

## **Community Board 1, Queens – Board Meeting Minutes**

**May 17, 2022**

Meeting opens with Chairperson, Marie Torniali at 6:30 p.m.

Chair, Marie Torniali - Good evening everyone and welcome to the May 17, 2022 Community Board 1 meeting. Our first item is the Queensbridge Baby Park Reconstruction Project by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation.

### **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:**

#### **New York City Department of Parks and Recreation**

Queensbridge Baby Park Reconstruction Project Design Review Presentation by the NYC Parks Queens Capital Team

Presentation made by Frank Varro, NYC Parks and Recreation - I am here to talk about Queensbridge Baby Park Reconstruction. We have a six-million-dollar budget of Mayoral funds. The site we are looking at tonight is just over a third of an acre of the three-acre total park. The goals are to continue the efforts to improve the park and return it segment by segment to public residential use and to activate the Vernon Boulevard side to provide a gateway between Baby Park and Queensbridge Park. It is located just in the shadow of Queensbridge itself.  
*(Presentation Attached)*

Chair, Marie Torniali - Thank you so much Frank. I am going to open it up for any questions. First, from the Parks Committee Chairs.

### **Q&A with Board Members:**

Katie Ellman - This is the first time I am seeing this. I would prefer to let them go first or Kathleen.

Kathleen Warnock - This almost seems like part two (2) of the discussion we had about the BIG Compost and I am wondering have they been given a site somewhere near there, so people can still compost or do they have someone here tonight who could talk about that? I think the Park is a very good thing, but I also think the compost was very good thing.

Chair, Marie Torniali – Frank, can you answer that question?

Frank Varro - I believe a site has been selected where the compost would be moved to, I am not sure where it is off the top of my head. I do not know if anyone from Parks Planning was able to attend tonight who might know that.

Katie Ellman – I think a really important point. Obviously, we support more equitable park space distributed throughout our community, especially on night shift property, but BIG has been operating there for a long time and has revitalized the space under the bridge in many ways, and it would be really beneficial to know where their new space is going to be, and that should be part of this presentation.

Frank Varro – Sure, very much understood .

Chair, Maire Torniali - Are you able to get an answer to the new location?

Frank Varro - I can certainly look into it.

Diane Dreier, Landscape Design Director - We do not know, Capital knows all of those particular things. We are directed to do design work on a site. I guess the Community Board has to talk to the Planning Department to find out what the status of what is happening with the BIG Reuse.

Diane Dreier - I would recommend reaching out to Commissioner Dockett. Florence you could probably do that or who? I am sure he will be able to answer that. Unfortunately, Capital does not know that answer.

Shirley Echevarria - I will look into it and follow up. I do believe that BIG Reuse was going to be moved to a Sanitation space, I do not have the exact address. I will follow up and then I will get back to Florence with an answer tomorrow.

Chair, Marie Torniali - Does anyone else on the Parks Committee or any other Board Member have a question?

Diana Limongi - I just want to make sure that I am understanding that this is open space and seating, nothing more because I remember we had a whole visioning session, where a lot of people gave a lot of ideas, but none of that seems to be here aside from seating.

Frank Varro - The use we are able to do especially with those utilities is primarily seating, open space gathering area type space.

Diana Limongi - As a follow-up, is this seating going to be shaded, because that would be a lovely addition to any park in Astoria. I feel like a lot of times you have all these tables and benches, but then, if it is so hot people cannot sit there.

Frank Varro – Right, we don't have any shade structure type thing going in again with the utilities we actually are pretty constrained in where we can plant trees.

Diana Limongi - I meant even like tables with some kind of structure that families could sit and have a meal and be covered from the sun.

Frank Varro - Even that is actually a little bit tricky to do because most of the times those require foundations, but part of it is also most of the year. This spot is actually so close to the bridge that it is actually in the shadow of the bridge, especially in late afternoon. It is actually more early morning where it can kind of hook around because the site is twisted slightly, and there is a little bit of shade for these upper tables over on the right and for the couple benches in the northern area. What the upper right of the circle, I guess by those three existing London Plane Trees are up along the Greenway, and then we have those Understory Trees down on the south for when it is later in the year for the month or so that the bridge shadow really disappears for a little while.

Evie Hantzopoulos - I do want to emphasize the fact that BIG Reuse, that composting facility is the only one that is here, in Queens. I believe the new site is going to be in Greenpoint. I feel like it is a serious issue, so that is a concern and I do not know why another spot cannot be found for the maintenance facility. So much money was put in by the City to build the BIG Reuse site and now all that money, our tax dollars is going to go to waste when that facility is moved. Restore the Baby Park here, and that is really important and I think there needs to be a better plan for Parks to actually move the maintenance, not the composting site, because I am sure maybe the neighborhood likes the fact that there is actually a composting site there, instead of just a place where trucks are parking. I do not know if you can add more trees, I am not sure if these plants are native plants, or how much consideration was given into that in terms of biodiversity and some of those issues, I would like to know. Are these native? What kind of maintenance will they require? Are they going to be helpful in terms of biodiversity and food sources for birds and all that kind of stuff?

Frank Varro - We generally try to use natives when we can, but we also really go by the idea of right plant, right place. There is actually some of the things where these trees really need to be understory trees because they are in the shadow of the bridge so long that you cannot put a tree that needs a lot of sun and for the site. There are Dogwoods that would be very good, but the native Dogwood actually has a problem with blight on which disease it is, but there is a problem with the local Dogwoods being susceptible to that. This is an adaptive non-native, but non-invasive Dogwood that is not susceptible to that disease, so it actually requires fewer inputs, essentially than using the native wood and I was going to say and that is what we try to do with all our plant selections, if we cannot do a native because of a reason like that we try and find something that will fill that niche in a way, ideally better than the native could, because there are actually times where that is how those lock together.

Evie Hantzopoulos - For the maintenance law, can you just describe to me what is going to go there? Is it the same exact kind or are you just kind of moving it?

Shirley Echevarria - It would be my sector's maintenance lot that will be moving over to the BIG Reuse location. It will currently be the containers that we have there, along with the gators, our garbage trucks, pickup trucks, vans and it will be what you see there as well as we get deliveries of mulch and wood chips that we use throughout Astoria and Long Island City for our parks and playgrounds, that is what is being moved over to where BIG Reuse is currently.

Corrine Wood-Haynes - My question was regarding the input. I am not sure what was said that was given from Queensbridge residents. I am a resident of Queensbridge Houses and I personally was not on any of the communication that you said started about a year ago, we were in the pandemic. I do not know; I do not remember seeing any flyers. I did speak to one of my neighbors, a resident who was in on the meeting. He said there were about eight residents from Queensbridge. There were two (2) meetings and eight (8) residents for a development that has 6,637 units is not an equitable buy-in or feedback or response. I am just a little concerned with the fact that there was not an adequate outreach done to get more responses from the residents. We have now, in our development, five (5) basketball courts and six (6) playgrounds. We do not have a dog walk at all, there is a nice one down on little bit past 45<sup>th</sup> Road. I am just wondering what efforts were done since it was during the pandemic and I know a lot of us were struggling with the whole virtual process and participation. We did not have an existing Association President since 2019 late, 2018 early 2019. How was information disseminated to us and you could just fill me in with that?

Frank Varro- I do not remember exactly how the outreach was done for the two meetings. Unfortunately, I know normally we do put flyers up. I am not sure, I think Planning and Partnership for Parks normally handles that, right, Diane?

Diane Dreier – We have had two (2) meetings here at this site and yes, one (1) was in the middle of the pandemic. That was done by the Planning Department who has reached out to the Association in the building there, as well as the Community Board. We also had another one this past January, where there were several people from the Community who were there and from Housing that were there. Yes, there were a lot of people from other areas. About BIG Reuse, we focused on the people who were there from the Community. How that is being done, it gets disseminated by your Councilman, your Community Board and the Borough. Partnerships for Parks and Planning does that, they reach out as best they can.

Chair, Marie Torniali – Eileen, would you like to speak on this issue?

Eileen Munsch - It was challenging not having a Queensbridge Houses Resident Association President for the last meeting. I understand that you were in the midst of a re-election and we are so excited to work with you now. We did work with NYCHA Resident Engagement to try to get the word out as best we could. We worked with them to try to get flyers out in all of the buildings. We worked to get flyers in the Community Center and then we had an email blast sent out. We did really try to get as many Queensbridge residents to the February input meeting as possible, and I am so happy that you are here tonight too, to give us more feedback.

Chair, Marie Torniali – Corinne, I would also say if you have a suggestion for a dog walk, anything else in Queensbridge. Why don't you forward that to the Chairs of the Parks Committee, and they will take that up for our budget hearings.

Diana Dreier - At the last meeting, people did talk about a Dog Run here. It was brought up, but the consensus was people were more concerned of all of the salts and matters that will be coming off. The bridge would be detrimental to the dogs and their feet and their paws. At that meeting, it was decided that this was not a proper location for a Dog Run. We did talk about it going on the far side, where the bridge goes. The opposite way goes away from the Baby Park. As we further develop it, maybe it could happen down that way.

Chair, Marie Torniali – I am only suggesting that Corrine as the Queensbridge leader of the Tenant's Association, might forward some of their ideas currently to the Parks Committee. Thank you, Corrine, for bringing that up.

Antonella Di Saverio. - Was the site checked for contamination and if so, what were the results?

Frank Varro - I believe they are going out tomorrow to do the actual soil testing, so we are still in the process of that.

Antonella Di Saverio - Depending on what you find, that will determine cleanup efforts and how you proceed with this project?

Frank Varro – Correct, we did. This design is keeping in mind the site and the fact that it is right next to a large bridge and that there is obviously a fair amount of infrastructure underneath it. We were fairly cognizant of the strong potential for contamination.

Richard Khuzami - Will any of these tables be game tables and is there thought towards tables like ping pong tables, something that can activate the place a little more chess tables checkers that kind of thing, that is the first question. The second question is lighting being so close to Queensbridge Houses. Will the lighting be on timers? Will there be any chance of it disturbing the sleep of the tenants in the association down there and in general? What would the lighting consist of?

Frank Varro - First, in terms of this plan, all the tables are this kind of bistro style seating table, not game tables. Part of that is because where the tables are going, we cannot put anything with footings and the game tables are big enough and heavy enough that they actually need a flipping. Then, in terms of the lighting. Currently, it is again planned for the same lights that are actually along the greenway, these same, I think they are, probably 12-foot, pedestrian lights. I believe the way they are; they would be on a light sensor to control them and there is one additional at the main entry up on the greenway. We have one at the entrance from Vernon Boulevard, then there is basically four, one on each side of each of the small side spaces and flanking that central space.

Richard Khuzami- Okay, they are not going to be on timers, they are going to be going all through the dark.

Diane Dreier - We have to light our parks for security reasons Richard, but they also do have what they call the dark sky reflector. Everything is reflected down, not reflected up and out, so that is, and they will be LED, and so that makes it more doable. This is a standard by DOT, and they are the ones who provide the actual light and the service to it.

Richard Khuzami - It would be great if you could just rethink a little bit about the gaming tables and activate this place a little bit more.

Diane Dreier - We can look into the bistro tables and having a game table on top of it. We can look into that to see if we can accommodate it, yes.

Mitch Waxman - I have a couple of questions, first one is based around other parks facilities, hours of operation, usually dawn to dusk Will Parks employees show up and close the gate. Is that going to be the situation here and the second question I have is: do you anticipate reaching out to your colleagues at DOT to discuss some changes to the street crossing that neighbors the new park facility?

Shirley Echevarria - Regarding the closure of the site, we do not have the means to close the site. That would have to be an enforcement thing, and that would be something that the Borough Commissioner would have to approve. If you know, and normally that is under consideration, if there is or have been a series of safety concerns that take place, but normally we do not lock up sites.

Mitch Waxman - That would indicate this is a 24-hour park.

Shirley Echevarria - No park is 24 hours. We usually close by 10 p.m., we do not have the means to lock up a site, we do not have the manpower for that. A lot of our sites, even playgrounds, do not have gates that we will close, but they do have signs stating that the site is closed by 10 p.m.

Huge Ma – The greenway adjacent to the park is sometimes a really great and safe, protected bikeway, but oftentimes, you will see a lot cars parking on it, driving on it and as we are thinking about making the access points very friendly and attractive for pedestrians and bikers alike. I would like to echo the last comment and see if we can somehow work with DOT or other partners to really protect and fortify these access points so that they are friendly for all ages and all people.

Rod Townsend – In looking at this and if I heard you right, there is a six-million-dollar budget for this. We have seen a lot of programs throughout the years and for what you are describing here, the six million dollars seems a bit outsized. Can you give me some of the major dollar amounts that are going into this? What is really consuming this budget?

Diane Dreier - With the design that you see here, we will not be fully consuming this budget. The budget is for the entire Queensbridge Baby Park and we are only focusing right now on this area.

James Mituzas - I just wanted to add to what Diane said we also do not have our soil testing back yet so that is still pending, and in order to remediate soils, we are going to need some money there too. We do not have that number right now, but you know we do have enough, and we feel confident that we will be able to treat anything when we get the results back.

Katie Ellman -I want to thank the design team for coming before us and sharing this. Unfortunately, I am disappointed in the design and based on the constraints that you have shared, that is understandable, but for a site, that has been inactive in a formal way as far as the City is concerned, for so long I will echo other comments from my colleagues. It is disappointing, there should be more consideration of other views, especially the people that live adjacent to the site should have been considered. A handful of community members is not an adequate representation and I understand the limitations of Parks in regard to convening groups of people, but that I am sorely disappointed in this. I am sorely disappointed in the fact that BIG Reuse is being moved out of our district and I feel that, unfortunately, our community is losing more than it is getting.

