

**ESCR CAG) Meeting -- April 27, 2023**  
(via Zoom)

**CAG members present**

Martin Barrett	Michael Marino
Wendy Brawer	Sandra McKee
Ditashiah Evans	Damaris Reyes
Dov Goldman	Christine Datz Romero
Frank Avila Goldman	Robin Schatell
Trever Holland	Susan Steinberg
Dianne Lake	

**DDC Presentation of Updates**

*Desiree Gazzo, HNTB-LiRo*

[Link to Slide Deck](#)

I. Hiring Compliance

A. Work With Us: Quarterly Updates (*presented by Trang Bui*)

1. Data as of the end of February 2023
2. ESCR PA1 and PA2 Current Staff
  - a) Total PMCM Staff: 184
    - (1) PA1 New Hires: 34
    - (2) PA2 New Hires: 23
    - (3) 8 new hires working on both PA1 and PA2
    - (4) Staff from MWBEs is 42.4%
    - (5) Nearly 25% of staff are women, which is over triple the construction management industry average
  - b) Total General Contractors' Staff: 1,256
    - (1) Staff from MWBEs over 40%
    - (2) Less than 3% of contractors are women—there is work to be done to improve gender diversity
3. ESCR PA1 and PA2 Current Progress
  - a) HNTB-LiRo, IPC (the GC for PA1), and Perfetto (the GC for PA2) are all projected to meet MWBE goals
  - b) Section 3 hires — making slow progress
    - (1) PMCM: 5 new hires
    - (2) PA1, GC: 7 new hires
    - (3) PA2, GC: 1 new hire
    - (4) There are existing job postings for HNTB-LiRo and IPC
4. Staff by Residency (*slide 8*)

- a) Reminder: all teams came in with a large percentage of existing staff, which influences starting numbers
  - b) For new hires, they are getting resumes from locals; not applicants who are locals are qualified, but they do try to screen and refer them to other programs.
  - c) Same with trade workers on the union side; they are hiring from the hall. Both contractors have sent letters to locals saying that there is a preference for hiring local Section 3 workers
5. Strategy & Good Faith Efforts to Meet Goals
- a) GCs continued outreach to labor unions to assign locals to the ESCR project
  - b) Coordinating with DDC ODIR in collaboration with SBS and Henry Street Settlement
  - c) They're passing along job listings to partners and attending job fairs
6. Hiring Opportunity
- a) New job fair on Thursday, May 25th — they're passing along the job postings in advance so outreach can be done to qualified candidates

## II. Q&A

- A. Trever: What can we do as a community to increase these numbers of local hires? What should be done in advance so we can get higher numbers?
1. Trang: For this program, all of the community stakeholders have been great in getting the word out. As you said, a lot of the challenges are with the union hire, and we have limited control over that. In this program, there are limited non-trade opportunities that don't require technical expertise.
    - a) Some of the advanced work we can (and are trying) to do is focusing on training potential to increase awareness and outreach surrounding the certifications that you need to qualify for these jobs.
    - b) We've been talking to folks at LESEN about increasing the certifications trainings.
- B. Wendy: It is disconcerting to see these numbers. Local hire was one of the commitments made to the community, but there are 10 times more new hires from Long Island than from Manhattan. Now we're talking about things that should've happened before this all began. We don't know if they are Sandy impacted areas or not.
- C. Frank: Can you elaborate on the Sandy Recovery hiring?
1. Trang: The Sandy hiring also overlaps with the other hiring goals, such as local hires,

