

ESCR CAG Meeting -- January 25, 2024
(via Zoom)

CAG members present

Frank Avila-Goldman Wendy Brawer Christine Datz-Romero Richard Heitler Trever Holland Dianne Lake Michael Marino Camille Napoleon Charles Krezell Robin Schatell Shaheeda Smith Susan Steinberg ¹

DDC Presentation of Updates

Desiree Gazzo and Parker MacLure, HNTB-LiRo

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

1. Hiring compliance quarterly update – Stephen Anderson, Bui Studio
 - a. Queens job fair on Feb. 1 to represent the ESCR project
 - b. Union virtual event on March 13 – registration will be available next week
 - i. We can provide flyers for you to post; they'll be translated, too. Reach out to our CCLs.
 - c. Hiring numbers (*See slide 6*)
 - i. Not much change on PMCM team – 200 total staff; most were existing (i.e., they were working for the employer before ESCR started)
 - ii. New job opportunities will be posted on [Work with Us webpage](#)
 - iii. PA1 general contractors' staff is 1,205; for PA2 it's 604
 - iv. Staff by residency (*See slide 7*)
 - v. Exceeding or projected to meet goals for MWBE (*See slide 8 & slide 11 for the stated goals*)
 - vi. Seventeen new Section 3 hires
 - d. Strategy and good faith efforts to meet goals
 - i. Ongoing efforts with city and local partners (*See slide 10*)
 - e. As the weather warms up, there will be outdoor tabling job events

Q & A

Wendy: We heard about a jobs town hall that GOLES was supposed to sponsoring in the neighborhood. Is there any update about something happening in the local community?

¹ Susan Steinberg now represents Stuy Town-Peter Cooper Tenant Association and Community Board 6.

Stephen: We did have an event with GOLES and some unions, and we're continuing to plan for more events for when the weather warms up. In between we collaborate with Henry Street Settlement on their job fairs.

Wendy: It would be great to hear about training opportunities in the neighborhood

Stephen: The focus of the event that's coming up is what people need to know before joining a union.

Shaheeda: Can you provide clarity on requirements for Section 3?

Stephen: They're based on HUD income standards and where they live. Most of the hires are coming through unions, so the reporting on Section 3 individuals is limited.

Desiree: We'll put the link to the [Section 3/MWBE fact sheet](https://www.nyc.gov/assets/escr/downloads/pdf/WWU_MWBE-Hiring_July22.pdf) in the chat (https://www.nyc.gov/assets/escr/downloads/pdf/WWU_MWBE-Hiring_July22.pdf)

2. New CCL² for PA1 – Pauline Chan; has six years of experience as a CCL with DDC and speaks Cantonese & Mandarin. Please reach out to me with any questions or use the [inquiry tool](#) to submit your questions. (She succeeds Joyce Xin.)
3. Overview of Contracts (*See slide 13*)
 - 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 (the last ones in PA2!)
 - c. Parallel Conveyance
 - i. Mobilization for interceptor gate chamber and building construction
 - ii. Subsurface investigations in progress at Houston and Delancey
 - iii. Water main replacement on Ave. C between E. 18th & E. 23rd
4. PA1 Construction Activities (*See slide 15*)
 - a. Photos of leveled esplanade pier caps and prefabricated esplanade support beams (*See slide 16*)
 - b. Photos of Delancey Street Bridge ramp piers (*See slide 17*)
 - i. We apologize for periods when the crew hit obstructions that caused louder than typical noise levels.
 - c. E. 10th Street (*See slide 18*)
 - i. Utility relocation and upgrades completed
 - ii. Current work is 42-inch sewer work at E. 10th and Ave. D
 - iii. Upcoming work will be 42-inch sewer work on E 10th St. between Avenue D and FDR Dr.
 - iv. Micro-tunneling under FDR Dr. for 42-inch sewer to begin in March
 - v. Next year they'll start the E. 10th St. bridge demolition and reconstruction
5. PA1 Amenity Openings (*See slide 19*)
 - a. We can't provide exact dates for amenity reopenings, but we wanted to give a general overview of what you can expect. We will continue to provide updates at upcoming CAG meetings as the information becomes available.
 - i. Over Summer 2024, amenities south of the Williamsburg Bridge will begin to open. The following amenities anticipated to open through 2024:
 - ii. Fields 1 and 2 (expected June 2024)