Katie Ellman on behalf of Rosemary Yelton (Audio Malfunction) - If the soil turns up, I guess what the time frame would be so there is most likely contamination that needs to be remediated. What is the timeline, and is there potential that you know this may not be built as a result?

Frank Varro - I believe the timeline to find out should be fairly quickly.

Diane Dreier - I think we are going to be able to build what you see; we just have to mediate. You know the soil there, that is what we have to do, I think what you are seeing here, we designed it knowing that we had a really good chance of there being contamination here, and so that is how we went about designing this project. What you see I think is going to still be done after we get all of the soil testing back.

Katie Ellman - Is there an estimated time? In past experiences, in doing this work in other locations, what does that look like, time wise because we know the construction timeline is usually like 18 months minimum? What would the remediation be like?

Frank Varro - It would be part of that construction timeline. I think, I believe this is a one-year construction.

Diane Dreier - Right now, we are about 30 (%) done with the design process, so we have until next January to finish the design. It then goes into procurement, which is also another year, and then it will go into construction, which will be another year, so you will not see this completed for about two and a half years from now. The mediation that will happen will be a part of the construction process, whoever is the contractor will be doing the necessary work associated with it, because we will outline it in our contract documents.

Frank Varro - Right and it would not add additional time to that.

Diane Dreier - No, so that is the timeline.

Rosemary Yelton - The water features for the park, are there two water fountains? Is that what I am seeing?

Frank Varro – There are two drinking fountains and a bottle filler.

Rosemary Yelton – That is fantastic. I am wondering how well that serves the young children that were hoping to use this park and their mothers and fathers in particular or caregivers. That is just something that I feel like there needs to be a little bit more consideration, given that it is designed for younger children.

Diane Dreier - The drinking fountain has two heights: the lower height is for ADA and for small children. There is also a bottle filler that you as a caregiver can fill up a water bottle.

Chelsea Lopez - Looking at the other slide that you were mostly on, it looks like there is only one (1) trash can towards one exit. I am not sure how often that is going to be picked up, but if there is going to be eight tables, I can imagine that filling up pretty quickly. Maybe there should be two (2) garbage cans, one by each exit just seems more convenient and also like it would keep the space clean.

Frank Varro - Right, overall, there are three (3). There is one down here, kind of hidden by that tree and then there is one over here, close to the drinking fountain as well as then one up here, so each space has its own trash can.

Tyrone Gardener - I have a basic request, what about putting a kiddy exercise park in that area as well?



Frank Varro - The trick with it is any equipment is most of that type of exercise equipment again, unfortunately requires footings that there is not enough space to actually put those in to make that doable. That is something we looked at trying to find a place to do, and it just was not feasible with all of the utilities below grade.

Chair, Marie Torniali – Katie so you will bring this to the Committee during the Business Session and discuss it there?

Chair, Marie Torniali - Thank you, New York City Parks.

#### **The New York Power Authority (NYPA)**

Clean Path NY – Project Update Presentation by Wendy Frank, MPA, Community Relations Representative II, SENY- Public & Government Affairs, New York Power Authority

Wendy Frank - Madame Chair, I am passing the baton to my two (2) Clean Path team members, Frank D'Eufemia and Luke Falk.

Frank D'Eufemia – I am Senior Director of Transmission Development for New York Power Authority (NYPA). I am here today with Luke Falk from energyRe and Gordon Gray from Invenergy to talk about one of our very interactive and interesting projects called Clean Path New York.

Luke Falk - I am running the day-to-day development of the Clean Path project for a company called energyRe and we are here to talk about what that project is all about and what it means to your community and I wanted to start by thanking you for giving us the opportunity to present tonight we are in the pretty early days in this project and I will explain the timeline around the project and what it is that we are doing and when things will be happening, but I wanted to stipulate at the outset that it is pretty early on in our process. We wanted to get in front of the Community Board early to elicit your feedback and thoughts about what we are trying to do. Frank introduced himself from the Power Authority, I am sure everybody on is familiar with NYPA. They own a third of the bulk power system in the State and are the largest state-owned utility in the Country. Invenergy is with whom Gordy Gray is affiliated and I will give him an opportunity to introduce himself and Invenergy before we move on.

Gordon Gray – I am a VP of Transmission Development with Invenergy, we are the largest privately held developer of renewable projects in North America, and have had a long history in New York with decades of development of wind and solar projects Upstate, and are excited to join NYPA and energyRe in the Clean Path project.

Presentation made by Luke Falk, energyRe (*Presentation Attached*)

#### **Q&A with Board Members:**

Chair, Marie Torniali - I have a question. Do you have if I understood, a proposed route in our community where you will be going underground?

Luke Falk – Yes, we are still in the early stages of compiling what we think is a feasible and optimal routing. In conjunction with multiple agencies and it is one of the reasons why we wanted to come before you today, so that we could elicit your feedback as to anything that you think that we should be aware of as we are developing our plans or any areas that you think are especially sensitive or projects that are forthcoming, that you want us to take into consideration, as we begin to finalize what we think we are trying to do.

Daniel Aliberti - I have a two-part question. We are mainly concerned with the portion of the transmission system that is in our immediate area, however, I would like to know two (2) background pieces of information. You mentioned a battery of two (2) pools of water, acting as a battery, I would like to know how many days of backup power that could potentially provide to our community and the other part of the question is you mentioned you spoke a lot about the southern portion of this power transmission system 100 miles down here, but there is another at least 250 miles running north up into Canada across the border. I would like to know about that and how will U.S, Canadian relations affect our electricity here in Queens?

Luke Falk - Let me take that in reverse order. I think the bit about Canada is confusing our project with another project. There is another project out there called the Champlain Hudson Express that is getting hydropower from Canada, that is not our project. We have nothing to do with Canada. Everything that we are building on the renewable energy side is fully contained within the State of New York, with that having been said in terms of our big water battery that NYPA built in 1973, it is called The Blenheim-Gilboa Pumped Storage Power Station. Frank can jump in and correct me if I am wrong, but I believe that it is approximately 1200 megawatts that can be discharged over the course of eight (8) to 12 hours. It is not a long duration storage facility; it cannot keep our line full of power for days. The way that we intend to use it is when we are generating more power than our transmission line can deliver into the City, we will fill it up and then at certain hours, when the sun is not shining and the wind is not blowing, we will discharge it, but we are not conceiving of it as being a facility that can keep us energized for days on end.

Daniel Aliberti - It is more of a shot in the arm kind of thing, but the other thing was, if the lines go all the way up to Canada, where is this electricity originating?

Luke Falk - Just to clarify again, our line does not have anything to do with Canada. It does not go all the way up to Canada. It starts in Delhi and the western Catskills about 175 miles away from New York City. All of the renewable energy that is flowing into the line is built in various projects across the State of New York that are all sending their power through the New York grid to the top of our line in Delhi.

Antonella Di Saverio.- I am really excited for the clean air, we need clean air in our area, definitely. We just want to make sure that we are not transferring one benefit for another for a negative. I think if you would consider a shielding a magnetic shield so that the Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMFs) do not come out into either the basements that are being occupied in close proximity or affecting the people that are traveling above on that path, that road path, but I am sure we are all going to go into this in more depth when you have your presentation before the Committee in the future, but I just wanted to plant that seed.

Luke Falk - I think that is a great call out. What I can say about it is, I will make two (2) points, but we will certainly be back in front of you again to discuss it in greater detail when we have the granular route that we are going to propose, but just conceptually there are two (2) things that I point out. One is that there are a lot of high voltage power lines running in the streets of New York all over the place today, and this is just going to be another similar instance of that happening, but it is also a highly regulated matter. As part of the Article VII permitting process, the Department of Public Service (DPS) enforce thresholds for Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMFs), emittance under which all projects need to comply and those thresholds are reviewed as part of the article, not only the Army Corps, DEC and DEP, but you know the Department of State and the Department of Public Service and the Public Service Commission, these are current; up-to-date thresholds that are informed by science and research. All of that having been said, we are going to be well below the thresholds by virtue of being underground. Our cable is already shielded in metal. For a large majority of the run, it is encased in a concrete duct bank, it is buried underground and with these electromagnetic fields, they dissipate at the cubed root of the frequency, which is like a snobby scientific way of saying that they dissipate very rapidly like as you get further from the source of the EMFs. What we will be doing is making public the results of all the technical analysis around this issue that will be publicly accessible to everybody, who is interested as part of the Article VII proceeding.

Richard Khuzami - Just a quick question, I wondered on the other side of this. The actual creation of the power. Are you running into much NIMBY-ism in the upstate area? Is this a situation where the State would step in and have eminent domain or anything like that or is it stated all involved in this creation of the energy of the farms themselves?

Luke Falk - Nobody on our team and I have never heard anybody on the stage even attempt to suggest that anybody has any interest whatsoever in ever uttering the word, eminent domain with respect to renewable energy, so I think that is a hard no, as far as I can tell that having been said. I think that, from what I understand, like NIMBY-ism is a thing that exists, I think that we are going to endeavor to work collaboratively with our host communities to make sure that what we are trying to do benefits everybody and it-and our plans-are favorably met. Gordy, I don't know if you wanted to talk further about it, given Invenenergy's experience in the space.

Gordon Gray - Working with communities to develop wind and solar projects is our job. Obviously, and energy is developed well over a hundred wind and solar projects across the country, we are very experienced in managing and working with communities in order to help everyone to see the benefits of locating those projects and hosting those projects, and we take that experience into New York more than anywhere and have worked with all the Communities to ensure that the projects are permitted and addressing their issues through the Article 10 and Section 94-c processes that are similar to Article VII through for the generation side. Yes, there are local small groups potentially of NIMBY activity in the State, but we find broad support and ability to work with communities and secure the permits that are needed for all the projects that we are developing.

Richard Khuzami - Okay, just to be clear, then on all these energy creation projects they are privately run completely, and the State's not involved in it.

Gordon Gray - The projects themselves are privately run and, as we talked about earlier, those projects are bid into the State grid system and then New York determines if and when they are allowed to operate, to ensure that the New York grid is supplied as we talked about at the minimum cost and ensuring reliable supply for all users.

Andreas Migias - I am sure I can speak for a lot of people here We are very excited, for clean air, clean energy. I think these are important, investment projects and infrastructure, and you know the long-term benefit, if done correctly, can definitely be a big plus for the Community. This question may be a little bit difficult to answer initially, because as you have said, there is not necessarily a set proposal where these lines would run. For those that have been to a lot of these meetings, there is a lot of construction going on in Astoria. A lot of zoning proposals and with that comes a lot of construction, and with that there tends to be a disruption with people's day-to-day lives. Construction creates accessibility, issues, difficulty for people who mobility-wise for them to get around their communities. I am just wondering with projects like these, when the groundwork is done to actually embed the infrastructure, underground. How does that typically look from a construction standpoint? Is it similar to what you would expect if ConEd does work on your block, because it is renewable would it require more work, less work, time wise?

Luke Falk – I will let Gordy take it, but I think the simple answer is that it is a lot like the type of work that ConEd does and that is basically what you can expect, but Gordy can elaborate on the details.

Gordon Gray - I think that is right, I mean in street construction and bearing utilities is something that is very routinely done, especially in cities like New York and so fundamentally the construction process that we are undertaking here looks pretty much the same as that. We will be opening up a trench in the streets we will be putting in conduits, we will be encasing them in concrete and then we will be closing it back up. The power lines that we will be pulling through will arrive later and be pulled through. We do not need to keep the streets open for the entire process and, of course, you know as any street construction project we would be plating.

Mitch Waxman – They actually had drawn up a route for us to look at and discuss. I have a couple of questions first off in aggregate. How long is the channel you are going to be cutting into Queens meant to travel, as in from the

time it comes out of the water at the north end of Astoria to the point that it makes it to the Rainy Park substation? Secondly, what do you anticipate the duration of the street construction project would be? Third, and this is just some commentary that came out of the conversation about the last trench proposal, there was some concern along Vernon Boulevard about putting in metal plates specifically in crosswalks, due to the fact that the metal plate freezes over during the winter and create obstacles for people in wheelchairs and baby carriages and so on. As far as the two questions, how long is the aggregate trench going to be and how long do you think the project will take for you to do the installation?

Luke Falk - Let me take the first one in aggregate. I think you are looking at about four miles in Queens end to end. Now that could be plus or minus like a very little bit, but it is right around there. With respect to the duration and the pleading issue that you raised, I am going to nominate my colleague, Frank Norcross, who has been sitting next to me for this discussion to respond because he is the head of more technical things in our office and can take you the rest of the way, through your answer.

Frank Norcross - First off to come up with the distance it looks right it is four miles about a mile that is sitting inside the Astoria complex. About three (3) miles and outside of the complex with respect to the timing of the construction and how long the streets will be open, it will probably be proceeding in a number of different spots. The amount of time that any one section of the street might be open is probably a period of a few weeks. Probably in the span of a few weeks to a month, something in that vicinity as it works its way from the complex to the Rainy Park substation as part of the routing. Thank you for calling out the manholes. We have approximately every half mile or so a splice chamber that involves a manhole. We are looking at the preliminary routing, in addition to where we put this place chamber bolts, we would be looking to avoid crosswalks in that area that would be troubling and impact pedestrians in Queens. That is all the work that we are currently undertaking as we work with New York City, Queens Borough DOT and DEP to figure out the best place to route in order to make sure that it is technically viable, while also limiting the impact on the local community.

Chair, Marie Torniali - Thank you all for the presentation.