2. Section 3, and MWBE. Because the project site is Sandy impacted and to the Section 3 local area, we have the benefit of having candidates who would fit in all of those categories.
- D. Damaris: The hiring numbers are stark, and I don't feel like this work is honoring what we agreed to. I want to say that as a founding member of LESEN and as a workforce development site ourselves, we're not even on the flyer, and OSHA and those trainings are things that GOLES has been doing and trained hundreds of people on. I don't know who is talking to who, and it all seems pretty convoluted. I am disappointed in the outcome of it.
1. Trang: I'm sorry that you're not seeing some of the participation; we've been coordinating with Jorge from your team and we've seen some success with the in-person and virtual job fair events we've done and brought in all of the partners. We'll revisit that to see the circulation and to see the partners that should be highlights. We're open to having more partners who want to take a lead or serve in a partnership/sponsorship role.
  2. Damaris: That's less important to me than knowing what all the events are. We had been talking with folks from your team and I hadn't seen very much activity. I know there was an event or two, but for the duration of this project and the number of hires, it just doesn't add up. In this instance, I feel like folks have not done the best they could by our community.
  3. Desiree: Damaris, can we have a call with you and your team? I think that'd be a good next step for us to attend an event hosted by your organization and to collaborate on an event.
    - a) Damaris: Yes, we're open to that, but again, it's less about the events; the numbers I'm hearing are disturbing because I don't think there's a lot of local activity. Maybe when we talk you can give us an update on that so we're not spreading misinformation.
- E. Robin: Perhaps there's a way to look at the kinds of jobs being filled and the qualifications; perhaps there could be some monies put toward creating new kinds of jobs -- like community docents -- that aren't construction jobs where people from the neighborhoods could be involved.
- F. Wendy: I just looked up the commitment, and it says that 30% of all new hires should be low and very low-income persons including NYCHA residents. Trang, are you collecting data about new hires who live in NYCHA, and can we see that in a chart?
1. Trang: As part of the onboarding process for all team members, there is a Section 3 certification, and it's a voluntary form. One of the questions is do you live in public housing? That is how employers report their data to us, but it is confidential.

III. Project Information Delivery (*presented by Desiree*)

A. PA1 | Community Construction Liaison

- 1. Introduction to Vanessa Gomez, the newest member of our team of CCLs
  - B. PA1 | New Renderings Board at E. Houston St.
    - 1. This is in addition to bulletins with information about the project.
- IV. Community Programming & Coordination
  - A. Earth Day tabling event in the park and on the sidewalk; they provided coloring project for youth
- V. Construction Progress / Approach
  - A. Overview of contracts
    - 1. PA1 and PA2 is relatively the same
    - 2. PC: subsurface investigations are in progress, and water main replacements will begin soon.
  - B. PA1 | Early 2023 Construction Activities
    - 1. New work task starting soon the week of May 8th: demolition of E. Houston St. retaining wall
- VI. Access / Signage / Safety
  - A. PA1 | Pedestrian Access E. Houston St.
    - 1. New pedestrian access pattern. Field #6 will have access. Circulation on the southern portion changes, but the park amenities will not be impacted.
- VII. Construction Progress / Approach:
  - A. PA1 | Construction Photos
    - 1. Combi-wall construction ongoing
    - 2. Per Wendy's question last meeting, the wick drains do stay in the soil.
  - B. PA1 | What We've Heard
    - 1. They're looking into the Montgomery St. lighting
    - 2. Air quality and construction vehicles at Montgomery St
      - a) There are a number of contributing factors at this location and they can't point the particulate matter to one source.
    - 3. Archaeology update:
      - a) Field investigation work is about to wrap up; construction is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2023. Final reporting is ongoing with City historic agencies.
    - 4. Pedestrian signage
      - a) Coordinating with NYC DOT on additional signage at E. 10th St. and Delancey St.
  - C. PA2 | Construction Progress
    - 1. Asser Levy Playground is open
      - a) The floodwall and floodgate #18 are installed
    - 2. E 23rd St. Intersection
      - a) Floodwall, curb, and sidewalk construction ongoing; gate installation will happen in spring of this year
    - 3. Stuyvesant Cove Park north of E. 20th St
      - a) The greenway is open and the northern portion is anticipated to reopen at the end of May.
    - 4. Stuyvesant Cove Park south of E. 20th St.