² Community construction Liaison

- iii. Corlears Hook Park flagpole area
- iv. Amphitheater seating area (no canopy yet; will be put in place later)
- v. Nature Exploration and Water Play
- vi. Delancey Street Lawn
- vii. South Basketball Courts
- viii. South BBQ area
- ix. Esplanade and pathways south of Williamsburg Bridge
- x. Delancey Street and Corlears Hook Park Pedestrian Bridges
- xi. Plantings will be done during Fall 2024 planting season
- xii. Still working on what exactly will open with ballfields 1 & 2, but we'll provide updates as spring approaches and we receive them
- xiii. Compost Yard is still under design and expected to open in 2026
- xiv. Shared use path expected to open in 2026
- xv. Amphitheater state/canopy construction to begin in 2025 and open in 2025

6. PA1 Construction Progress (*See slide 20*)

- a. Update on anticipated timeline, including a few pushes, but the project is still on schedule to be completed in 2026.
 - i. Corlears Hook Park has been pushed to summer of 2024
 - ii. The park south of Grand Street will open this year
 - iii. The Grand Street to Stanton Street section will push into 2025

7. PA1 Amphitheater Canopy rendering (*See slide 21*)

- a. For more on this, see: <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/escr/downloads/pdf/DDC-f-ESCR-Amphitheater-Canopy-Structure-pres-3-20-23.pdf>

8. PA1 What We've Heard

- a. South Street / Montgomery Street Intersection: ESCR contractor added pictorial signage to FDR on-ramp to deter pedestrians and cyclists. DOT is working with Pier 42 to ensure safe access when the park opens spring 2024. DOT will evaluate timing of pedestrian walk signals and feasibility of delayed green vehicular signals.
- b. CAG written inquiries: Responses to written inquiries from the past few months are under review and will be sent to the CAG shortly.
- c. Passive lawn closure and esplanade: When the passive lawn closes for assembly of the Delancey Street and Corlears Hook pedestrian bridges, the adjacent esplanade is expected to remain open.

9. Fireboat House Update: This what we have to report now, but we will provide updates as the process moves forward.

- a. December 2023: Section 106 consultation with State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) to review building conditions and proposed demolition.
- b. January 2024: OMB will notify Section 106 consulting parties (Municipal Art Society, New York Landmarks Conservancy, and Lower East Preservation Initiative) of structural concerns recently discovered. NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) is performing an evaluation of the building.
- c. Analysis of Alternatives:
 - i. Per SHPO, OMB, DDC and NYC Parks to prepare analysis of alternatives.
 - ii. City to formally present findings to the consulting parties in several weeks.
 - iii. OMB to provide project update to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

- iv. Provide alternatives analysis to the SHPO, LPC, and consulting parties for 30-day comment period
 - d. Draft of an Amendment to the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement:
 - i. Identify mitigation for the adverse effect (if demo is preferred action, likely HABS recordation)
 - ii. OMB to prepare draft of an Amendment to the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement. The Amendment will stipulate the mitigation to be conducted
 - iii. Provide Amendment to the Programmatic Agreement to SHPO, LPC, NYC Parks, and consulting parties for 30-day comment period
 - iv. Execute Amendment to the Programmatic Agreement
10. PA2 Construction Progress – Stuyvesant Cover Park (*See slide 25*)
- 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
11. PA1 AQM | Monitoring Locations (*See slide 27*) – haven't changed since last presentation
12. PA1 AQM | December 2023 Update (*See slide 28*)
- a. Most of the alert durations were around 15 minutes; some were from on-site construction activities, and some were from off-site construction work from other projects in the area. Dust suppression techniques were applied, the contractor is cognizant about the need to keep these numbers low.
13. PA2 AQM | Monitoring Locations (*See slide 29*)
14. PA2 AQM | December 2023 Update (*See slide 30*)
- a. There were good readings this month; the few alerts were from unknown off-site activities.
15. PC (Parallel Conveyance) Construction Progress (*See slide 32*) – water main work is not expected to affect buildings' water supply.
- a. Location 1 – Jackson St. & Water St.
 - i. Utility relocation
 - ii. Mobilization in Corlears Hook Park
 - b. Location 2 – Lewis St. & Delancey St.
 - i. Utility relocation
 - c. Location 3 – Baruch Dr. & Delancey St.
 - i. Utility relocation
 - ii. Water main work
 - d. Location 4 – Houston & Avenue D
 - i. Utility relocation
 - e. Location 5 – Avenue C & E.18th
 - i. Test Pits
 - ii. Water main work
 - f. Location 6 – Avenue C, E.20th to E.23rd
 - i. Test Pits
 - ii. Water main work

