

**ESCR CAG Meeting Summary -- January 6th, 2022**  
(via Zoom)

**CAG members present**

Alberto Roldan Ayo Harrington Christine Datz-Romero Ditashiah Kohn Dov Goldman Dianne Lake Damaris Reyes Dina Elkan	Damaris Reyes Dina Elkan Martin Barrett Michael Marino Sandra McKee Sam Moskowitz Seth Coren Susan Sternberg	Robin Schatell Trevor Holland Wendy Brawer
--	---	--

**DDC Presentation of Updates**

*Desiree Gazzo, HNTB-LiRo*

[Link to Slide Deck](#)

- I. Overview of Contracts
- II. PA2 Construction Updates
  - A. Stuyvesant Cove Park pile installation and floodwall construction underway.
  - B. E 23st St. intersection utility work and pile installation underway.
  - C. West Service Road pile installation underway.
  - D. Asser Levy Playground floodwall foundation and park reconstruction underway.
    1. Playground is scheduled to open in Spring 2022.
  - E. E. 15th St. between Ave C and FDR Dr. within ConEd facility sewer reconstruction/ coordination for subsurface investigation.
  - F. FDR Dr. NB exit 7 ramps, lane shift, and sewer work.
- III. Air Quality Monitoring November
  - A. Only two occurrences with a slight increase in air quality readings for a duration of 15 minutes.
- IV. Hiring Virtual Resources Event
  - A. ESCR winter virtual information session and resource fair taking place January 26, 2022, between 4:00 pm-7:00 pm.
- V. Q&A
  - A. Wendy: On the job training, I hope the CAG can help reach out to people to let people know because not everyone has a computer.
    1. Desiree: Happy to work with any buildings or community groups that need support in helping people attend the meeting.
    2. Wendy: I would also like to suggest that people can watch the recording.

3. Desiree: Yes, it will be recorded
- B. Trever: Can you explain the role of LESEN?
  1. Damaris: LESEN is not a single organization; it includes a coalition of providers and is a comprehensive group that sees a lot of people.
- C. Damaris: It would be good to know what other options are available for job employment?
  1. Desiree: Information will be made available for anyone who couldn't make the event.
  2. She also noted that she didn't think it would be good to have people gathered in one place to view the event.
- D. Damaris: How is the survey going to be administered, online or during the event?
  1. Desiree: It will be provided online, and we can provide paper copies to community members as requested.

## VI. PA1 Upcoming Construction Activities

- A. Slides from November 2021 show construction approach, revisit slides for construction approach timeline.
- B. Work hours are scheduled to start at 7 am but crews normally arrive before 7 am. Equipment and materials also may arrive before 7 am.
  1. Shifts in work hours will be put in the bulletin.
- C. PA1 January Construction Activities:
  1. Shallow clearing and grubbing activities will continue in the closed area of the park.
  2. Shared Use Path closure will continue north to E 10th St. with access provided to open amenities.
  3. ConEd work to begin in Shared Use Path.
  4. Utility work will begin in and adjacent to East River Park.
  5. Completion of Amphitheater dismantling.
  6. Bridge replacement activities at Delancey Street will begin.
  7. Weekly Bulletins will be issues with construction activities.
- D. PA1 Amenity Overview Summer 2022 (Slide 17)
- E. Access and Detours (Slide 18):
  1. Shared Use Path will be closed north to E 10th St. during this phase and closed fully later this year.
  2. DDC is working with DOT and Parks on bike detour signage.
  3. Access for emergency vehicles is 24 hours, when work is not happening there are security guards on-site to provide access.
- F. Open Streets DOT (*Neg Lakew, DOT*)
  1. Community groups can apply by January 28th, 2022 to apply for the Open Streets program.
- G. PA1 Environmental Monitoring
  1. A minimum of 6 monitoring stations for PA1 based on phasing and work activities.

2. Additional monitoring where Manufactured Gas products have been encountered.
3. Two air monitors were installed today and the remaining are waiting for delivery.
4. Current work is shallow clearing and grubbing activities.
5. Quarterly reports on air monitoring for PA1 will start this year and will be reported at CAG meetings as well.
6. Soil sample programs were performed to determine subsurface soil conditions.
7. Dust control measures are being implemented.
8. Material piles on-site are wood chip piles.