#### **BUSINESS SESSION:**

Chair, Marie Torniali - Can I please get a Motion to Adopt the April 20, 2022 Minutes.

#### **Adoption April 2022 Minutes**

**Motioned by Amin Mehedi; Seconded by Dino Panagoulis**

#### **Chair Report:**

Chair, Marie Torniali - I just want to remind everyone that next week we are having a local area Public Hearing on Innovation QNS on Wednesday, May 25th at 6:30 p.m. If you wish to register beforehand, you may email the Board Office or call them if you cannot or prefer to, you may also register on site the night of the event. I am going to just mention, as we all know, we are on high alert now, so I am going to suggest very strongly that anyone who attends this meeting wear a mask just for your benefit and the benefit of everyone who is there. Thank you.

#### **District Manager Report:**

Florence Koulouris - Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, it is so good to see you here again. This week, the Mayor's Office elevated the New York City COVID alert system to high. Please continue to take any personal precautions necessary. Our office received a survey from the Comptroller's Office on your opinion on Department of Sanitation Services and you have been asked to participate. This is a very short survey and we ask that you participate. It has been posted on Facebook, Twitter and I posted in the Chat. In addition, our office has just completed a massive mailing for Innovation QNS Project, the full distribution has been sent out formally as of today. We are also promoting this on Facebook, Twitter and the press regularly. Our new representative from the Mayor's Office for Community Affairs Unit, has been extremely hands-on, we have visited areas within our district touring some of the troubled locations. Two (2) of the major matters addressed were RV trailers within our district and the issue of complaints within the Dutch Kills civic area. We have recently had an uptick in commercial parking by one vendor and we have not only reached out to the parent company, but we have also been working with truck enforcement to address this matter. We have been working closely with the Department of Transportation on road work complaints. As of late, we have seen an uptick in utility work being done post pandemic as individuals return in some cases to more stable work cycles. Please feel free to contact the office with any local matters that require attention. Thank you and have a wonderful evening.

#### **Committee Reports:**

Dino Panagoulis, Consumer Affairs Committee - Please refer to your spreadsheet that Florence has sent to all of us. I believe if I am not mistaken, there are 24 businesses on this spreadsheet, however, there is one (1) business of note that has been brought to our attention as a quality of life issue, the business that I am referring to is known as The Late Night Café, and it has been brought to our attention that there have been a 150- 311 Complaints, 144 of which have been Noise Complaints also and of notable concern, are the amount of 911 calls that have been assessed to this business, which number at 76. This is a great drain on our police resources, and it is for that reason that we are moving to deny this liquor license for this business. I would like to move forward with this Motion to approve all license applications and renewals for all, but one, notably The Late Night Café.

**Motioned by Amin Mehedi; Seconded by Rosemary Yelton**

Chair, Marie Torniali - Any objections (hearing none), the Motion carries.

Antonella Di Saverio, Environmental/Sanitation Committee - We did receive a response from DEP regarding the water levels, the levels of the contaminants, on the first site. We have two sites in our area that were tested in 2021 and it was again tested in 2022. The first area was 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 21<sup>st</sup> Street, which had a level of 0.048. The second area was 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 24<sup>th</sup> Street, which had a 0.054 rate, the contaminant level, the threshold was .06. It is pretty close, but I am happy to say that in 2022 it was tested again in March at 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 21<sup>st</sup> Street. It was at 0.29 and at 24<sup>th</sup> Street and 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue is .028. We have to discuss this further in our next meeting, but it is possible it was reduced because they started using UV light to disinfect the water, they are still using chlorine, but not as much chlorine. We have to look into it a little more, but I am really happy to report that the levels have come down.

Elizabeth Erion, Land Use and Zoning Committee – I am just going to follow up on the Chair's Report of the Land Use Committee, future public hearings before the summer. First of all, at the June meeting we will be hearing on the Rezoning for 40-25 Crescent Street. This is a property owned by the Rosenbach group, which makes all of the water tanks around the city they are requesting a rezoning to allow a mixed-use building, which will also allow them to continue testing operations for their tanks. That was certified by City Planning early May. We will have a public hearing on that on June 21<sup>st</sup> at the next Board Meeting. The second one, is Innovation QNS. It will be a local area hearing on the 25<sup>th</sup>, but it will also be continued at the June 21<sup>st</sup> meeting at and we will be taking this up for recommendation on both of these at the Committee Meeting on June 1<sup>st</sup>, we are having a presentation tomorrow evening by the Innovation QNS team. This is a presentation of the certified application, after which we will discuss it on June 1<sup>st</sup> for recommendation. That concludes my report. Thank you.

Katie Ellman, Parks/Recreation/Cultural Committee - Before we get into the conversation about Queensbridge Baby Park, I wanted to share a few things. I wanted to say congratulations and thanks to all the Community Members that participated in the Participatory Budgeting with Tiffany Cabán's Office and to say that a Capital Project winners were tree plantings throughout the District, and for improvements to lighting in Astoria Houses. Congratulations to the Connected Chef on their weekly farm stand at Astoria Heights Playground and 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue Open Street events that are coming up this weekend and before our next Full Board Meeting it is the shoreline cleanup, this Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> at 10 a.m., in Astoria Park. There will also a movie under the stars on Friday, June 1<sup>st</sup> in Astoria Park, playing "Spiderman: No Way Home", followed by a park beautification day the next day to clean up potential mess that patrons left after the movie. June 4<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. to noon, Astoria Performing Arts Center (APAC), which is no longer in the District but was for a very long time has two (2) new two shows running, "Your Negro Tour Guide" is running through May 23<sup>rd</sup>, and their next show will run from June 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> called "Buggy Baby". You can find out more at: <https://www.apacny.org/> and then lastly, the Queens Rising Festival takes place throughout June and all over the borough, most notably at QED and Astoria, and you can find out more at: <https://queensrising.nyc/>. Thank you. Now, if Marie and Florence can advise so we open the floor for discussion amongst Board Members, is that correct?

Chair, Marie Torniali - Would you like to make a Motion and open the floor to a discussion about this proposal?

Katie Ellman - Kathleen would you like to make the Motion.

Kathleen Warnock - Certainly, I make the Motion to open the floor for discussion about Baby Park.

Chair, Marie Torniali - Start the discussion Katie, you obviously had some issues with the proposed project.

Katie Ellman - I made my feelings and thoughts about this, pretty clear, I would love to hear from other members.

Richard Khuzami - I think this is all premature, quite frankly, I think that the contamination issue is huge. I know that during the mitigation, when they redid the sea wall underneath the bridge, they had to go way down like two (2) or three (3) feet or something of removing soil.

Antonella Di Saverio - I think you brought up a good point before we really need to have the people who live in that immediate area, give input and bring them back to the table and see what their thoughts are.

Evie Hantzopoulos - It has always been Baby Park right, I imagine contamination was an issue then, too right. Obviously, it needs to be decontaminated. I just wanted to say something about the outreach, because I know that many of the folks from Queensbridge who did attend, they were in favor of keeping the composting facility there and I think that there were times when they were shut down by Parks.

Corrine Wood-Haynes - I just want to echo my sentiments from earlier and yes, it was a park. I grew up here. It has been here for 60 years and when I was still in elementary school, that was a playground. There was no truck site, and none of that was there. It was long from one end of the handball park, all the way down was the playground area, full of monkey bars, seesaws and the whole nine (yards). At some point it was feasible for that. I just really want to echo the fact that we have not done our due diligence and getting a view from the residents in the development outside of the 8 to 10 people that may have been there. I do not want to say anything else; I am sure the design, plan and the intention is already in place. If we are going to talk about it, I think that we should create a platform for it to be equitably discussed.

Kathleen Warnock - I think that we are seeing more and more people coming to the Community Board people saying to their Council Members and the Borough President, that we need stuff that goes and helps the people directly and, as our last commenter just mentioned, there has not really been an equitable chance to listen to what the people of the Community have to say. I think that as a Community Board, we can continue to step up our efforts to bring the pressure on the people who fund these things and approve these things, because, after all, it is coming off

of our taxes and it is coming into our neighborhoods, some of which people are going to have to move because things are being replaced. That is an overall kind of comment, but it reflects so many of the topics we have discussed in the last several months, particularly during the pandemic, when people really needed help.

Mitch Waxman - There used to be a Terracotta plant across the street over there, so the soil is probably contaminated along the lines of what they call urban standard. Where it has higher levels of heavy metals and PCBs and other insulating fluids and they are going to scoop all that out. I would not feel confident voting for this unless I had some mandate from the people who live next door to it, I really want to hear a lot more from Queensbridge, as far as opinion on this.

Rod Townsend - Corrine welcome to the Board. I am so grateful to have your sense of history and knowledge of the area and I think this Board has needed a member and more members from Queensbridge, welcome and thank you. I am kind of echoing what other people said. This is part of a larger, comprehensive plan and they are giving us a baby feeding of it, and if there is going to be soil mitigation in that one little section, if this is the larger, comprehensive plan, then the whole area is going to need soil mitigation, most likely. I think they should be presenting us a large plan, not a spoon-fed little dollop.

Jeffrey Martin - I work for Parks. I am on the Brooklyn Capital Team; I do not have any work in Queens specifically. I do just want to mention I know we heard a lot about community voices and how as a community to be heard. I know this team particularly, I do not know the specific work that went out to get this advertised, but I do I did see when this came up. I know that there was a small turnout at the event, I know the flyers went up. I also know that the Team received surveys back as we typically do and were reviewed. Many of them probably came from the composting. I know that was a big focus of the scope meeting, so I just want to say that the Team followed the Capital process. We have a process that we follow. We have the scoping meeting at the beginning of the project, and maybe it was not properly advertised and maybe there is some way to come back, maybe through Corrine or maybe through the Queensbridge Houses' Board. Maybe Parks can reach back out to them and get feedback on this particular design and I think programming is specifically what we are all talking about tonight. Having maybe an issue with what is the space going to be? What can it be used for? Maybe a broader view needs to be looked at because I know that composting was here, but I do not think that composting is a particularly a great program for this area. It is not the proper program for a project right along Vernon Boulevard, right across the street from Queensbridge Park right next to the greenway and right next to the Queensbridge Houses. If programming is the issue, I think we could continue to push that and we can continue to as Community Board Members to push that and Parks can continue or further reach out to the local residents, because I know that there has been a round already of that, but maybe another round can be done. I do want to say, as in terms of the environmental impacts, typically, that is done about this part of a project. We typically do develop a plan at about the same time that we are analyzing what is underground, typically, unless we know of contaminants like, I am working on a project right now in Red Hook that we knew the EPA was involved, we had a consent order to clean it up for lead. We typically know about those big contaminants prior, not saying that there would not be one but the solutions and for this site, particularly being that we cannot excavate much to begin with, because of the utilities and the utility complex underground. There is opportunity to remove a layer of soil, not deep and cap it with clean fill and pavement. We are not necessarily building a building here, so we are not looking to excavate. We are not going 10 feet for a foundation. We only have to excavate enough for foundations and being that here, foundations are not a big issue, it might turn out to be less of a problem when we are thinking as long as it is capped with clean fill and as long as it is capped with a hard pavement depending on what they find, of course.

Chair, Marie Torniali - Katie. If I may suggest that perhaps you want to bring this back to Committee and maybe formulate a letter voicing all the concerns that everyone expressed tonight, including the outreach to Queensbridge and see what that means.

Katie Ellman - I think that is a great idea. I do not think we are in a position to vote on this right now.

Chair, Marie Torniali - Okay, so we will table it until you have your committee meeting and discuss everything and formulate a letter to pause, expressing our concerns.

Kathleen Warnock - I think that is a good suggestion and I look forward to us being able to document the kind of feedback we have gotten tonight, because I think we have had some very good discussions.

Mitch Waxman, Transportation Committee - The other night we received a presentation from the MTA describing a Capital Project they are about to start in Queens Plaza, which is going to see them working on the pedestrian bridges over Queens Plaza and also installing elevators. These elevators, of course, will be going upstairs to Queens Borough Plaza. This is going to create several outages in the new year on both the 7 and the N/W lines. MTA is going to compensate for those outages by bringing in shuttle buses and having agents on the street they are still fairly early in their process, but it is definitely going to happen. We did request of them that they consider programming, what is called a walking transfer into Queens Plaza, which is something we should be asking for anyway, which would allow you to you swipe into let's say the 7 train you get to Queens Plaza, you walk down to the ground level, you find the IND R Station and then the OMNY System would consider that a transfer. It is something that we should have had all along, but they did say they were going to look into it and consider that.

Chair, Marie Torniali – Are there any elected officials or their representatives here who would like to make a comment, please raise your hand.

#### **Old/New Business:**

#### **ELECTED OFFICIALS/REPRESENTATIVES – Announcements:**

**Oriana Shulevitz Rosado, Office of Council Member Tiffany Cabán:**

- **Participatory Budgeting**
  - We are extremely excited to announce that the results are in for the 2022 Participatory Budgeting Process. As a quick recap the Council Member allocated, from her discretionary funds, \$1M for physical infrastructure projects, and \$50K for discretionary expense programmatic funding. These projects and ideas were submitted by community members and voted on by community members and I wanted to share with you the winning projects:
    - The Winners for our Capital & Expense Projects:
      - \$500K is going to install new lighting in Astoria Houses parking lot to increase visibility and safety Outdoor Lighting
      - \$200K for Electrical Upgrades at IS 126
      - \$275K for Tech Upgrades for D22 Schools which means, new iPads and Chromebooks for PS 122, IS 235, IS 126, PS 171 and a couple of others
      - \$150K for Street Tree Planting throughout the District
    - The Winners for our Capital & Expense Projects:
      - \$10K for a Weekly Farm Stand
      - \$18K "Basics of Cooking" Series
      - \$5K Pop-up Arts Classes
      - \$20K Astoria's First Gender Justice Center
- **Budget Town Hall**
  - This week, Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at 6pm join Council Member Cabán as well as some of her colleagues at our Budget Town Hall where we will provide updates on the budget process, give some top-lines on what was in the Mayor's Executive Budget, and suggest ways to engage in the budget process in this final month and a half. Sign up here: [bit.ly/BudgetTownHall2022](https://bit.ly/BudgetTownHall2022)
- **Legislative Updates**
  - Our legislative team has been hard at work, researching and drafting bills to improve the lives of folks here in the district and across the city. We're currently working with the Speaker on a package of bills in response to the leaked Supreme Court opinion striking down Roe v. Wade. These bills would move through the Committee that the Council Member Chairs, Women & Gender Equity.
  - If you have any legislative ideas for us, please send them to: [district22@council.nyc.gov](mailto:district22@council.nyc.gov)
  - While we currently have a full legislative plate, we are always interested in ideas from constituents.
  - If you would like to get more information, I am going to add the mailing list sign up for our mailing list.

**Katherine "Kat" Zapata, Office of the Queens Borough President** - I am the Transportation and Policy Liaison to the Queens Borough President. I have some quick updates, the first one being the Queens Bus Redesign Plan. Our office is currently taking any feedback and suggestions from either advocacy groups or constituents. If you have a suggestion, a thought, a concern, please feel free to email us or give us a call. I will leave my email and phone number. We have some office events, the first one being the Asian- American Pacific Islander Heritage Celebration happening this Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall in the Atrium, vaccination record is required. Next Monday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> we will be hosting a virtual, advancing leaders through collaboration, business webinar at 12 p.m., and then on Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup> we will be having our monthly Queens job Recruitment Fair at Queens Borough Hall in the minutes, you will receive the link to join either one of these events, please feel free to contact the office if anything arises and thank you all for having us.

**Farah Salam, Office of Council Member Julie Won's Office** - I wanted to provide a few updates. In the past few weeks, we have been going around distributing COVID-19 tests to constituents visiting people at parks, and we have also been hosting quite a few events. Last week we had our Citizenship Event with CUNY citizenship, we had about 60 people come and apply for citizenship through the CUNY Citizenship Program. Next week, we have New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) coming into little Bangladesh in Astoria and they will be providing legal services intakes and consultations with community members in the area. It will be at 30<sup>th</sup> Street and 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue. If you are in the neighborhood, please feel free to stop by and let people know that the bus will be there. We are also planning a Know Your Rights with Council Member Francisco Moya in the beginning of June, so any community members can come and learn about their rights when they are encountered by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and then lastly, tomorrow we have an event with the New York City Department of Health, where we will be hosting a Rat Academy and Training, this is really beneficial for business owners, landlords and tenants and really anybody, because folks will get an idea of what to do when there are a lot of rats, what they can do to assuage this. This is especially helpful for landlords and small business owners. Just a bit on the Legislation side, the Council Member earlier in the month introduced three (3) bills that she adopted from former Council Members Helen Rosenthal and Ben Kallos, who both served as Chairs of the Committee on Contracts. Before her she introduced the three (3) bills that she introduced, Intro 299, would add an optional question to the passport questionnaire asking prospective city vendors to voluntarily disclose the gender and race of their directors and senior executives. Intro 300 would require the Commissioner of Investigation to appoint a special inspector to monitor the Emergency Procurement Contracts entered into the City in response to COVID-19. Intro 301 would apply a contractor in the City Council that are parties to a city contract valid in excess of \$100,000 dollars and would establish standards for Conflicts of Interest that may arise as a result of entering into contracts with these organizations. If you have any questions, any concerns please feel free to reach out to us. I will leave our District email and our District phone number in the Chat and if you would like to sign up for a newsletter, I will also include that in the Chat.

Chair, Marie Torniali - Members of the public who would like to speak, please use the raise-hand function.

## **PUBLIC SESSION:**

Maryam S. - This is Maryam, she/her pronouns. I am the Founder of The Astoria Mutual Aid Network (AMAN) and a community organizer here in Astoria. I wanted to follow up with a request that was made of a community group called Dave's Lesbian Bar that has been hosting events throughout Astoria to collect and support the Queer Community here in Queens, with the goal of opening a physical Brick and Mortar Bar and venue mutual aid hub, sometime in the next 12 months. As you may know, this group has been doing pop-up events around Astoria to try to create visibility for the Queer Community and create community for this often-overlooked group. As of yesterday, at 5 p.m., we were made aware that there was a demand from this Community Board to collect 60 signatures from residents of the block where we have applied for a Special Activity Permit for this Saturday. After looking through the listing of residences, actually active on that block, there are no more than 70 residences available, currently registered with the City and the request to get and secure 60 signatures, from residents on that block before Saturday seems unreasonable. It is my understanding from the lead organizers in this community that while there may have been feedback from residents issued to the Community Board, there has not been meaningful or good faith outreach to communicate and mitigate those concerns until this very last minute for an event that has been published and has a lot of community support. I am here to ask if there is an opportunity to bypass this request, it is on 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue down from the Open Street between 37<sup>th</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup>, and requesting a bypass of this request for this Saturday's event, with an invitation to host a collaborative conversation about how programming can be better supported and supportive of the residents of that area going forward.

Chair, Marie Torniali – Maryam, can you clarify the location you are speaking of?

Maryam S. - Yes, it is on 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue between 37<sup>th</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup> Streets in front of the now closed Associated Supermarket.

Chair, Marie Torniali – 37 to 38, one block only?

Maryam S. – Correct, thank you for your concern.

Chair, Marie Torniali – We will address this offline, thank you.

Maryam S. - What would be the resolution for offline, as this event is on Saturday? How can I follow up accordingly?

Chair, Marie Torniali - Send an email to the Board Office.

Maryam S. - We will send another email, Thank you.

Chair, Marie Torniali - Will you do that? I am sorry, I did not hear you.

Maryam S. - Yes, we have been in touch with Florence already, who was the one who made the request with regard to the signatures? We will send an email as well.

Maroua Righi, Outreach Coordinator, NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) - For those of you who may not know the CCRB is a city government agency that investigates police misconduct. As an Outreach Coordinator, what I do is, I give presentations, workshops, I do tabling events, resource fairs and so on and so forth to educate the public on what is police misconduct, what the CCRB does, how do we investigate complaints and what your rights are when you get stopped by the Police and lots of other really important information. With the weather getting warmer, I just wanted to let anyone in this meeting know that if you are planning on having any upcoming events, resource fairs or block parties, anything where you want city government agencies to attend and share free resources and free information, please feel free to reach out to me or if you have a program, that you would like a presentation or workshop for please reach out to me. I can share my contact information in the Chat. I see that it says that I could share it with hosts and panelists, but hopefully, if someone could just share it in the Chat so that everyone can see it in case, they need it, thank you so much.

Chair, Marie Torniali - Thank you so much, if anyone else who would like to bring up an item from the public, hearing none, Motion to Adjourn.

**Motioned by Thomas Ryan; Seconded by Amy Hau**

**Meeting Adjourned: 9:10 p.m.**



**ATTENDANCE FULL BOARD MEETING**

Community Board Member	Yes	No	Abs.	Community Board Member	Yes	No	Abs.
Helene Abiola				Chelsea Lopez	✓		
George Alexiou				Huge Ma	✓		
Daniel Aliberti	✓			Jeffrey Martin	✓		
Louise Bordley				Sam Massol	✓		
Shoma Brahmanandam	Resigned			Amin Mehedi	✓		
Ann Bruno	✓			Antonio Meloni	✓		
Gerald Caliendo	✓			Andreas Migias			E
Irak Dahir Cehonski				Doreen Mohammed			
Jean Marie D'Alleva	✓			Eric Mouchette	✓		
Tenzin Dechen				Stella Nicolaou	✓		
Antonella Di Saverio	✓			Dino Panagoulis	✓		
Katie Ellman	✓			Juliet Payabyab	✓		
Elizabeth Erion	✓			RoseMarie Poveromo			
Mackenzi Farquer				Brian Romero	✓		
Dean Feratovic				Thomas Ryan	✓		
Adam Fisher-Cox			E	Dominic Stiller			
Tyrone Gardner	✓			Andre Stith			
Shahenaz Hamde	✓			Marie Torniali	✓		
Evie Hantzopoulos	✓			Rod Townsend	✓		
Amy Hau	✓			Judy Trilivas			
Helen Ho				Kathleen Warnock	✓		
Vanessa Jones-Hall				Mitchell Waxman	✓		
Richard Khuzami	✓			Corrine Wood-Haynes	✓		
Amr Kotb				Rosemary Yelton	✓		
Cristina Lastres							
Diana Limongi	✓						
Number Board Members Present <u>31</u>							
				Excused <u>2</u>			
Present _____				Absent <u>16</u>			
				April 2022			





**Parks**

# Queensbridge Baby Park Reconstruction

Located near Vernon Boulevard and Queensboro Bridge,  
in the Borough of Queens.

Community Board 1, Parks Committee Presentation  
June 13, 2022  
Frank Varro, NYC Parks

**Total Budget:** \$6m  
Mayoral - \$ 6m FY21

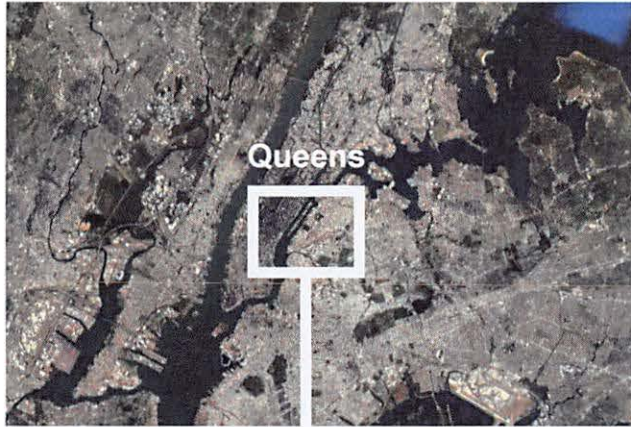
**Project Size:** 0.39 ac (Portion of 3.0 ac park)

## Goals

- Continue efforts to improve this park and return segments to resident use
- Activate the Vernon Boulevard frontage by providing an attractive gateway and improved linkage to Queensbridge Park







City

2 MI



Neighborhood

1000 FT



Site

200 FT



NYC Parks

## Queensbridge Baby Park | Project Location





Base Flood Elevation (BFE): 11

## Flood Hazard Zones

### 2015 Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map

#### V Zone (100-year floodplain subject to wave action)

Areas along coasts subject to inundation by the 1% annual chance flood event with additional hazards associated with storm-induced waves.

#### A Zone (100-year floodplain)

Areas subject to inundation by the 1% annual chance flood event.

#### Shaded X Zone (500-year floodplain)

Areas within the 0.2% annual chance floodplain, areas of 1% annual chance flooding where average depths are less than 1 foot, areas of 1% annual chance flooding where the contributing drainage area is less than 1 square mile, and areas protected from the 1% annual chance flood by a levee.

#### Limit of Moderate Wave Action (LiMWA)

The inland limit of the area expected to receive 1.5ft or greater breaking waves during the 1% annual chance flood event. Data from 2015 PFIRMs

### Future Floodplain 2050s

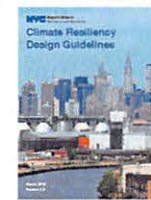
#### Future 1% Annual Chance Floodplain (100-year)

#### Future 0.2% Annual Chance Floodplain (500-year)

### Resources (Links):



NYC Parks: Design and Planning for Flood Resiliency



NYC MOCR: Climate Resiliency Design Guidelines (v4.0)



Queensbridge Baby Park | Flood Risk (Coastal)







## NYC Stormwater Flood Maps (Moderate Flooding)

- Area not included in analysis
- Future High Tides 2050
- National Wetlands Inventory
- Deep and Contiguous Flooding (1ft and greater)
- Nuisance Flooding (greater or equal to 4 in and less than 1 ft)

This map:

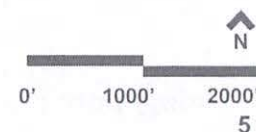
- Reflects roughly two inches of rain falling in one hour (also referred to as the 10-year storm, with approximately 10 percent chance of occurrence in any given year)
- Shows a moderate rainstorm that City infrastructure was not designed to handle.
- Reflects 2.5 feet of sea level rise, which is a high estimate for the 2050s.
- Includes impacts of potential blocked storm drains and outfalls from sea level rise.

Flooding from a storm like this would temporarily disrupt transportation and enter buildings and basements, causing minor damages to contents and surfaces.



NYC Parks

### Queensbridge Baby Park | Flood Risk (Stormwater)



5



## NYC Stormwater Flood Maps (Extreme Flooding)

- Area not included in analysis
- Future High Tides 2080
- National Wetlands Inventory
- Deep and Contiguous Flooding (1ft and greater)
- Nuisance Flooding (greater or equal to 4 in and less than 1 ft)

This map:

- Reflects roughly 3.5 inches of rain falling in one hour (also referred to as the 100 year storm, with approximately 1 percent chance of occurrence in any given year).
- Shows an extreme rainstorm that City infrastructure was not designed to handle.
- Reflects 4.8 feet of sea level rise, which is a high estimate for the 2080s.
- Includes impacts of potential blocked storm drains and outfalls from sea level rise.