16. PC (Parallel Conveyance) Timeline (See slide 33)

- a. Parallel conveyance sewers work
- b. Interceptor gate chambers/buildings

17. PC | Construction for Interceptor Gate Chamber & Building (See slide 34)

- a. Mobilization Late-January 2024: Interceptor gate chamber construction is a critical piece of the flood protection system which connects to the interceptor sewer
 - i. Partial closure of Corlears Hook Park ballfield
 - 1. Youth-sized league field will remain.
 - 2. Parks coordinating alternative locations for adult leagues.
 - 3. New synthetic turf will be installed in the open portion of the athletic field this Winter 2024 (Parks)
 - ii. Partial closure of Corlears Hook Park playground
 - iii. Access to temporary bridge will remain.
- b. Summer 2025
 - i. Contractor will restore remaining ballfield and return to NYC Parks when work concludes.
 - ii. Playground area will be restored.

18. PC | What We've Heard

- a. Avenue C final design tree plantings: During final restoration, four trees will be planted in the median of Avenue C between E. 20th Street and E. 23rd Street.
- b. Movement of large equipment in/out of site: The contractor will use the shared use path adjacent to the FDR to bring equipment in and out of the staging area. The large equipment, such as the excavators and crane, will be removed from the park after the interceptor gate chamber is installed and prior to construction of the interceptor gate building.

Q & A

Michael: For Parallel Conveyance closure of the ballfield, when you say next summer do you mean the summer of 2024 or 2025?

Parker: Summer of 2025

Michael: This leads me to this comment: the Corlears Hook Park areas on Slide 19 should be corrected to show that not all of it will be open in the summer of 2024.

Michael: Also, I think we're all shocked to learn that the Fireboat House is going to be demolished when we thought it was going to be saved. Why wasn't an assessment of the building structure done before the project even started? Is any of the damage that is causing the need for demolition caused by the work being done around it?

Desiree: The main concern is the structure of the piers that are under the building. When the piers were initially assessed there wasn't the degradation that there is now. The piers are very old, and it's not related to the work that currently being done for ESCR. The shape that they're in right now wasn't expected, and that's why things are being reassessed.

Michael: What does this mean for the design of that area? Is that area now being redesigned?

Jeff: No decision about demolishing the building has been made as of yet, so there hasn't been a discussion of what would be there in its place.

Michael: Whatever happens, the amount of space that the LES Ecology Center is losing has to be replaced; it has to be equivalent or greater.

Christine: It's very exciting to see your timeline for everything that's opening in 2026. Is the flyover bridge going to be built then or afterwards?

Jeff: No, it won't be built by 2026. There have been a lot of challenges with figuring out the best alignment for that bridge related to Con Edison. They use that area for their operations, and we hope to have more information about the next steps for that project soon.

Christine: Related to the Fireboat House, what does "analysis of alternatives" mean? Does that include an analysis of how the LES Ecology Center will get replacement space?

Desiree: They're looking into what those alternatives could be, for example it may mean replacing the piers; there are different options that they'll have to look at in terms of cost, value, constructability, and time/schedule. They'll look at all that and put together a report that will include all of them.

Christine: I hope that will include the needs that the park has going forward and what this building was really meant to be – an anchor for the park and a space for programming and park stewardship for environmental education that is critical for the park and our community. There was a lot packed into this building, including public bathrooms, so they really need to replace it adequately. My final question is about an ESCR bid package that was released in June 2022; it was looking into the rehabbing of piles under the Fireboat House and a small section of the esplanade. What happened to the contract, and was any work performed?

Desiree: That was the contract for the recently performed the inspection work that discovered that the piles are the shape that they're in.

Christine: Is there a reason why that work was so delayed?

Jeff: I think it was always intended to be bid out after the larger ESCR package. I don't remember the rationale as to why it was done separately. We can get some clarity on that.

Dianne: Regarding 4a) on Slide 23, what does "HABS³ recordation" mean?

Desiree: We'll have to get back to you on that. I believe it is the documentation of the building per the Historic American Building Survey—the documentation and photographs of the building.

Dianne: Losing the Fireboat House means more than losing a historic building, so I'd like to know what the guardrails are.

Desiree: If the CAG would like to submit specific written questions about the Fireboat House, we can share them with people who are closer to this topic than we are.

