



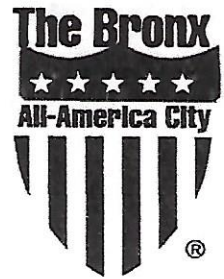
# BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #1

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## MUNICIPAL SERVICES

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MINUTES

### NEW YORK CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**Mr. Fernando Ortiz, EDC** said that I'm the Upper Manhattan and Bronx Borough Director for Government and Community Relations at the New York City Economic Development Corporation. I have some fellow EDC staff here and some other project team members and we're here tonight to present on the Harlem River Park which is in the Lower Concourse neighborhood. So, I will pass it on to the project team who will present on the project.

**Ms. Julia Melzer, EDC** said that as Fernando mentioned this is for Lower Concourse Park. I believe that we met with you in January of 2020 and again earlier this year in May of 2021 just to give you an update of where the project is. So, now we're in preliminary design so we're here to show you the updates on the progress of it, no big changes happened it's just more design development but no big changes. So, we can go through these slides quickly because you've seen them before. Just a reminder this project is on the Harlem River it's just between East 144<sup>th</sup> Street to East 146<sup>th</sup> Street, between the Harlem River and Exterior Street. Just to recap really quick these are the outreach that we did we had a community visioning session on November 14, 2019 the Community Board meeting again in December 2019 and then we had a survey that we extended to the community that happened in early 2020 so, we have those results as well. So, for both the community input meeting that we had in 2019 as well as the online survey results there was a strong preference for playgrounds, splash pad, having security, educational opportunities, and making sure that we have access to the waterfront and having some performance areas and flexible open space and of course having a lot of trees and native plants. So, these are still the same goals as before just making sure to adhere to the resiliency guidelines by New York City Parks Department. A living breathing shoreline along the water where we can get access to the water for the community. Having a welcoming park entrance as you know this is right next to Exterior Street and the Major Deegan, which is dark and uninviting under there so, our goal is to have welcoming entrance to the park, of course creating native planting and infrastructure wherever possible. Because along the Harlem River is getting developed you want to make sure that it

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works seamlessly with the future development that's happening to the north as well as to the south.

So, this was the concept plan that we had shown to the Community Board in 2020 of the programming elements and then we had shown some progress in design development in May of 2021, and this is just a further development to that. No program changes have happened. We're still have these welcoming entrances on 146<sup>th</sup> Street as well as 144<sup>th</sup>, we have a comfort station with restrooms as well as a maintenance area for the Parks Department and a storage area for them. As you walk into the entrance at 146<sup>th</sup> Street there's a large playground for 5 to 12 and a 2 to 5 play area with swings and a water play and a flex use of lawn area where there are spaces that face the waterfront and then you've got the living shoreline and access to the water and some seating in those areas and then of course a lot of planting and trees as much as possible and connections to both the south development site as well as the north. This is just showing the types of fencing in the area, there will be a sea rail along the parks, waterfront, but we don't necessarily need it along the whole thing because the shoreline will have a slope down to the water so, it doesn't require a sea rail in those areas. Then there will be fencing around the playground and around the storage space at the comfort station. We're also going to have a 10 ft high architectural fence along the northern property because we don't anticipate that this northern part will be developed by the time this park gets built but the south property will be developed by the time this park is built so, there's no need for a fence on this side just on the north side. We imagine once that northern property does get developed this fence will come down. We have a wide variety of seating, the amphitheater seating at the performance space barbecue areas in the back of park as well as towards the front of the park, there's benches there's café seating and then there's seating at the shoreline. This is just a section cutting through the sites, there's some land formation that we did designing to the site where the building sits it needs to be at a certain level to follow those resiliency guidelines I had referenced earlier. We did have to build up the site a little bit but of course we have to bring it back down to existing grade where Exterior Street is. Just to show a little more detail as you zoom into that section, this is the section cutting through the shoreline and then the get down area and then up to the park so, this is the river over on this side. This is probably a little bit easier to read with a better understanding of what this park would look like this is an ariel perceptive view of the park. Just some other views this is down on that promenade looking towards the access way that goes down towards the get down in the shoreline and this is at your entrance your, at Exterior Street under the Major Deegan at this point looking into the park entrance at 145<sup>th</sup> Street. This is at the entrance at 144<sup>th</sup> Street looking in there's a musical play area where there's drums that you can pound on and then looking at the get down and seating area and here are some of furnishings, benches and some cafe style seating, security lighting on the site and tables in the barbecue areas then this is the sea rail as well as the 6 ft. fence that goes around the storage area the comfort station and then the 10 ft high screen the one that goes along the north property to kind of screen off the adjacent site until that gets