#### H. What We've Heard

1. Call for Art
  - a) The call for art is being finalized and the announcement will take place in January 2022.
  - b) Art to be selected will be placed on fencing in the project area.
2. Salvaging Park Materials (*Melissa Haldeman, NYC Parks Department*)
  - a) Tree salvage, wood reuse, and nature exploration areas
    - (1) NYC Parks and DDC working to provide pick up for wood chips from timber salvage.
    - (2) Poor tree health has not had a major impact on the project for tree salvage.
  - b) Seal, crab, and turtle sculptures
    - (1) Salvage of sculptures will be happening and artists hired to refurbish and recast sculptures.
  - c) Park Furnishing
    - (1) Not all of the park furnishings can be reinstalled or salvaged from East River Park as they are older models.
    - (2) Some furniture is being reused across other NYC Parks.
  - d) Plant Transplanting
    - (1) The public cannot access sites closed for construction and the NYC Parks Department has a plant salvage plan.
    - (2) Had to stop plant salvage plans because of TRO and once TRO was lifted winter season prevented proper plant transplant.
    - (3) Plants are currently being stored in an NYC Parks facility.
  - e) Light Fixtures (*Neg Lakew, DOT*)
    - (1) Light fixtures will be salvaged and taken back to the DOT yard to be used in the future.

#### I. PA1 Community Construction Liaison

1. Sonia Quinones will be Community Construction Liaison for PA1.
- J. Q&A
1. Ayo: Where have the park benches been reinstalled and where are you planning to reinstall them? Did the NYC Parks department consider the 53 community gardens in CB 3 that could be ideal places for benches to be installed?
    - a) Melissa: I will have to get back to you on specific locations for benches. The City cannot transfer items of value to non-city entities such as community gardens not managed by the city.
    - b) Ayo: 42 of community gardens are owned by the City of New York.
    - c) Melissa: If you know of a GreenThumb group interested in benches, they can reach out to their GreenThumb coordinator.
  2. Christine: The reuse of materials is disappointing. Many community garden representatives were not contacted. During construction, a bulldozer has been crushing benches. Many small gardens could use resources.
    - a) Desiree: The design and construction of a project are different. Always listen to community feedback but not able to make all requests happen. We come and advise about different subjects that are brought to us. If there are other items, we can discuss also. There are things we can discuss together but there are certain parts of the construction that can't change. More can be discussed in the future.
  3. Christine: What is the advisory role of the CAG, do City officials listen to CAG comments on the project updates? Why are there roadblocks from the City to not engage in discussion to just listen to what is being told what is going to happen?
    - a) Desiree: ConEd is coming in to do construction now so it does not happen after the park is constructed.
  4. Wendy: PA2 air quality monitors were in place before construction began, in PA1 not in place ahead of time along with many other things. Where do the trucks come from after they get to Montgomery St.?
    - a) Jeff (DDC): We can get back to you on the truck routes.
    - b) Desiree: Will present on truck routes at next CB3 meeting.
  5. Wendy: Park is full of squirrels who have lost their home. When are the trees going to be cut in Corlears Hook Park where it might be reasonable to encourage squirrels to go?
    - a) Desiree: Not sure about Corlears Hook Park trees, will have to get back to you on that.
    - b) Jeff: Have not scheduled that far ahead, have to get back to you. Most likely not in the next three months.

6. Michael: Echo disappointment on the refurbishment of rehoming items from the park. Lack of storage is not a good excuse. Corlears Hook Park could have used some extra benches. Cherry Hill plantings were paid for Corlears Hook Park fundraising efforts, and need to be uprooted and put somewhere else by NYC Parks Department.
  - a) Melissa: NYC Parks reviewed and took an inventory of all items in the park. Delay due to legal actions of the project negatively impacted the plant salvage. NYC Parks plantings, even if paid for by friend groups, are City property.
  - b) Jeff: Can come back to you with more information about the construction and when it will happen. DDC is tasked with construction, can take feedback on only certain components of the project. Protests in the park delayed the amount of information that could be shared but DDC values the CAG forum and hopes to be more transparent.
7. Damaris: I hoped for a CAG that could weigh in more. The time during the lawsuit would have been a good opportunity for things that have been asked. Moving forward suggests setting time aside to discuss major components of the project that are coming up. Can we set up a process that is different?
8. Damaris: Is there an opportunity to share a salvage list?
  - a) Melissa: I have to get back to you on that.
9. Damaris: Where are the other four sites of air monitoring?
  - a) Desiree: Two air monitors right now are moveable. All six will be put into positions based on how construction operations are coordinated. Locations are shown in the quarterly report as well.
10. Damaris: Was there CAG involvement in the art project?
  - a) Desiree: Have been speaking about the call for art since the beginning of the project including local organizations. There will be another call for art.
11. Damaris: Which of the bridge entrances are actual entrances into the park?
  - a) Desiree: Shared use path will be significantly closed but there will be access from the bridges through gated areas (slide 16).
12. Robin: This project is understaffed. Missing parks management and would advise NYC Parks to add a staff member to this project.
  - a) Melissa: I can get back to you on that. DDC is managing the construction of the project but you're asking for someone to be more frequently engaging with the CAG?
  - b) Robin: Desiree is monitoring the construction but a community engagement person from the NYC Parks Department is missing.