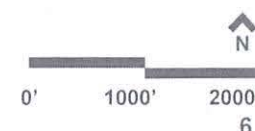
Flooding from a storm like this would:

- Cause widespread damage and disruption to both private and public property.
- Disrupt roads, subways, regional rail, and potentially power/communication networks.
- Cause flooding across coastal neighborhoods due to sea level rise impacts.



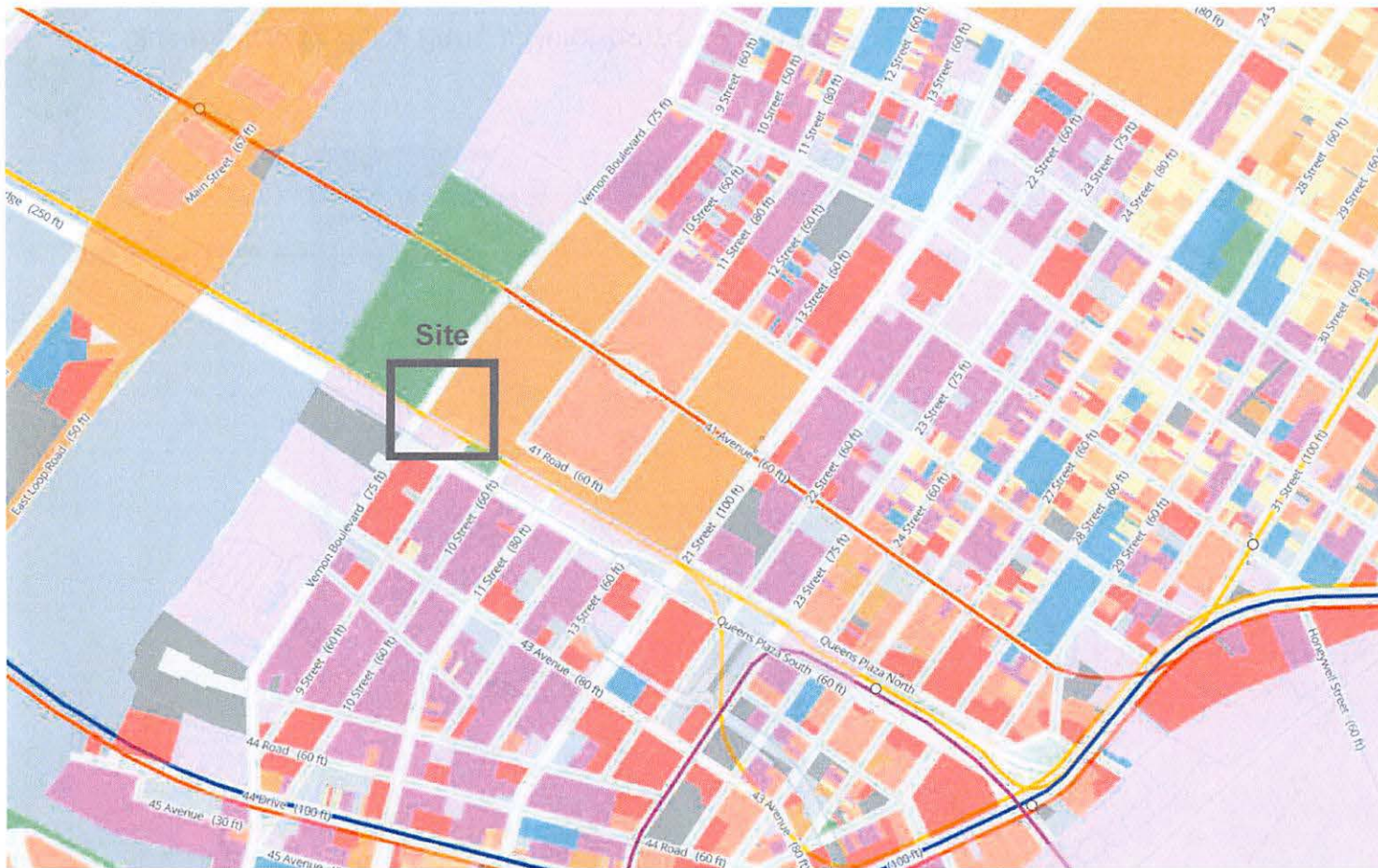
NYC Parks

Queensbridge Baby Park | Flood Risk (Stormwater)



6





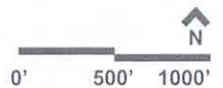
## Land Use Categories

- 1 And 2 Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential (Walkup)
- Multi-Family Residential (Elevator)
- Mixed Use
- Commercial & Office
- Industrial & Manufacturing
- Transportation / Utilities
- Public Facilities & Institutional
- Open Space And Outdoor Recreation
- Parking
- Vacant Land
- Other



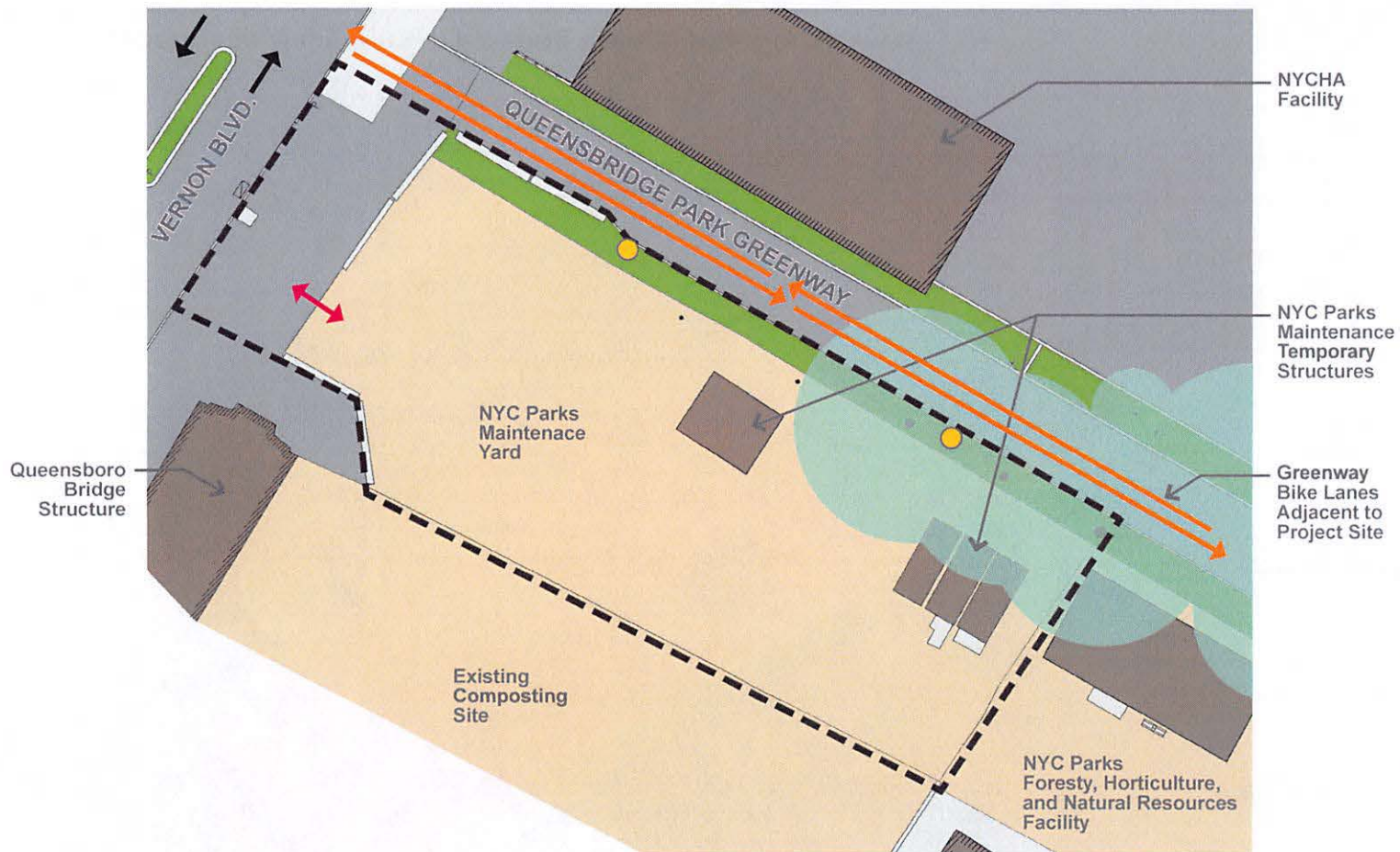
NYC Parks

## Queensbridge Baby Park | Surrounding Land Use









### Legend

- Project Limit
- ↔ Park Entrance
- Greenway Bike Lanes
- Building or Structure
- Gravel
- Asphalt Pavement
- Concrete Pavement
- Planting/Lawn
- Tree
- Parks Lightpole
- Traffic

### Park Tree Canopy Information

47.4% Parkland Canopy Cover  
0.6% Canopy Change 2010-2017

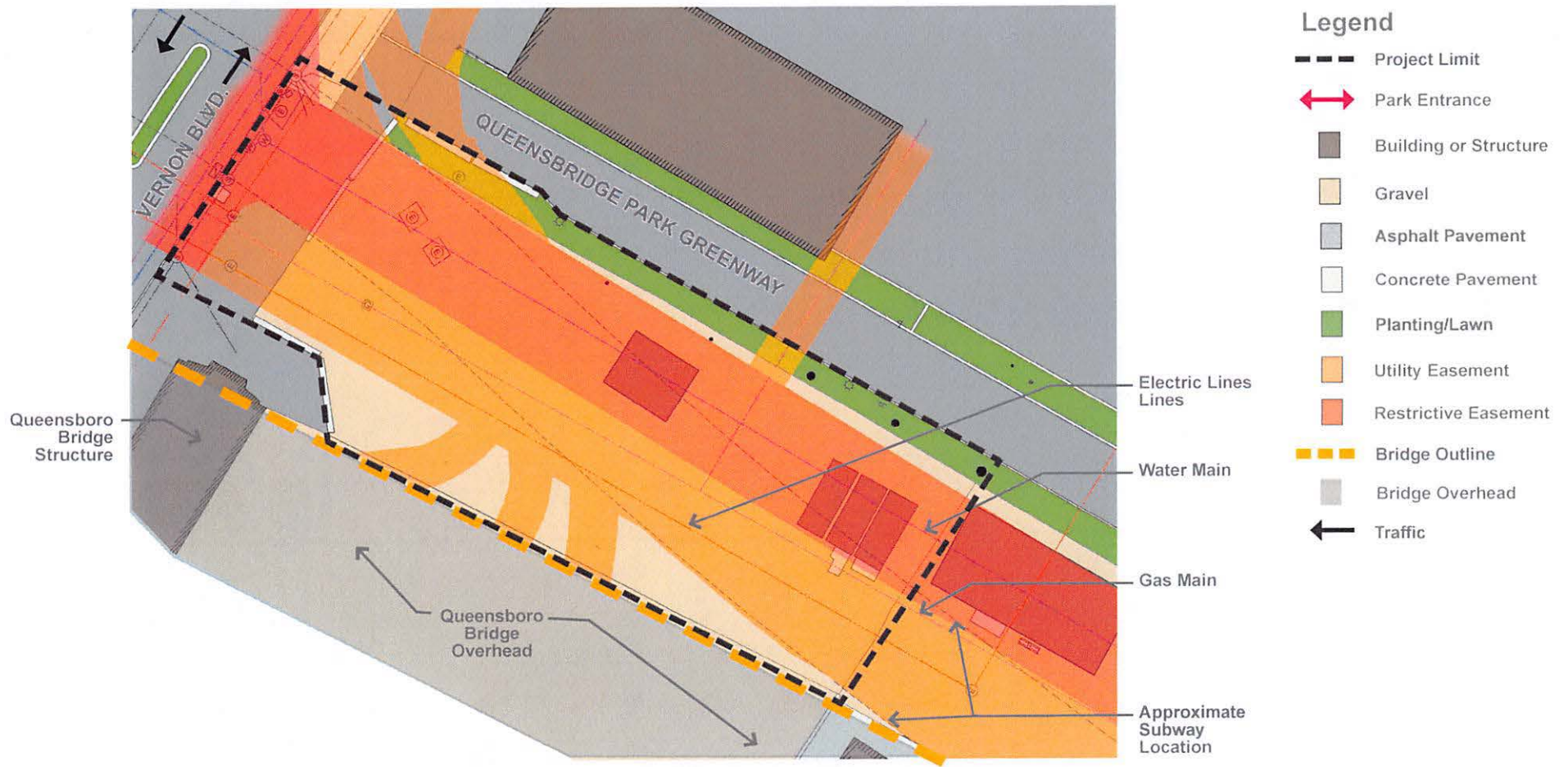
### Heat Vulnerability Index

Site is in high HVI area.