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developed. Then some of the other site materials we're proposing the concrete pavers that will be at the welcoming plaza's then the walkways on asphalt and other concrete work proposed for the site. Then these are the materials for the playground is where we have designed a large play area for the 5 to 12, this is for the 2-5 then there will also be some swings and here those drums I mentioned in this section of the entrance at 144<sup>th</sup> Street. This is for the green garden areas this is for the upland areas and this is the grasses that we're proposing for the living shoreline that can be conducive to a little bit wetter and saltier environment. So that was the park.

**Mr. Peter Coombe, Sage and Coombe** said that we've been tasked with designing a Comfort Station it's a little bit more than a typical Parks Department Comfort Station it's roughly 15 hundred sq. ft. 700 of which is the Comfort Station, the remainder is storage, maintenance and operations office for the Parks Department. This is an ariel view from the northwest looking at the Major Deegan Expressway our planet roof which is required by local laws 92 and 94 and what you're seeing in the foreground is the Comfort Station proper a trail which is leading towards the expressway the Parks Departments portion of this building their storage and maintenance office. This is a view from the same vantage but on the ground working towards the entrances to the restrooms the door on the far left is for the Parks Department office and the door on the far right is for the women's room there's a mechanical room in between the two restrooms and the men's room is the second door from the left. The building is a combination of stainless steel and spark brick which is a very beautiful brick, and it picks up on a lot of materials that Stantec is using in the paving, and up above is a, stainless steel screen that shields some of the windows. This is a view from the entry to provide a welcoming portal to the park and what you see at the end is the garage door for the Parks Department. There were some questions about the size of the logo, but we feel that being underneath the Major Deegan Expressway it's important to know that this is a Department of Parks facility and that it's open to all. This is the western end the higher end and this is the end of the women's room, the women's room actually has the most glazing it seems to be appropriate. So, this is plan north is up on this plan so on the far left is the women's room in between is the mechanical room and sandwiched between the parks office and the mechanical room is the men's room. Those first three rooms are a typical Parks Department Comfort Station everything to the right is next to the hybrid so there's a small office accessible restroom for the Parks Department employees and their storage garage. This is a view of the roof showing the planted roof, there's also an access hatch for the maintenance people to get up onto the roof and clear out drains. Basically, the building is divided in half roughly a little bit more for the Department of Parks and Recreation, but you see part of the building is for the public and the other part is for the Parks Department. This is the elevation the public façade faces the playground we like to do that because it allows parents to survey their children going in and out of the restrooms it gives everybody a level of comfort and a sense of security. This is the southside there is a small yard

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for the Department of Parks and Recreation, storage area equipment yard is going to be fenced off and this is the view down 146<sup>th</sup> Street you will see the Parks logo the shorter end of the building it's not very imposing the building sets up to the west which actually follows the topography of the park, the building was conceived in concert with the parks, topography. This is the other end the west end, a very simple façade the way it works passively is the Parks Department tends to keep their doors open to the restrooms and cool breezes would enter and also on the south side where we have operable windows, we like to try to use natural ventilation as much as possible. There is a code requirement for mechanical ventilation that is being provided. I will turn it over to Harriet Spears whose, going to talk about the signage.