- c) Melissa: ESCR is a flood protection project, it encompasses areas under jurisdictions by many agencies to make sure ULURP commitments are honored. DDC has been tasked with the construction and has a community engagement team.
  - d) Robin: Who is working with CAG to be proactive?
  - e) Desiree: The CAG is a resource for these conversations to identify where discussions should go. Now have two more community construction liaisons who will be boots on the ground. Could not be in the park more recently due to other activities happening in the park.
  - f) Robin asked for a CCL job description.
13. Dianne: Where will fencing be going up between Stanton and 10th?
- a) Desiree: I do not have a specific layout of the fence. I will get back to you on that during the CB 3 meeting. Unsure if the area outside the track will be accessible or not.
  - b) Dianne: Could you please get back to us before you install the fences? This is the moment to incorporate CAG feedback.
  - c) Desiree: I have to get back to you on that. Fencing will be erected where construction will happen.
  - d) Tara: Is there a timeframe for that?
  - e) Desiree: Tomorrow morning I will talk to people and voice that this conversation happened.
14. Trever: Allen St. bike lanes signs are taken down and the pathway is still dangerous because it floods, has that portion of the bike lane been repaired?
- a) Neg: I had taken back to the resurfacing unit. There is a seasonal schedule when it comes to resurfacing streets. It did not make this season but I did make it a priority to include in the next season.
  - b) Trever: When is the next season?
  - c) Neg: I have to get back to you but I understand they don't have it on the schedule in the spring.
  - d) Trever: The lane has been in disrepair for over a decade, and needs repair.
15. Trever: Open Streets program does not always accommodate emergency vehicles. Ask to make sure there is a 15 ft gap for emergency vehicles?
- a) Neg: The public space unit is in charge of the entire program, links shared earlier have more information. Now have more resources and funding to assist with open streets programs, which could be implemented next spring.
16. Trever: Can we get a more technical explanation of the greenway closure?
- a) Desiree: Okay, we will get back to you on that.

- b) Jeff: The high voltage line runs under the Shared Use Path, and we have to make sure the line is stabilized and doesn't fail before the park is elevated. ConEdison is also upgrading the line. Shared use lines have to be excavated for these upgrades to occur.
- 17. Desiree: We are open to other ways to make these CAG meetings differently.
- 18. Trever: How are people going to get open to Pier 42 if the path is closed?
  - a) Desiree: We will get back to you on that.
- 19. Wendy: Said fields need grooming and asked why the path needs to be closed.

### **CAG-Only Portion**

- I. Tara: Please fill out a vote on by-laws to reach quorum.
- II. Damaris: I would like to know about letters regarding the comfort station and air filters along FDR drive?
  - A. Paula: That letter has been sent out, waiting for the City's response.
- III. Tara: Pratt Center will follow up on the following items:
  - A. Salvage list of Park items
  - B. Location of air monitors
  - C. Information on the art project
  - D. Confirmation of entry to the park
  - E. Follow up about temporary green spaces
  - F. DOT truck routes
  - G. Information on tasks CCLs are required to perform
  - H. Where CAG can advise for access
  - I. Feedback on open streets
  - J. Access on Pier 42
- IV. Wendy: Open ferries, why cannot get behind the idea of having a pass for neighborhood people to go to other parks?
- V. Robin: Who is doing all the work for us?
  - A. Tara: Unsure who is managing open streets requests and community input.
- VI. Wendy: Could the CCL or a video be used to show problems with access points?
- VII. Ayo: I agree with Robin about hiring a person to coordinate community communication between the CAG and NYC agencies. I think suggestions should go directly to agencies and the CAG. Not valuable to post questions on social media.
- VIII. Dianne: Running an Open Street is a colossal amount of work and commitment. If you have a 15 ft emergency lane no longer safe for pedestrians. Not a substitute for the greenway esplanade. Need to talk to someone other than Desiree.

- IX. Trever: If we are going to have Open Streets, we need space for emergency vehicles. The Governor's Island ferry does offer free service during the summer and will follow up about this at the CB3 meeting.
- X. Wendy: I am going to start mapping places that could be opened up on a Sunday. There are paid people now to move barriers for Open Streets. Could there be another lane along Houston St.? FDNY got stuck in the park on January 2nd.
- XI. Wendy: What has already been spent from promised \$32 million for mitigation measures?
- XII. Damaris: SBS was offering a grant for Open Streets but do we have data that speaks to how many runners there really are to create alternative running spaces for? Should we weigh out what is actually needed and is realistic?
- XIII. Damaris: Desiree is not a person that can advocate on behalf of the CAG? What are still moving parts, so if the CAG chooses to collectively advocate, we can know on what?
- XIV. Damaris: Can Paula and Tara describe their role to us and what can we do as a CAG given their role?
- XV. Wendy: Important part of resiliency is working together as a community.
- XVI. Tara: As far as the next steps, I will break down outstanding questions by the department.