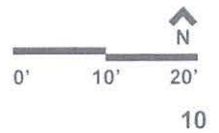


## Queensbridge Baby Park | Existing Conditions





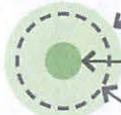




## Queensbridge Baby Park | Existing Conditions- Constraints







## Legend

- 
  - Canopy
  - Structural Root Zone
  - Critical Root Zone
-  Stump Removal
-  Tree Removal due to poor condition
-  Tree Removal due to design considerations
-  Tree to be transplanted







Queensbridge Baby Park | Site Photo







Queensbridge Baby Park | Site Photo





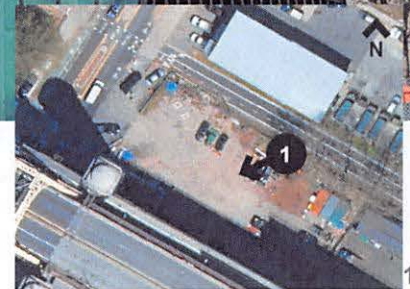


Queensbridge Baby Park | Site Photo





Queensbridge Baby Park | Site Photo





## Community Priorities

### Green

Composting, Plantings

### Seating

Benches, Tables

### Play

Play Equipment, Play Area

### Events

Gathering space, Space for Art

### Visioning Session:

February 01, 2022, 6:30 PM

### Online Survey:

Open Feb. 01, 2022 - Feb 15, 2022

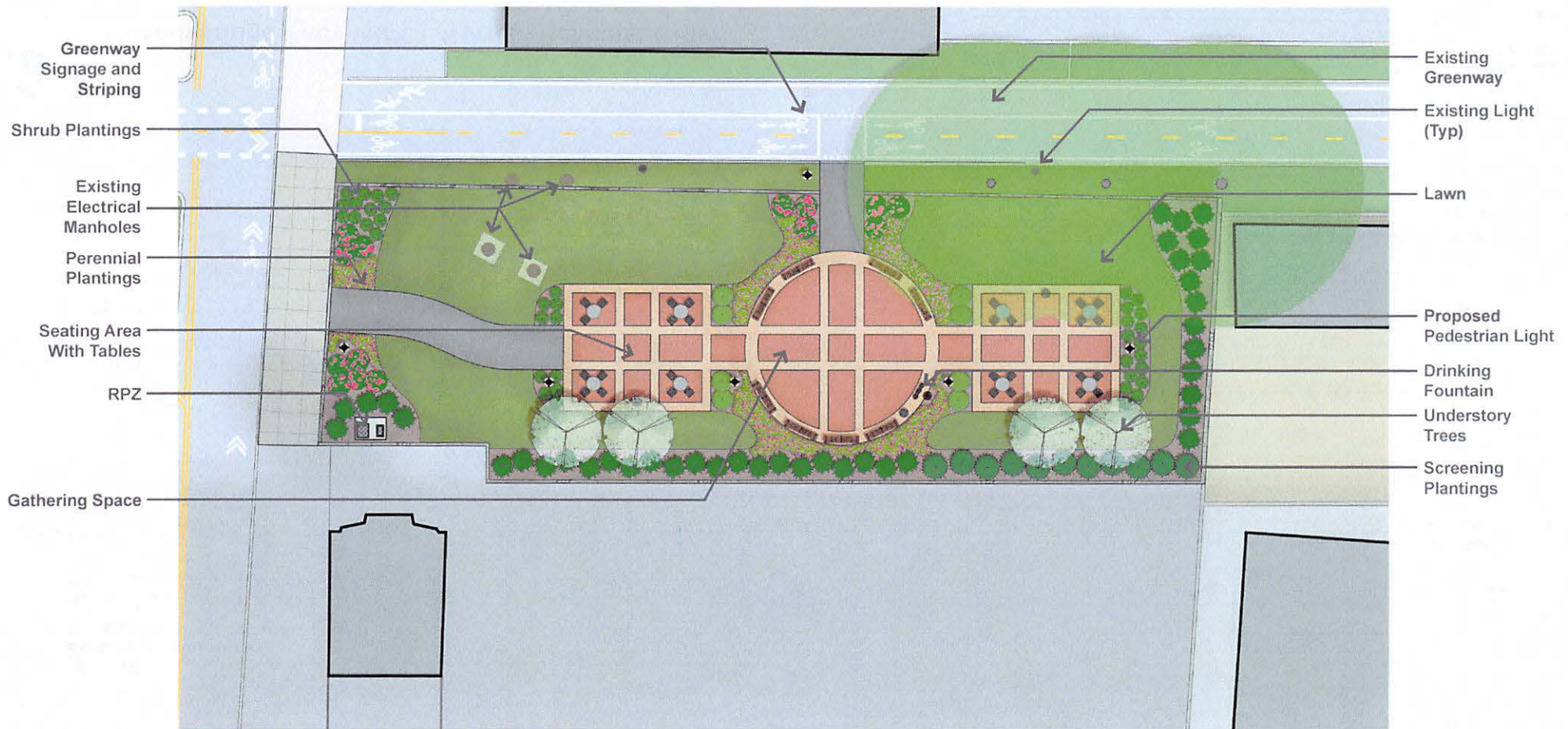


NYC Parks

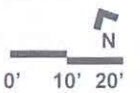
Queensbridge Baby Park | Community Input Meeting

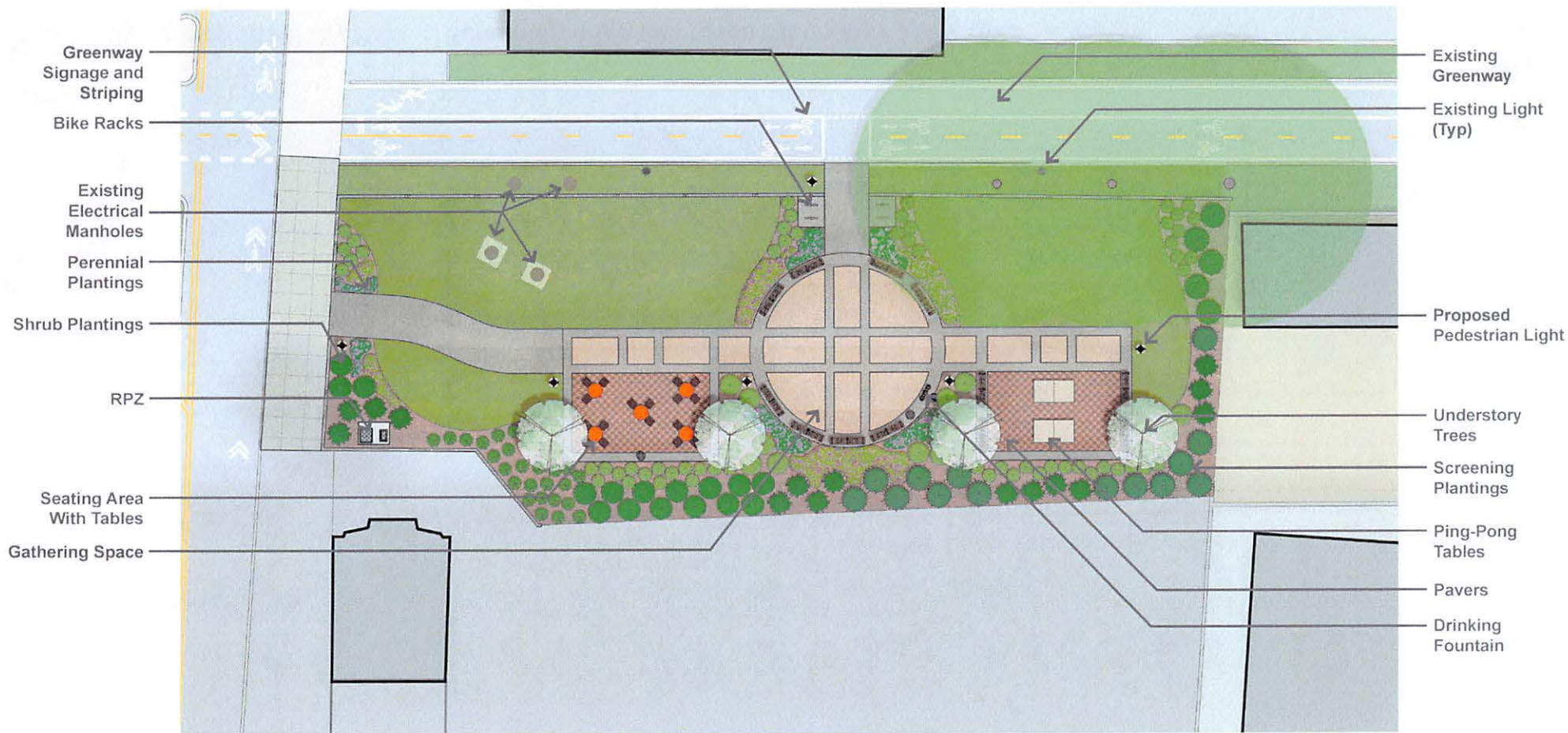






Queensbridge Baby Park | Schematic Plan as presented on May 17th, 2022





NYC Parks

## Queensbridge Baby Park | Current Schematic Plan







Queensbridge Baby Park | Central Gathering Space and Seating Area



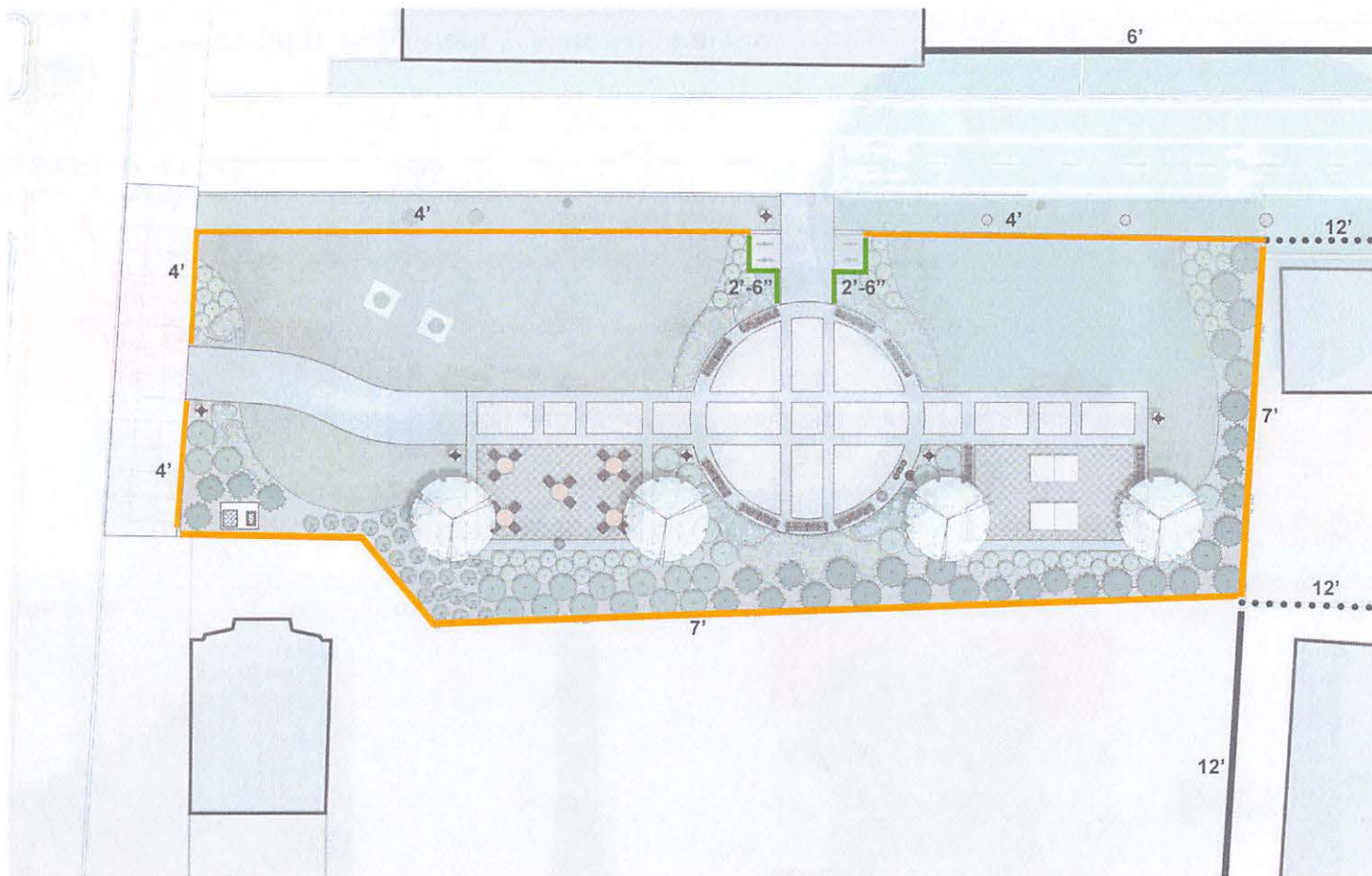




Queensbridge Baby Park | Game Area





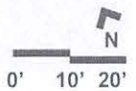


## LEGEND

- EXISTING FENCES (x = HEIGHT)
- .....<sup>x</sup>..... CLF
- <sup>x</sup>— STEEL
- LOW / PLANTING  
FENCES 2'-6" - 3'-6" HT. (x = HEIGHT)
- <sup>x</sup>— STEEL
- MEDIUM / PERIMETER  
FENCES 4' - 7'-6" HT. (x = HEIGHT)
- <sup>x</sup>— STEEL



Queensbridge Baby Park | Fencing Diagram





Steel Fence



World's Fair Fixture & Pole



Public Space Receptacle, Color: Gray



Drinking Fountain W/Bottle Filler, Color: BackGray



'Hoop' Bicycle Rack



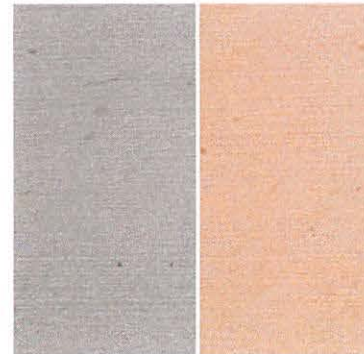
Keystone "CourtYard" Table, Color: Orange with Game



