



# Meeting Summary

## Canarsie Planning Committee Meeting #7

Monday, October 20, 2014, 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Hebrew Educational Society, 9502 Seaview Ave Brooklyn, NY 11236

### Attendance:

Emily James	Committee Co-Chair	Bill Calabrese	Consultant Team
Harold Jones	Committee Co-Chair	Sam Saliba	Consultant Team
Maria Garrett	Committee Member	Pippa Brashear	Consultant Team
Yosef Serebryanski	Committee Member	Chris Longo	Consultant Team
Avrohom Hecht	Committee Member	Amber Baron	Consultant Team
Molly Griffith	Committee Member	Gena Wirth	Consultant Team
Melba Brown	Committee Member	Silvia Vercher	Consultant Team
Chelsea Muller	NYS GOSR	Trevor Joseph	Attendee
Chris Gorman	NYS GOSR	Shawn Jones	Attendee
Arana Hankin	Consultant Team	Jerry Francois	Attendee
Kaye Matheny	Consultant Team		

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### Agenda Item: **Introduction/Review List of Projects**

Presenter: **Arana Hankin, HR&A**

#### Summary of Discussion:

- Consulting team presented list of projects to Committee
- Public will have opportunity to weigh in on projects at next meeting on November 10
  - Voting will take place at the following Committee meeting on the 17th
- Reminder given to the Committee to distribute the flyers out to churches and residences
- Roles assigned for public meeting outreach
  - Melba Brown distributing to 69<sup>th</sup> precinct
  - Emily to distribute to businesses
  - Molly Griffith to distribute to churches
  - Yossi Serebryanski and Harold Jones to canvas subway
  - Avrohom Hecht and Maria Garrett to email message

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### Agenda Item: **Drainage**

Presenter: **Sam Saliba, PB**

#### Summary of Discussion:

- Project option: stormwater capture pilot project
  - Wastewater not a target of this project, but this may impact the amount of stormwater that enters the system and may prevent some backup
  - Study would find most vulnerable locations and to create pilot projects
  - Question about how big is the area that would be under study
    - Answer: Area is Canarsie, study would verify areas we've heard where stormwater is a problem and pick a implementable project
  - Question: How much does a bioswale actually help in an area with a high water table?
    - Answer: Boring would find where the water table is and determine the potential performance of a bioswale

- Study would look into the performance, which is highly dependent on site conditions
  - Study would look at:
    - Streetlevel bioswales
    - Stormwater detention
    - Blue/green roofs – limited to surfaces of the roofs, but could be part of a larger strategy
  - Project would have two components: ~\$300,000 study and pilot projects. Study could be split between Southeast Brooklyn Waterfront and Canarsie
  - Having two projects would help to advocate for these projects. It would also put focus on these two communities as especially in need for these sorts of projects
  - Pilot project cost would not be split. Committee could put \$500,000 to \$1M for pilot projects
  - Parks has been supportive of these projects
  - Committee is in favor of this approach. Consulting team will verify that study has not been done before
  - Project will be supported by a recommendation to DEP to look beyond stormwater improvements and into the sewer problem to lessen backup
  - Committee feels project is long-term, cost-effective, and in line with their goals
  - Representative from DEP public affairs is working through question list and will attempt to use existing channels to answers
  - Consulting team to keep Committee in loop on this meeting update
- Project option: Resilient tree plan project
  - Project would take a survey of trees, monitor if they are healthy or maintained and put forth a resiliency plan
  - This project can be scaled up or down
  - This is a good way to engage Community on what resilient tree species is
  - Parks has organized programs already, so their effort would be supplanted by cbo tree surveying
  - Question: Could we get college class to do this?
    - Answer: Most volunteer classes are in conjunction with schools
  - Committee feels the department has already done this project and trees are marked, so this is unnecessary
  - This project to become a recommendation for trees to be replanted with salt-water tolerant species

Agenda Item: **Housing**

Presenter: **Kaye Matheny, HR&A**

- Have heard needs in Canarsie for:
  - Technical assistance/education
  - Money to make repairs and resiliency improvements
- Housing programs that exist or have been proposed
  - 1) Rebuilding resources
    - a. Build It Back
    - b. SBA loans
    - c. Private funding
  - 2) Resiliency improvements
    - a. SIRR proposal to assist homeowners make their own (privately funded) improvements to make improvements to make their home more resilient
      - i. Committee thinks it's a good idea to reinforce this recommendation in the NYRCR plan
  - 3) Homeowner assistance
    - a. Center for NYC Neighborhoods mentioned, as an example
    - b. Programs include

- i. Foreclosure prevention
    - ii. Capacity building
    - iii. Sandy relief
    - iv. Technical assistance
    - v. Possible flood insurance program forthcoming
  - c. Point made that people were reluctant to take advantage of these programs, some presume because potential clients were undocumented
- Major issue with rising insurance premiums
- Flood insurance program was grandfathering homes and not charging market rates
- Change in policy means incremental raise rates that relate to risk at the same time that the flood map is increasing significantly
- Ways to mitigate impacts of flood insurance:
  - Raising homes is difficult in Canarsie, but other smaller measures exists
  - Potential projects:
    - 1) Education
      - a. One stop shop for information
      - b. Online
    - 2) Technical Assistance
      - a. If interested, having someone come out and audit the home, take a look at what interventions make sense
    - 3) Financial assistance
      - a. If intervention makes sense, the nursing financial assistance to tie to these needs
- Questions/thoughts:
  - Committee thinks project is needed. Question about how this is different from Build it Back
    - Answer: This is not about putting things back to where they were. This is more forward looking and meant to address present and future risk
  - Question: For people in Canarsie, they do not get the resources they should. Some people did not even sign up for BIB. Online component is good, but how to do outreach?
    - Answer: Local organizations are working with CNYCN, could use organizations like these to help in outreach
  - Question: Are there other trusted organizations now that people would work with?
    - Answer: Bridge Street and Canarsie Strong have been partnering on projects. Still outreach has not gotten to everyone
    - Point made that at public meeting people did not know why their home was flooded. Need individual engineering expertise
    - Answer: Outreach could be tied into the community center. Thoughts considered about how it ties in. Thought about how block captain system could be tied to outreach through a multi-pronged approach. Ways needed to integrate these project ingredients into the needs of your community. Adding nuance about outreach, connecting to other programs, and how it fits in with existing initiatives with cost break outs.