**Ms. Harriet Spear, Harriet Spear** said that we have been working on the interpretive signage that will be throughout the park. The location that we're looking at now shows the two panels that we're working on, one is at the south welcome plaza and the other one is by the seating area by the stairs, it's a small park so there are two panels. Here is a closer detail so you can see a little bit more of the environment of the area where the signage will be. In the welcoming plaza is in close proximity to the musical play and then again signage panel two which is by the overlook is situated by the stairs it will be places where people will have a chance to look at the panels absorb the material and also, it's relevant to that area. This showing the structure the panels both are going to be free standing and then it shows the parks standards for the panels and they will both be following this structural and mounting plan. If you look at the panel design, we have Hip Hop Concert happening as a background image and then the three other items HOSTOS being the larger picture, the Hip Hop Concert on the top image and then a really incredible photo of the Young Lords. Again, if there's any questions or if anyone wants to discuss anything please feel free to speak up. So, this is the first panel, and it deals with the very relevant and local industry of the area and then I'm going to move on to the second panel which talks about the park itself and the benefits of the park being here and talks about the green infrastructure and why the green infrastructure and the waterfront restoration. Here you can see the panel in place and how this will be in the park.

## **Questions and Answers**

## **NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT (MTA)**

**Mr. Larry Gallegos, Assistant Director of Government and Community Affairs** said that I just wanted to present the Bronx Bus Network Redesign.

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**Mr. Robert Josephs, Planner for the Bronx** said that we've been here a couple of times on this project the Bronx Bus Network Redesign. We began this project about three years ago and we started with some outreach and existing conditions report we published the first draft of the plan in the spring of 2019. We developed the final plan for the fall of 2019, and we were planning to implement that plan during 2020 however, due to the pandemic we ended up having to pause the project until we thought things were stable. Things are now moving ahead and we're ready to get going we are now in a phase where we just published an addendum to our final plan there have been a couple of small changes to the final plan but for the most part it's the plan you would remember from the fall of 2019. If the MTA Board votes and accepts the Bronx Network Redesign next month we're hoping to implement next summer in 2022.

So, will tell you a bit about the engagement and what we've done we've had a number of open houses, on street workshops, Community Board meetings and we've been to your Community Board before. We've collected a tremendous amount of outreach through social media and online surveys and we're continuing to do so. We actually have a public meeting tomorrow if any of you are available, we will make that information available at the end of the meeting if you have an additional feedback for us. But as we've said it's not too late to provide us with feedback if you'd like.

Let me tell you a bit about what the project is doing you might remember that we had a couple of strategies that we employed as part of this redesign and we were trying to simplify the network to make sure that we could make our routes more direct and provide better **connections. We're looking to improve frequency on a number of buses across the borough** we're expanding bus priority and will be happy to talk about the project in your district shortly and we are balancing bus stops to help people get where they're going and improve bus needs. So, in terms of simplifying the network we are making 14 route changes and we are creating two new routes one of which is really critical for you it's the M125 which will be replacing the lower half of the BX15. The M125 will go across 125<sup>th</sup> Street and then up to the HUB and then that's it, it's going to end at the HUB. The BX15 the northern half is still going to be north of 149<sup>th</sup> Street so you're still be able to make that connection no issues. I don't believe there are any other significant changes in your district but it's good for you to know that the M125 and BX15 are going to change. We been looking to enhance connectivity across the borough. There aren't any particular large changes in your district, but you should know that we're making changes that will help bus customers across the borough and it's going to be a helpful connection to ADA, subway stations connections to new locations all should be very helpful for bus customers. We are looking to improve frequency on 11 different routes that operate on 9 different corridors. We are going to increase frequency on the BX4 and the 4A, the BX4 is going to remain going to the HUB and the 4A is going to be short-termed, at Gladstone Square and the BX4 is going to have increased frequency to compensate for the 4A not being there and we're also going to improve frequency on the 41SBS which you can also catch at the HUB.