1964 WF Bench RPL, Slat Color: Cedar



Ping Pong Table



Colored Concrete



Colored Concrete and Pavers



## Queensbridge Baby Park | Materials Palette





*Cornus kousa*



*Viburnum prunifolium*



*Thuja plicata*



*Hydrangea quercifolia*



*Fothergilla gardenii*



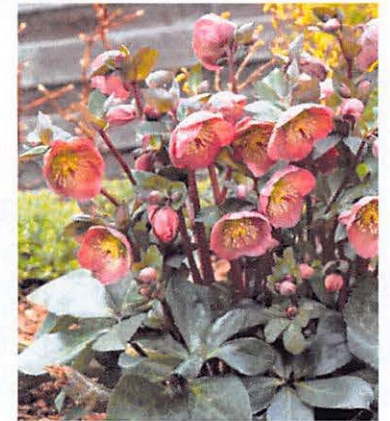
*Ilex glabra*



*Rhus aromatica* 'Gro-Low'



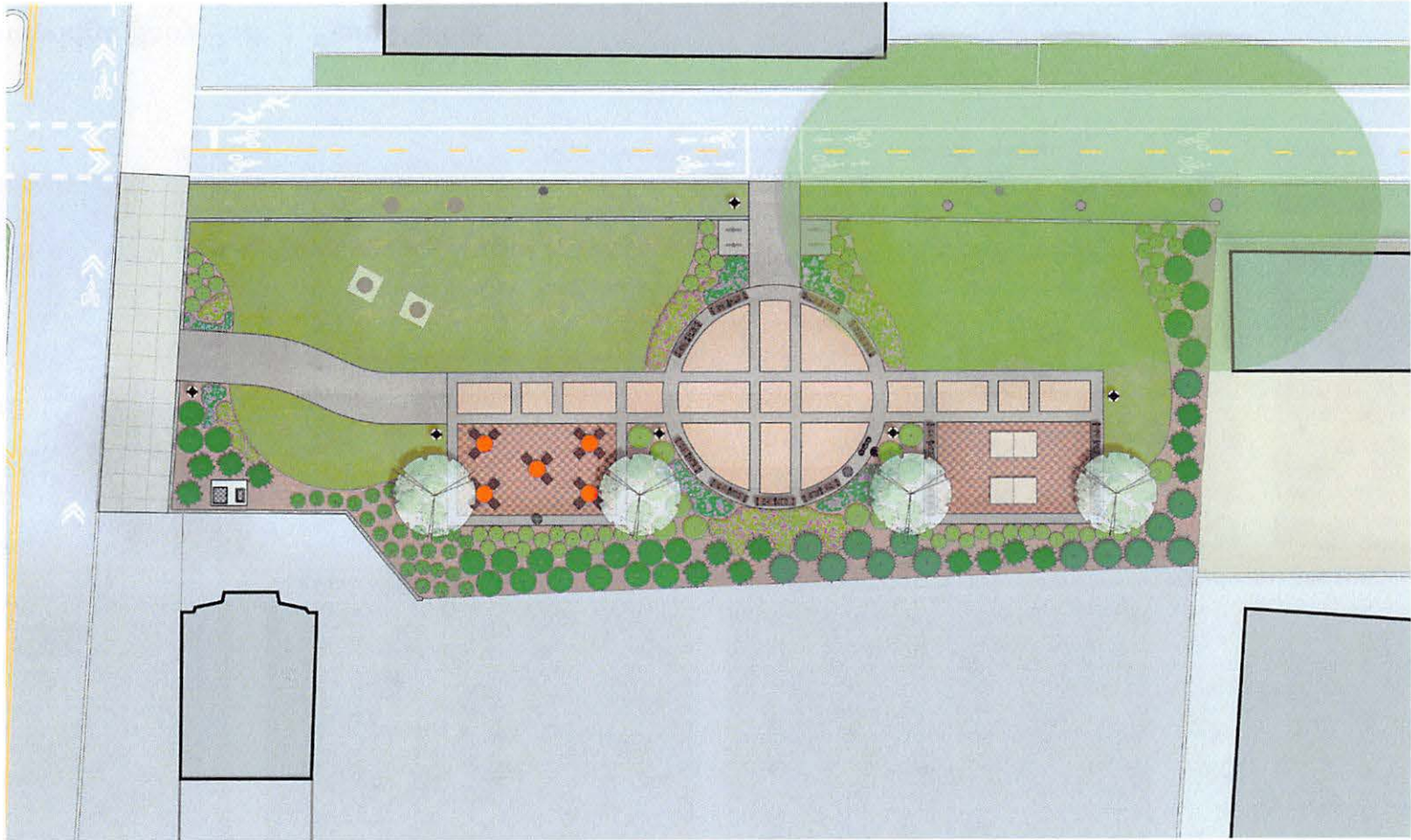
*Liriope muscari*



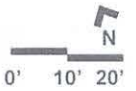
*Helleborous*







## Queensbridge Baby Park | Schematic Plan







Clean Path  
NY



# Development Team

## Clean Path NY



**NYPA** is the largest state public power organization in the nation, operating 16 generating facilities and more than 1,400 circuit-miles of transmission lines. More than 80 percent of the electricity NYPA produces is clean renewable hydropower.

# Invenergy

**Invenergy** has successfully developed more than 30 gigawatts of projects that are in operation, construction, or contracted, including over 890 megawatts of wind, solar, and advanced energy storage projects in New York.



**energyRe** is an independent New York company focused on solving complex challenges and providing clean energy solutions. The team at energyRe has expertise in infrastructure, engineering, and development and its founding investors include principals of Related Companies.

# Clean Path NY

All Renewable, All New York



**1,300 MW, 175-mile** underground and underwater HVDC transmission line from Delaware County to New York City and **3,800 MW** of new wind and solar capacity in upstate New York.

- **\$7.5 billion** in new clean energy generation
- **\$3.5 billion** in new transmission investment
- **8,300+** new in-state jobs
- **22% reduction in fossil fuel generation** statewide per year on average
- **49 million tons of avoided CO2 emissions** by 2040
- **Billions in avoided social and public health costs** due to emissions reductions





# Energy and Public Health Challenges

## ...and the Tale of Two Grids



New York State's **Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act** calls for a just transition to clean energy.

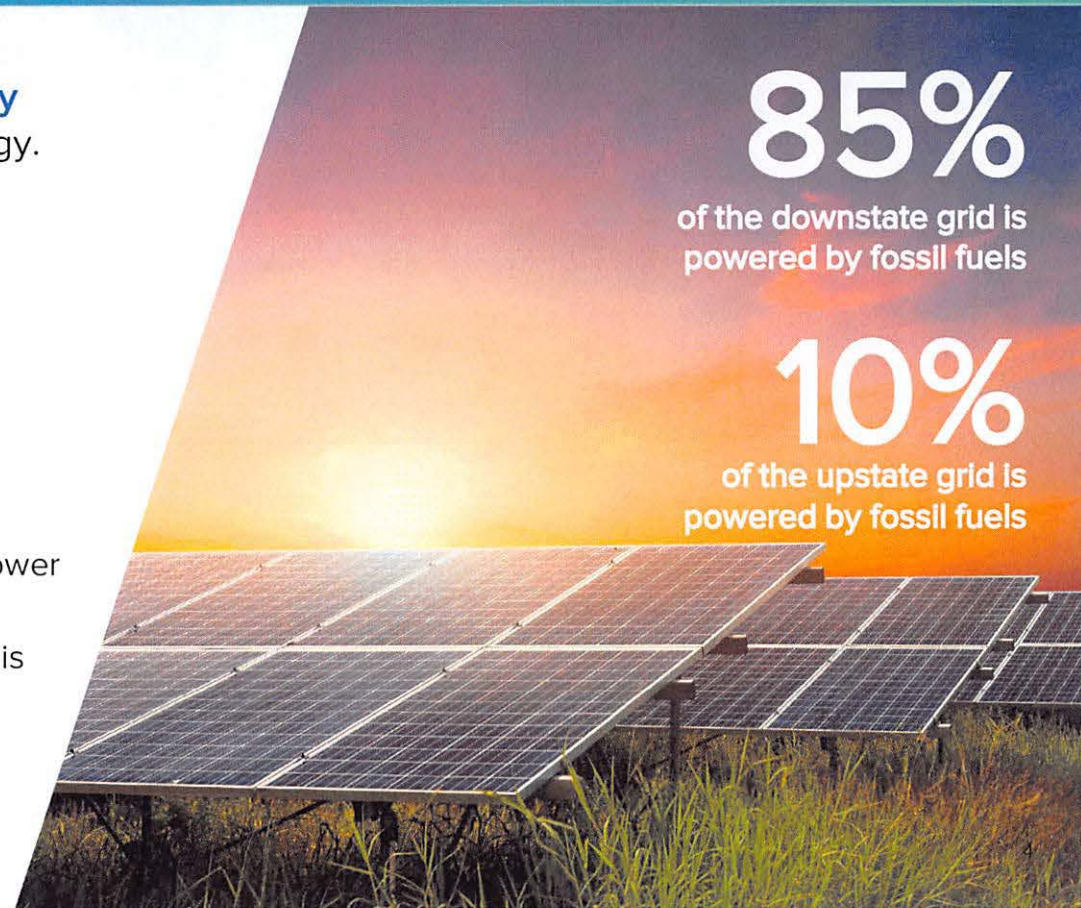
### The Goal

- 70% renewable energy generation by 2030
- Zero-emission electricity sector by 2040
- Economy-wide carbon neutrality
- Clean air and green jobs

### The Challenge

- Congestion in outdated energy grid blocking clean power produced upstate from reaching New York City
- Poor air quality in frontline communities where power is supplied by fossil-fuel fired plants

[cleanpathny.com](http://cleanpathny.com)





# Project History



- **January 2021:** New York State, through the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), issues request for proposals for renewable energy projects to deliver energy to downstate New York.
- **September 2021:** Clean Path NY was selected for award through competitive selection process.
- **November 2021:** Agreement signed with NYSERDA and contract is submitted to the New York State Public Service Commission for approval
- **April 2022:** Public Service Commission approves project contract



# A Clean Air, Clean Energy Future

For all New Yorkers



## 22%

reduction per year statewide  
in fossil fuel generation

## 49 million

tons of avoided CO2 emissions  
over 25 years statewide

## How We Get There

3,800 Megawatts of New Generation Resources

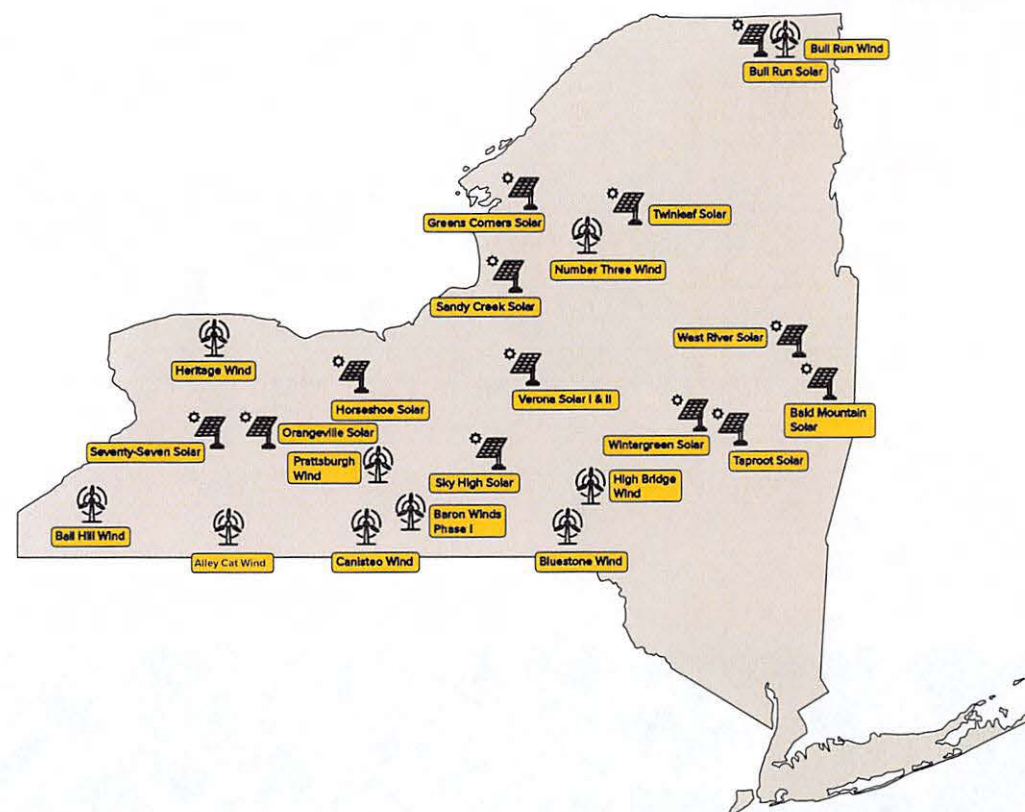


# Wind

2,000 MW of new in-state generation

# Solar

1,800 MW of new in-state generation





# How We Get There

## Responsibly-Routed Transmission Line



Clean Path NY is designed to untangle our grid and free it from the congestion that is blocking clean energy from reaching New York City:

- **Uses existing Right of Ways:** approximately 100 of 175 miles located in NYPA right-of-ways in Marcy South Corridor; already used for roads and other infrastructure
- **Responsible Routing:** sited entirely underground or underwater to minimize environmental and community impact
- **Reliability:** resilient against extreme weather to limit disruptions in service
- **Transparency and accountability:** commitment to work with communities and stakeholders at every stage of development.