- a) Ferry access will remain open and is shifted to E. 20th St.
- 5. E. 18th St. & SB FDR entrance ramp
  - a) Floodwall construction ongoing
- 6. E. 15th St. between Ave C and FDR Dr. within ConEd
  - a) Sewer replacement is pending
- 7. Murphy Brothers Playground
  - a) Very much under construction
- 8. Southbound shoulder of E. 16th St.
  - a) Sewer work continues

VIII. Access / Signage / Safety

A. PA2 | Current Greenway Access

- 1. Disconnect between PA2 and PA1. Reopening anticipated summer 2023

IX. Construction Progress / Approach:

A. PC | Construction Progress

- 1. The work is scheduled to start from the south and move north.
- 2. Reminder, PC is different from PA1 and PA2 as it is primarily work within the street and not work within closed parks. There will be some parking limitations, short-term sidewalk detours, and lane shifts. Please feel free to reach out to the CCLs.
- 3. *See slide 22 for updates by location*

X. Q&A

- A. Frank: There hasn't been much activity with the piles along the FDR north of Montgomery St near Pier 42. I'm wondering if there's a reason for this and if there's a projection of when those piles are going to continue.
  - 1. Desiree: Great question. I believe the contractor did what they could do for now, and as access opens up as Pier 42 work is completed, they will move back in and work with start up again in the near future.
- B. Frank: We are very anxious to move forward (from Gouverneur Gardens' perspective) with floodwall implementation; it's taking too long for the city to get back to us. Can you also take this comment back?
  - 1. Desiree: Yes, will do.
- C. Wendy: First, where is the construction schedule? We haven't seen it since February.
  - 1. Desiree: That is coming next month.
- D. Wendy: You mentioned that park amenities are not impacted by construction activities around E. Houston St., but what about the mature trees around Field #3? Those are important community amenities.
  - 1. Desiree: I am not sure if the trees will be impacted during demolition—I will check in on that.
- E. Wendy: You show barge activity on slide 17. What are they doing?

1. Desiree: A lot of the esplanade demolition happens from the barge; right now, that is the majority of the barge work. In the past it was removing and bringing in materials, such as the stone for stone columns.
- F. Wendy: Regarding parallel conveyance, when will it be on Avenue D -- especially around 10th and 11<sup>th</sup> -- where there is remediation going on for arsenic?
1. Desiree: The sewer work at E. 10<sup>th</sup> Street that used to be a part of the Parallel Conveyance project is now part of the PA1 project because PA1 already had work to do in that area. I have to go back and look at the schedule for that; I will send that over to Paula and Tara to share.
- G. Dianne: It looks like you'll be able to connect into East River Park past the grove of trees that are between the ball field and the track and field. Will you be able to? Right now, you can't get from the greenway into that space.
1. Desiree: The greenway will open there.
  2. Dianne: Right in that same area is one of the slip ramps. How will the safety be managed there?
  3. Desiree: There will be a flagger there; they're still working out the details about if the flagger will be there throughout the day, or only when vehicles are using the slip ramp, but a person will be there. As this area changes, we are working to increase signage.
  4. Dianne: I'm glad that you all are working to keep this area safe as we transition into warmer weather. Just to confirm, by field #3, the esplanade will remain open but you won't be able to turn onto that blacktop path anymore?
    - a) Desiree: Yes, for now it doesn't make sense to keep that open because it would be a dead end since you can't do the full loop there.
  5. Dianne: the demolition of the new retaining wall—I still don't fully understand what's going on there. Can you talk more about that next time?
    - a) Desiree: Sure, we can make that one of our technical highlights.
- H. Sandra: You noted that the sea rail is almost complete—do you know if it is going to have the openings that we asked for?
1. Desiree: We did bring that back; from what I heard, it sounds like the sea rails will not have the openings in them. I'm not sure how those decisions were made. They did say there would be openings in the iron rails, but the water access has been determined to not move forward as part of this contract.
  2. Sandra: Do you know how we can get the openings in the sea rails included in part of some contract?
  3. Desiree: The decision was made by EDC, so you can contact them for more information.
- I. Robin: I have a comment about the flagger job—that sounds like a great job for local residents.