Kate Scher, DOT: Since last year, DOT and Parks have been studying the FDR from Montgomery St. to E. 14th Street as part of the LES/East Village access study. We are wrapping it up and will be presenting our findings at CB 3's Transportation committee meeting in February.

Frank: Make sure you are working with and centering the LES Ecology Center as they are invaluable, and despite the park closure and inconvenience they've been ramping up their programming. We really need them as an anchor in the neighborhood. Please pass on what an important asset they are; it's vital that they be able to return and flourish in the new park.

³ Historic American Buildings Survey

Wendy: I was sent a picture of the new fields, 1 and 2, and there's some repair work already going on there and a cordoned off area. What's happening?

Desiree: The fields are under construction; it's not complete yet. I can reach out to the construction team to ask what's happening in the cordoned off area. Please note that they'll continue to work on that area until it's opened.

Wendy: When it's open will there be bathrooms or water there?

Desiree: We're still waiting on information about what will open with the ballfields, but will bring that back and provide more information when available.

Wendy: I was glad to see the Compost Yard on the map, and I want to echo what everyone else has said about replacement space for the LES Ecology Center. It's absolutely critical they be able to continue their environmental education, composting, and e-waste work. Also, there are more people in Tompkins Square Park these days, but there are no bathrooms there. It's a public health and safety issue; can they be restored?

Desiree: We can bring that back to Parks.

Trever: We alternate ESCR months at CB 3, so if Desiree could please let me know if you're thinking February or March for the next time, it's on the agenda that would be helpful.

CAG-only Portion

Christine: I'm still trying to wrap my head around what all of this means and how seriously the City takes what they've heard from the community. After requesting a meeting for a long time, the City met with us in December and dropped this bombshell and offered us a trailer in the Compost Yard. It's been stressful to come to this reality and to figure out what we can do to push back on it. I want to thank everyone including our public officials for their support. I hope we can work on a list of things we can ask as follow-up.

Robin: Can we get an outside engineering firm to do the assessment?

Wendy: I think it's a great idea; I don't know how much it would cost.

Frank: What about getting a copy of their review and then sending it to an independent third party for their review which would be likely more affordable?

Christine: I like the idea of taking their report and independently reviewing it. They should at least provide the 2022 review from when the divers went down there.

Dianne: Christine, what else can the CAG do besides put a list of questions together?

Christine: As a CAG, we could talk about the types of things we'd like to see in the park if the building has to be demolished. We could outline what an acceptable replacement is to make it clear that an office trailer is not a replacement option.

Wendy: What's the square footage of the Fireboat House?

Christine: I think it's over 2,000 square feet; that doesn't include the adjacent outdoor space that we heavily used.

Robin: Did they say a trailer would be temporary or permanent?

Christine: They presented it like it was one possible solution but not a temporary one.

Susan: Christine, have you approached your local councilmember about participatory budgeting?

Christine: We always approach our councilmember about budget issues, and we have several holes to plug. This goes deeper because it was a commitment that was made to the community when ESCR went forward. I think we really need to have the ESCR team figure out how to make this right.

Charles: What's the replacement value that the City's considering? If the building's torn down, we have to demand that it's replaced with at least the same substance as before; we can't go for less. If we have to build a new building, that whole area will have to be redesigned.

Wendy: Stuy Cove Park is getting a new (Solar One) building that the city put \$3 million towards, and we have to demand the same. Could the Baruch Bathhouse work for you?

Christine: No; we really like the space we have in East River Park and think it's important to have a presence there.

Paula: In addition to compiling and sharing questions about the CAG on this issue, how do you feel about a letter from the CAG outlining its concerns about demolishing the building and ensuring an adequate replacement space?

Christine: That sounds good; we really need to keep the pressure on the city to let them know that they really need to do something. I will send a draft letter out shortly.

Wendy: There was FOIA about soil tests that were done in 2019; should we be ready to do that for these reports? Or is it something to say that we'll be ready to do if the resources aren't directly provided?

Dianne: Will the public be able to participate in the comment process once the analysis/report is done? Will the public and the CAG have access to the content of the analysis?

Michael: Friends of Corlears Hook Park was asked to be added as a consultant party to the archaeological work that was happening there, so I don't see a reason why LES Ecology Center couldn't do the same.

Christine: Thanks for sharing that. It's a great idea; we can always ask.

Paula: I'll create and share a Google doc. where you can enter your Fireboat House questions. At the same time, we'll await Christine's letter and conduct a vote for sending it out.