# Storage Resource

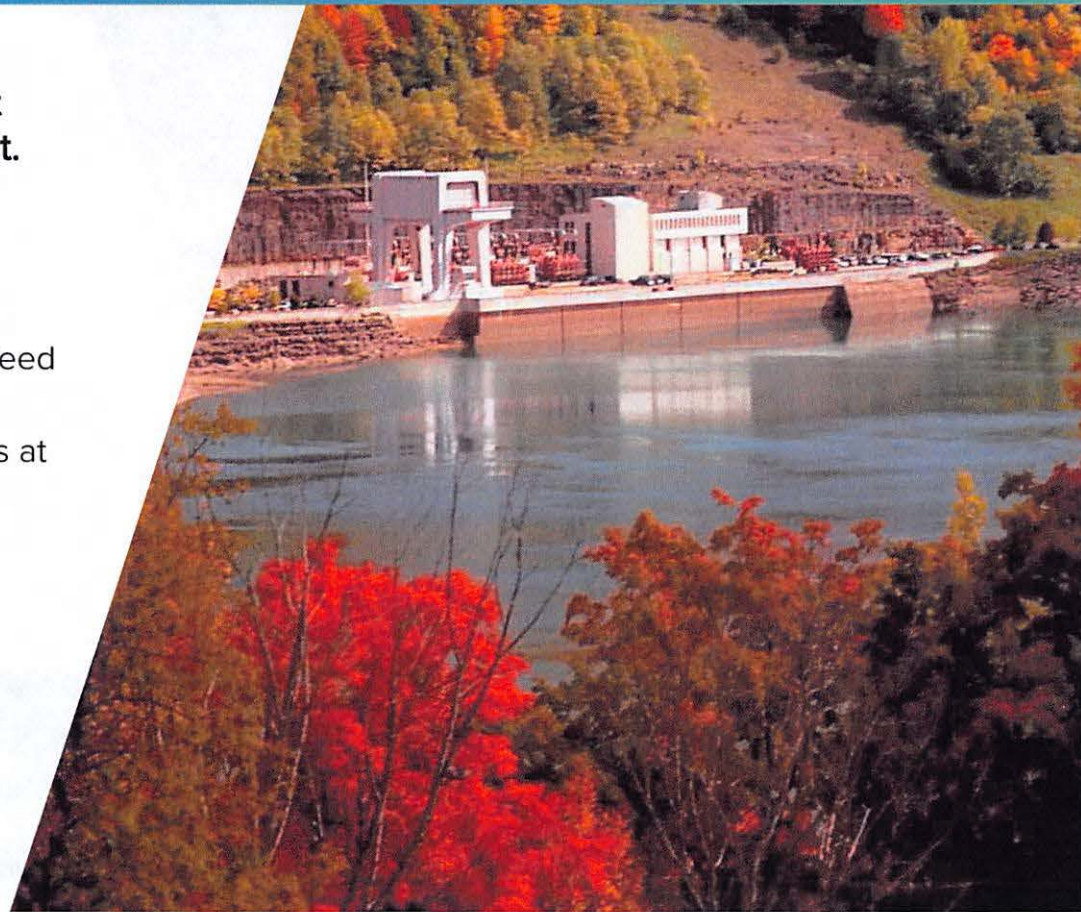
Unlocking Energy When it's Needed Most



## The Blenheim-Gilboa Pumped Storage Power Project strengthens the reliability and resiliency of the project.

- Use of long-duration storage to maximize utilization
- Owned and operated by New York Power Authority (NYPA) since 1973
- Interconnects at Gilboa Substation with direct 345 kV feed to Fraser
- Uses hydroelectric technology and two large reservoirs at different altitudes to generate electricity
- 1,160 MW of existing, long-duration storage capacity

[cleanpathny.com](http://cleanpathny.com)





# Economic Investment and Job Creation

All Renewable, All New York



## \$11 billion investment for projects in New York State

- **8,300** engineering, construction and operation, and maintenance jobs through the first three years of operation
- Major investment in **publicly-owned transmission resource** that will reduce congestion and lower energy costs well beyond the initial 25-year contract period
- Pursuing **project-labor agreement** in partnership with union labor and opportunities for **local suppliers**

[cleanpathny.com](http://cleanpathny.com)





# Environmental Justice

## A just transition to a green economy



### 40% of the benefits of the project accrue to communities on the frontlines of climate change

- Direct investments via development of transmission and generation
- Directly induced supply chain impacts
- Community investment fund
- Avoided social and public health costs
- Cleaner air and better air quality
- More resilient energy grid to withstand extreme weather
- Reducing reliance on oil and gas





# Investing in Our Communities

## Education, Workforce Development, Community Health



### **\$270 million in community-led investments for job training, education, public health and the environment**

- Funding for new and existing workforce development, local apprenticeship, and education programs to increase access and opportunities for people of color and women in the green economy
- Investments to expand access to medical care and health services in frontline communities
- Environmental conservation and clean energy initiatives (electrification retrofits in frontline communities to spur local investment, create good jobs, and reduce the environmental burden existing buildings place on neighborhoods)



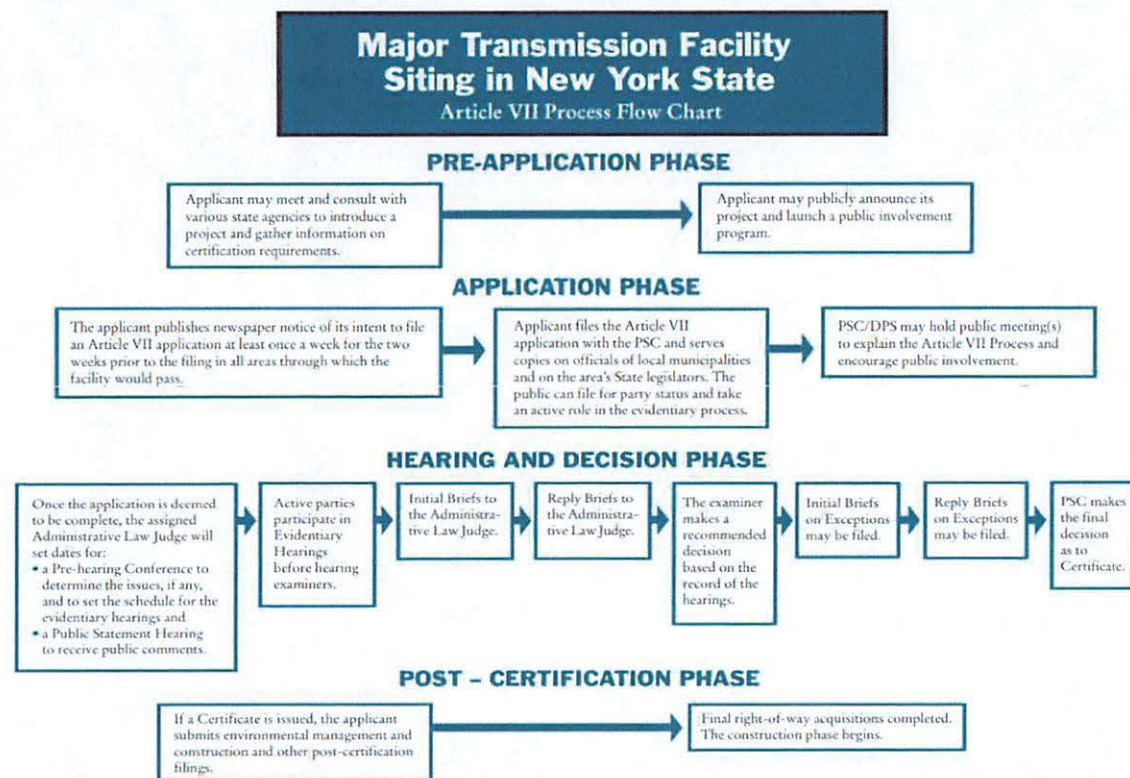


A photograph of a man and a young child walking away from the camera on a paved path in a park. The man is wearing a blue and black plaid shirt and khaki shorts, holding the child's hand. The child is wearing a light blue shirt and shorts. The background is filled with green trees and foliage. The text "Article VII Process" is overlaid in white.

# Article VII Process



# Article VII Regulatory Process



# Article VII

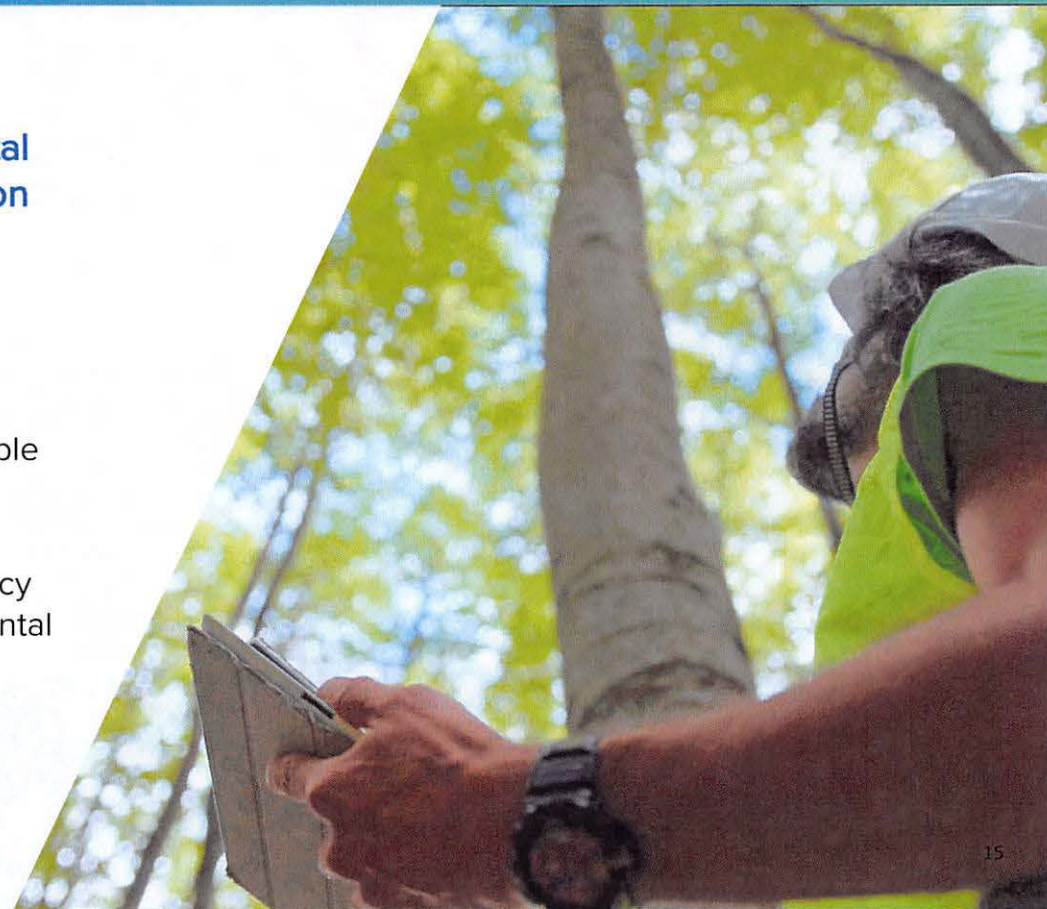
## Environmental Assessments



Article VII of the New York State Public Service Law requires a full review of the need for and environmental impact of the siting, design, construction, and operation of major transmission facilities in New York State.

- **Underground and underwater transmission:** minimizes environmental impacts during operation
- **Limited scope and duration:** following completion of construction, the presence of the line will not be perceptible to local communities
- **Robust environmental analysis:** field investigations, environmental impact studies, literature review, and agency consultations underway to identify and assess environmental conditions

**Target Article VII application: Fall 2022**





# Article VII

## Public Review and Participation



The Clean Path NY team is committed to working with communities and stakeholders at every stage of the process to ensure local voices are sought and heard.

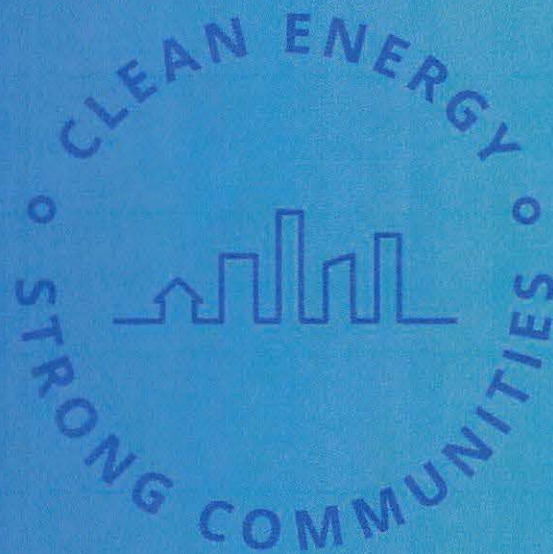
- **Attend public meetings and open houses:** meet the project team at open houses to learn more and ask questions about the project
- **Connect with Clean Path online:** visit the CPNY website, follow the project's progress on social media @CleanPathNY, and email questions to [info@cleanpathny.com](mailto:info@cleanpathny.com)

Any New Yorker along the project may become an intervenor (formal party) to the Article VII public review process by contributing testimony, comments, and other material. Clean Path NY will provide funding to offset costs of consultants, administrative fees and other expenses for this purpose.

For detailed information regarding the preparation of an intervenor fund application, visit the Public Service Commission Website at Article VII Major Electric and Gas Transmission Facilities [[dps.ny.gov](http://dps.ny.gov)]







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