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Expanding bus priority so you may be familiar with the bus priority project we have on 149<sup>th</sup> Street the bus lanes that DOT has put in are going to help us operate faster and more reliable service along the 149<sup>th</sup> Street corridor. We're working with them on a number of projects across the borough to try to speed up buses to make them more reliable, more effective and give buses priority where we can. In terms of balancing bus stops we're planning to consolidate approximately 400 bus stops as part of the project by doing this we save somewhere between 20 seconds and 60 seconds. The first stop that's removed on the bus sometimes even more depending on the location and whether it's rush hour or not we made sure that we did extensive research into all the stops that we are eliminating and preserving we maintain stops that have heavy ridership and that have key connections to other buses or to subways or serve specialized communities or community centers and we wanted to make sure that in terms of topography we weren't making people walk up a hill or a long distance to get to a bus stop and some of these have already been done to accommodate bus bearing projects. In terms of COVID on bus ridership the Bronx experienced a smaller drop on ridership in terms of other boroughs, the Bronx has essentially kept higher ridership than other boroughs it's also seen bus riders come back in greater force than a lot of other boroughs. That's why we're confident that the Bronx Borough Plan we worked on two years ago is still relevant today and we know that it's going to continue to benefit essential workers both today and in the future. So, just that you know we are going to continue to monitor ridership as it changes and we're going to adjust service levels as appropriate. So, this is not the end this is just a big step towards the future.

There are few small updates to the plan that we want to let you know about the BX6SBS unfortunately we've had to postpone the realignment from Hunts Point through Distribution Center to Soundview along Story Avenue, we've had to postpone that until 2023 until OMNY Cards are fully deployed, because it doesn't make sense to move the fare machines just for a year when we will have to take them out a year from now when OMNY is deployed Citywide, and the MetroCard is retired. We also heard some community feedback regarding the BX28 and the BX34 we heard some strong feelings and sentiments from communities that are served by those bus routes BX28 and 34 and we took a fresh look at those routes and we determined not to change those routes they will remain as they are today. In terms of bus routes that are affected in Community Board 1 like I mentioned before the BX4 is going to continue to go to the HUB, but the 4A is going to be short-termed, at Gladstone Square and like I said we're increasing the frequency on the BX4 to compensate for the lack of the 4A service and as I just mentioned the BX6SBS that change has been postponed until 2023, but it should be great once it happens late in 2023. As I also mentioned the M125 and the BX15, the BX15 is being split at the HUB the M125 will service the entire portion of the route south of 149<sup>th</sup> Street and along 125<sup>th</sup> Street. The BX15 will continue to serve 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue north of the HUB. Finally, this is information that has been online and available for about two years this is about the proposed schedule and if you're curious about these, these are all available online you can find out about the schedule of any and all of these routes, and we published our addendum document to the final plan and this schedule information is available for all these routes.

## **Questions and Answers**

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**WESTSIDE FEDERATION FOR SENIORS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

**Mr. Michael Hipson** said that located at 570 East 137<sup>th</sup> Street and St. Ann’s Avenue alongside the Mill Brook Houses NYCHA development is where WSFSSH development Mill Brook Terrace in partnership with NYCHA as part of the NextGen NYCHA Program.

The vision developed by the NYCHA residents included more affordable housing and senior services. Mill Brook Terrace has 100 percent very low-income senior housing which includes a soon to open senior center which will serve meals to the community.

WSFSSH’S goal is for all Mill Brook Terrace residents to age in place as long as possible, and about 70 percent of 160 plus residents require ambulette service. The need is urgent, a resident recently broke her arm attempting to get a ride walking down the block to the corner. NYCHA residents will also be welcomed to use the ambulette parking.

It was again decided that the ambulette parking would be permitted only from 7AM to 7PM on five days a week from Monday to Friday therefore allowing parking access to residents overnight and on the weekends.

WSFSSH is requesting a letter of support from the Board to the Department of Transportation for to be allowed to implement an ambulette service of three parking spots at the front entrance of the Mill Brook Terrace development.

**Questions and Answers**

**MEETING ADJOURNED**