

**Minutes (Final)**

Public Access Work Group

New York-New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program

June 15 12:30 – 2:00 PM

Attendees: Hugh Carola, Hackensack Riverkeeper; Liz Balladares, HEP & UWFP; Sara Eichner, Pratt SAVI; Kara Meyer, + POOL; Scott Dvorak, Trust for Public Land; Michael Marrella, NYC Dept of City Planning; Luis Gonzalez, City Parks Foundation; Shino Tanikawa, , NYC Soil & Water Conservation District, SWIM Coalition & HEP CAC & WQWG; Allan Zaretsky with Department of City Planning, Waterfront and Open Space; Rob Pirani from NYNJ HEP; Sherrise Palomino from New Yorkers for Parks; Karen Argenti from the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality; Christopher Girgenti, Randalls Island Park Alliance; Chris Bowser NYSDEC Hudson River Program; Rosana Da Silva, HRF/HEP; Graeme Birchall, Downtown Boathouse; Clay Sherman NJ DEP; Karen Imas, Waterfront Alliance; Chris Boyd; Steven Thomson, Institute for Urban Parks; Sara Hodges, Pratt; Willis Elkins, NCA; Shawn Slevin, Swimstrong;

- 1. Welcome and Agenda Review** **12:30 - 12:35 PM**
- 2. Approval of Minutes from March 2022 Meeting** **12:35 - 12:40 PM**

Karen Imas motioned and Hugh Carola seconded. Adopted with no objections.

- 3. NYC Waterfront Access Map** **12:40 - 1:00 PM**

**Priority PA-A-1: Increase Access** Advance opportunities for increasing public access, particularly in areas of higher need.

Allan Zaretsky from NYC DCP will provided an overview of DCP's recently released [Waterfront Access Map](#) and "Assessing New Yorkers' Access to NYC's Waterfront" study on equity of waterfront public access. This was created by DCP as part of the Comprehensive Waterfront Plan.

*Questions / Comments*

- Rob Pirani – What are the indicators of success? DCP stated that a half mile walk as being a statistic that they will use to measure success but no specific goal for what is acceptable. Also included 30 and 60 minute commute on transit with 60 minutes for beaches
- Karen Argenti - How will this translate to policy changes? Eg Harlem River. How are the private spaces being connected to each other and upland neighborhoods? How will this translate to action. More accountability for developers and builders is needed. When the community is told they will maximize green space, green infrastructure, and access, to get building approvals, what Dept. at the

*city can monitor that those benefits are really maximized? NYC DCP does review and monitor as possible the POPS created under waterfront zoning and uses Waterfront Access Plans to help coordinate with other agencies.*

- *Willis Elkins - "Not doable" should be better defined. There are plenty of great examples of incorporating access within active industrial zones. Too often it is used as an excuse by the City to not create access. Hopefully these maps can help push the rest of the City where there are obvious needs.*
- *Graeme Birchell - On water access as opposed access to the waterfront. DCP – noted that is something that could be looked at.*
- *Dan Shapley – could this be done on the Hudson (also NJ). Is this something that could be done? Other metrics – car only? Cost of transit? DCP used a network model that exists outside of region. Parking spaces would be key additional criteria out side of urban areas.*

*The NYC Waterfront Access Study is here:*

*<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/c62dbca5a3a14189b8284ad41b6ca7e9>*

*Fuller Comprehensive Waterfront Plan can be found here: [waterfrontplan.nyc](http://waterfrontplan.nyc)*

#### **4. Activating Underutilized City-Owned Waterfront Properties 1:00 - 1:20 PM**

**Priority PA-A-1: Increase Access** Advance opportunities for increasing public access, particularly in areas of higher need.

*Karen Imas presented a Waterfront Alliance project to identify and activate sites with potential for funding, community stewardship, and creating greater access equity across New York City. The presentation will be a preview of the final report, which will present action agendas for four sites in particular, going live in mid July.*

#### **5. Update of Access Database 1:20 - 1:40 PM**

**Priority PA-C-2: Public Participation** Encourage and support public participation in water-based activities.

*Sara Eichner from Pratt Institute provided an update on their work to create an accessible database and map of public access sites.*

#### **6. Managing Swimming in the Hudson and Harbor 1:40 – 1:45 PM**

**Priority PA-A-2: Contact Recreation** Assess prospects and refine goals for increasing direct access for boating, swimming, and wading, incorporating associated water quality consideration and **Priority PA-C-1: Safety** Increase understanding of the safety and risks associated with direct contact with the water.



*Rob Pirani provided quick update on our effort to clarify process for permitting new bathing beaches in the Hudson and Harbor, noting committee conversations and possibility of supporting with funding.*

**7. Partner Updates**

**1:45 – 2:00 PM**

**Next Meetings**

Thu 10/6/2022 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Thu 12/1/2022 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM