we'll have an update on the esplanade, and we can take the questions about the walking paths back because we know that's important.

Katherine (subbing for Wendy this month): Are ballfields 1 and 2 going to be open for use this spring and summer?

Desiree: They are on schedule to open at the end of May.

Katherine: Did City Hall give you any idea about when they might have a decision on the Fireboat House?

Desiree: No.

Katherine: Is something being done for the LES Ecology Center in the interim?

Desiree: There is no interim solution right now because everything is dependent on the decision about the Fireboat House.

Katherine: I've gotten a bunch of questions from people who are looking out at the construction, and there's a lot of graffiti going on the walls that they see. Is something being done about that?

Desiree: It's been in discussion. In PA2 they ended up covering the wall in plastic to prevent the graffiti. They're discussing the best way forward for PA1. We hope to have a better response for you by the CB3 meeting.

Christine: Do you know when the fireboat analysis will be done and the consultant who's doing it is?

Desiree: We can find out who the consultant is, but as far as timeline goes, I don't recall there being a specific date for its completion.

Christine: When we had the meeting with the Mayor's Office, DDC, and Parks we discussed the Fireboat House and the Compost Yard, the latter for which the City presented us with a conceptual design. Since then, I've requested a detailed drawing from Parks. A meeting we were supposed to have with the designers was cancelled, and I haven't received any communications about when it will be rescheduled. I've been reaching out to Parks, and there doesn't seem to be much promise there. We have real concerns about the Compost Yard, and we really need to have a discussion about how it's going to function so that the promise to complete it by 2026 can be realized. We need to give input about what works in the proposed design and what doesn't. I urge anyone on the City team who's on this call to get to the table with us. I don't think it's fair that this process came to a screeching halt.

Desiree: We can bring this back to the greater team.

Kristen: It's AKRF Consultants, but we don't have an exact date when the process will be done.

Robin: Is there any coordinated effort between DDC and Parks to announce the opening of the ballfields? Their use should be first and foremost for community groups and youth groups before everybody else is getting permits. Also, can we get another tour of the site?

Desiree: We can bring the local priority permit issue back to Parks. We can certainly facilitate another tour as well. Maybe the CAG can talk amongst themselves to see if they want to wait a little longer for warmer weather or do something sooner.

Robin: It's important that you let the community know that the ballfields (1 and 2) will be opening in two months.

Desiree: Yes, we will start coordinating that with Parks and the City team.

Tony: When will the Corlears Hook ballfield be available?

Desiree: Right now, the final restoration of the Corlears Hook ballfield is scheduled for mid- to end- 2025, but the partial field should be available for little leagues, just not for adult leagues.

Tara: I am about to reach out to Parks to confirm that the Corlears Hook ballfield will be open for Little League and that community leagues will be prioritized for access.

Michael: Who are the consulting parties for the Fireboat House analysis of alternatives?

Desiree: I believe Friends of Corlears Park is on the list, and we can share the larger list.

Christine: The tracks for the floodgates in Stuy Cove Park are still filled with asphalt. What is your process there and when can we expect them to be fully functioning?

Desiree: The asphalt is a temporary solution, and the design team is working on a final solution. The flood protection isn't fully complete until all the floodwalls and gates are fully installed. Flood protection will be fully functional at the end of the project, and when they have a final solution, they'll remove the asphalt. Additionally, the decision to deploy the flood protection and close the gates would be made days in advance of a storm hitting so there would be enough time to remove the asphalt.

Tony: What is the timeline for the work being done along Delancey for the new bridge?

Desiree: It's going to continue into this year, but we can get back to you with a more specific timeline for this area.

Tony: What is the access for ballfields 1 and 2?

Desiree: It is still being reviewed and finalized, so we don't have the specifics on that right now.

Katherine: The asphalt is being put in the tracks intentionally? Why is it being added?

Desiree: The tracks present a trip hazard, so they're working on a final solution so they won't have to continue to do that.

Katherine: So if there's a bad enough storm, someone will be out there removing the asphalt?

Desiree: The flood protection isn't completely installed yet, so the gates won't be employed. For PA2, that's in 2025, and for PA1 that's in 2026.

CAG-only portion

Dianne: Regarding Robin's request to do a walk-through, it might be a good idea to wait to do that until we learn what's going to happen to the fireboat house. If the decision is to demolish, it would be good to try to understand what the alternatives look like in the context of the park and not just on a diagram. They predicted that it would take 30 days to the analysis, so I'm predicting it will be ready fairly soon and we can time the visit for just after that.

Robin: As parts of the park open up, there should be ways that community can communicate what may not be working in the brand-new park.

Christine: I'm concerned about these ballfields reopening in the middle of a construction site. They're still hesitant to tell us how people would get there. Is there going to be water there? Who will have access? Just people who are playing ball? I would like to see more detail about what they can really open for us and how all of that will feel.

Michael: When they do come out with their Fireboat House study is that when we'll be aloud to comment again, or will the be a fait accompli? I'm wondering if the public can pass along their comments to the consultant party. Christine, were you able to be added as a consultant party?

Christine: Yes. The analysis is focused on the uniqueness of this historic building; I don't think it's going to provide ways forward to replace the building's role in the park and its programming uses. That's not what they're looking at, but I could be wrong.

Tara: Michael, when you were notified that you were a consultant party, were you given a chance to comment so as to guide what the analysis should look at?

Michael: We got an email that said "here's the plan, here's how we're moving forward. If you have any questions, please get back to us" kind of thing. LESPI submitted some questions and comments; we did not. We always piggy back on what LESPI does.

Tara: So, the question is: once they come back with their determination, is that when you as a consultant party have an opportunity to comment on it?

Dianne: At one point we were told that there would be a 30-day comment period once the report is released, so I'm assuming that it will be finished around the end of February and the comment period will close around the end of March.

Katherine: The community is very upset about the Fireboat House because this was one thing that was promised to them in the very early stages when people were upset about the park being destroyed. The general attitude was that at least this would be saved. The elected officials are also concerned about this. We'd like to know that we actually have some kind of input. Not allowing the public to weigh in is why there are some hard feelings in this community.

Tara: So, we're making the assumption that the determination will come out within the next few weeks and then there will be 30 days to comment, but I will get clarification from Desiree.

Christine: We're working with the Councilmember and some NYS elected officials on a press conference for March 1st at 10:30 at Corlears Hook Park. Come by if you're available The local elected officials have written a letter to express their concerns, just like we the CAG did.

Tara: Christine, if there's anything we can share with CAG members who aren't here please pass it along to us.

Tara: Going back to the idea of a walk-through, do you want to wait until the Section 106 analysis comes back?

Michael: I think that makes sense so we can ask questions about the Fireboat House knowing what the plan is.

Robin: Yeah, that makes sense, and there will also have been more building of the ballfields, so we can get a better sense of what they'll look like.

Tara: So, it may be some time in March or early April, and we'll want to schedule it sooner rather than later. I will let Desiree and Parks know. I will also talk to Parks about Tony's concerns around access to ballfields 1 & 2 and if the Corlears Hook ballfield will be open to little league. I'll also inquire about the permitting process and who gets priority.