- J. Christine: I really question my time here because I'm deeply disappointed to be hearing about real construction updates and where we stand (*audio cut out here*). DDC and your team should be working a little harder to really help us understand how the construction is going and what the timelines will be. We've been asking for that for half a year now and we're not getting any straight answers (about timelines).
  - 1. Also, about the entrance on E. Houston St., I feel it is a recipe for disaster how pedestrians and bicyclists have to share what used to be the greenway with heavy construction vehicles that speed up to get onto the highway. Right now, it's a very laissez faire attitude because all the gates are constantly left open so joggers could go up on the highway.
  - 2. I also want to say the closure of the blacktop road is really a setback for park use. I would put a request in to leave that blacktop open so people could circle up and go into the ballfield. It's about circular movement as a park user.
    - a) Desiree: We'll definitely bring that back and coordinate that with Parks as well; we'll continue to follow up on the gates and some of your other comments as well.
- K. Trever: The opening that Sandra mentioned in the sea rail—was that part of the original design or a suggestion for the new opening?
  - 1. Desiree: There were suggestions to add openings for kayak access or water access; this was also explored in the design phase, but it was determined that this area in the river isn't safe for that. So it is not a part of the contract. Then along the landscaped areas, there are iron rails that separate pedestrians from planting beds. The request was for some of the iron rails to have openings or gates; it seems that that was able to be incorporated into the fabrication of the rails.
- L. Desiree: If anyone has additional questions, please send them on to Paula or Tara, and we are still working on any outstanding questions and will get them to you ASAP.

## CAG-Only Portion

- I. Discussion after Presentation
  - A. Tara: I know you all are aware that DOT came and presented last at the last CAG meeting, and we did outreach to you as they were seeking folks to join their Neighborhood Support Group (NSG). Some of you are in that group. One of the members from the CAG was inadvertently listed as a representative of the CAG, which seems to have been a consultant error. It has been cleared up, but I did want to let you all know. We asked DOT if they were looking for a CAG representative to be on the NSG, and they are not explicitly looking for anyone from the CAG to be a representative in that group. If there are any questions, feel free to reach out to Paula and me about this.

- B. Paula: The floor is open to discuss what we heard today!
- C. Dianne: I want to second Christine's concern about the schedule. For several months now, the schedule updates are being pushed back. I want to understand what is holding that up.
  - 1. Paula: I was confused about that too; earlier this week when we spoke to them, they said this would be on the agenda.
  - 2. Dianne: If there is a way to reinforce that it is high time we got that schedule update, please do.
  - 3. Paula: We'll definitely bring that up.
- D. Wendy: We all got an email from DOT about the upcoming meeting about the process—please share it!
- E. Wendy: Didn't we used to get an agenda about a day or two before the CAG meetings?
  - 1. Paula: DDC seems to have stopped preparing the agenda.
  - 2. Tara: That will be a part of our larger conversation with them.
- F. Frank: With regard to the NSG, I would encourage people who do attend to demand a feasibility study for covering the FDR. This is DOT- run; my understanding is that they are very car focused, and they will not do that unless we as a community demand that.
  - 1. Secondly, regarding the hiring updates, this is out of my wheelhouse, but in other community groups that I'm a part of, from the very beginning we've advocated for apprenticeships or training jobs that lead to union jobs. I don't know why that's not possible. I don't understand why the community needs are being jettisoned, and we are getting these abysmal numbers. We're the ones being cut off by this project, and it just feels wrong to me. Even if it's not a job that leads to work within this project, but even if it's training, that would be helpful.
- G. Dov: I want to reiterate the comments about the schedule not being available. There used to be a very clear schedule, and that should be something that is present at every meeting. I wish they went back to the old format that stated the expected timeline vs. the actual timeline so we can understand the delays.
  - 1. Paula: We'll bring this up.
- H. Marty: I'm very happy to see that the northern part of Stuyvesant Cove park will be open. We'll look to seeing if we can have our summer concert series there; it's gratifying to know we're near the end of half of our project (even though the Stuy Cove work started before the East River Park work).
  - 1. Marty: The flagger position would be a good starting point for a trainee; it's a matter of the operating engineers opening up the positions.
- I. Damaris: Can someone please forward me the data that details the hiring since the inception of the project?
  - 1. Tara: Yes, we can ask Trang to pull it to send over to us. I'll check right now to see if they post it regularly.



- J. Robin: As far as the construction timeline, if they could have an electronic sign such as over by Grand St. indicating what's going on, because the people have no clue what is happening.
1. Haven't we been asking for the Parks department to present to us, and that hasn't happened in a long time. Any updates on that, or did I miss something?
  2. Paula: I've been reaching out to Parks on a few different issues. I just heard from them today, and I hope to get some answers from them soon.
- K. Wendy: I'm going to stick in the chat a link to the Big U's feedback about what the community felt about decking over the FDR. This should be happening here as well, and this is our chance to advocate for a study surrounding this.
- L. Robin: I think a concert series would be a great lift for the community; Marty, I'm happy to connect with you offline about this.
- M. Trevor: I want to know what is a realistic expectation for local hiring for construction projects in terms of percentages.
1. Secondly, I agree we do need a feasibility study for the FDR; and if we do that, to explore it in a more holistic way versus segments, especially in environmental justice areas.
- N. Damaris: Trever, did you say that you're wondering if the local hiring percentages are similar in other projects?
1. Trever: Yes, I know it's hard to compare but I'm wondering if we should expect more.
  2. Damaris: We should expect more, and there are Section 3 requirements which state that 30%, to the greatest extent feasible, of the jobs created by this project should go to local residents. It's not supposed to go from here to Long Island miraculously. What that says to me is that they already had staff and are using those people to meet the requirements that are set by this project.
    - a) When this project started, aside from federal mandatory requirements, there was a commitment to our community to hire locally. I do not believe they're doing everything that they can. I'm not saying they've done nothing, but we could have done better.
- O. Trever: In general, I'm just wondering what we can do not only as a CAG but as a community to enforce what you're talking about.
1. Damaris: I'd be happy to do some brainstorming with folks, but again, this may be an exercise in futility if the jobs are already taken.
  2. Tara: There are still a few more years to go, so I think there is still an opportunity for us to work on this. I know in the past we had folks who were focused on this to meet on the side, and I'm happy to facilitate another meeting around that if folks want.
  3. Damaris: If nothing else, at least a conversation to talk about what we've asked for, where we're at, and what is actually feasible would be good. If you put that together that would be great; thanks.

4. Tara: Let me know who else is interested in this, and I will email you to set up a time.
- P. Dianne: As someone who hasn't been in all these side conversations regarding hiring, the question that I have is if they're hiding behind the issue of qualifications or certifications. I think about the community benefits agreement that was created, and maybe the thing to ask for is for training and apprenticeship programs as well as actual jobs, because I feel like they always have an out.
- Q. Robin: There are the "needed" jobs that are defined and outlined by the construction companies. But as a community, we could say these are some things that are missing and here are some jobs that could be created.
- R. Frank: I concur with advocating for training and apprenticeship. People want union jobs, and we need to emphasize more implementation to help folks become qualified instead of having one-off resume review workshops.
- S. Wendy: I see Katie Loeb is here, and I wonder if the councilmembers can get involved here because this was a commitment that they introduced to ensure we have local employment. There's a long way to go. Another point is that when these workers aren't local, there are more vehicles that are coming into the community and taking up parking spots and worsening the air quality.
- T. Damaris: I've worked on construction labor agreements for a very long time, and we have to understand the context. I'm happy when we meet to set up a quick Q&A to help frame this conversation so we can understand where we should put our energy. We can set up a presentation that talks about unions and apprenticeship programs to establish a baseline understanding of how this works, I think that could be super helpful for us.
  1. Paula: That would be great; thank you.
- U. Marty: What happened to the rest of our members? We used to have 30 or so regular members?
  1. Tara: We've never had the full 30 present at the meetings, but numbers were low especially last month. We have lost members because people are no longer representing the places where they live; particularly looking for a replacement for NYCHA representation. But people are really stretched. We'll continue to do the same outreach, but especially as folks feel their needs are being addressed, attendance ebbs and flows.