**Agenda Item: Transportation**

Presenter: **Sam Saliba, PB**

Summary of Discussion:

- Tools presented here are options that can be integrated into existing projects
- According to ride counts, people tend to go crosstown more than north south
- Bike/Pedestrian improvements are ongoing
  - Along Paerdegat basin
  - Connector within the park
  - Jamaica Bay Greenway
- Point made that service is adequate in the community, but not good
- Pedestrian improvements

- These rebalance public rights of way to make room for pedestrians
- Include lane narrowing and removal and allowing for better transportation improvements
- Potential project:
  - Transportation study would examine
    - Crosswalks and intersections
    - Parking conditions and feasibility
    - Traffic patterns
    - Safety
    - Traffic conditions and flow
    - Parking cars during emergency and evacuation situation
  - Point made that transportation improvements are not as straightforward as drainage
  - Could focus more on the parking element. Could add a BRT recommendation to improve bus service
- Going to meet with Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce who helped with study in early 2000s
- Committee member feels that taking away parking on the streets means that more people will park in the residential areas
- Consulting team to refine scope and keep this as a project

Agenda Item: **Coastal Protection and Access to the Shoreline Updates**

Presenter: **Sam Saliba, PB/  
Gena Wirth, SCAPE**

Summary of Discussion:

- Potential project for 100-year protection along Paerdegat Basin
  - Project would protect significant portions of community housing
  - Approximate cost would be \$15 million
  - Interventions would need to tie to high ground
  - This would be a more near-term solution while USACE considers more comprehensive solution
  - Point made that Consulting team does not know exact scope of USACE study, but know they are studying many more than one option for Jamaica Bay
  - Committee agrees to keep this as a recommendation
- Potential project: Canarsie Pier and Beach improvements
  - Total suite of projects would be very costly, but we could provide certain funding for some elements
  - Project would include
    - Bumpouts to curbs with green edges and bioswales around entrance to Pier
    - Use the middle of the roundabout as an ecosystem and water storage area
    - Amenities on Pier expansion
    - More flexible event space and shading
  - Canarsie Pier questions and programming
  - Question: Does NPS keep track of traffic counts or amount of people who use these spaces? Can we get that information?
    - Answer: Don't believe they take parking counts. If we went forward with this, we'd have to advance the design process to see when/where parking could be flexible. This could also be built into the traffic study
  - Still outstanding questions on the structural integrity on the pier
  - Safety is very important to the committee: lighting, access
  - Feeling that can't take away 50 parking spaces
  - Food trucks vs. no restaurants. Some say Canarsie was all about elegance, referencing formal dining experience that used to be on Pier. Unknown if structure of Pier is sound.
    - Consulting team is meeting with NPS, can raise this issue with NPS next week
  - Besides necessity of parking, when you build you will need additional parking to bring people in there - need structured parking with educational center
  - Committee members to follow up on email about ideas they like or programming ideas

- Potential project(s): Fresh Creek access
  - Have identified six sites for improvement
  - All protect against sea level rise/ 10 year flood and provide better access to shoreline
  
- 1) North access at Flatlands Ave. Steep
- 2) Area near Shore Gardens apartment complex
  - a. Severely eroded edge
  - b. Place for living shoreline solutions and ecological revetment
  - c. Mix of green and grey infrastructure
- 3) Ave K Sea Level Rise/10 Year Protections
- 4) Ave L Sea Level Rise/10 Year protection
  - a. K/L are most vulnerable places in the community
  - b. Would propose access to the shore
    - i. Potential coastal forest and wetland restoration
    - ii. Small berm with pathway or greenway to reduce flooding threat from creek
    - iii. Could nicely link with DOT connection
  - c. Bioswale
  - d. K and L could be combined into one project, Ave L would propose more extensive restoration or separated.
- 5) Street end shoreline garden at Ave M
  - a. No mitigation for flooding, but would reduce erosion
  - b. Proposed living revetment or edge
- 6) Increased access at Seview pier
  - a. Space feels private and is not well-maintained
  - b. Make it feel more like a public space, improve and replacing pier
  
- Question: For Ave K/L - how much room is there between road and water edge?
  - Usually 30-40 ft strip that could be repurposed. In some portions of Ave K there is more.
- Would require coordination and shared space with DOT, but this will have to use part of the right of way
- Balance between community benefits, ecological benefits, and protective benefits.
- Recommendation from consulting team would be to pursue K/L joint project
- Question: Have you spoken to Parks Dept. about restoration on Fresh Creek?
  - Answer: There will be opportunities to leverage funds in certain places. Coastal Restoration Plan involved USACE and Port Authority with no funding attached.
- Concern from Committee around proposing something that does not address the whole stretch
  - Limited funding creates need to address the most vulnerable areas
  - Most of these sites are highly feasible, with departments that are willing to help
  - Risk is a way to think and be able to prioritize
  - Committee member notes the need one for project to bring together many agencies around to, so that there is door open to implement projects in Canarsie
  - Feeling that K/:L is what you see first. Flatlands up to 9/10 are erosion
  - Team to go ahead with costing for K/L and show the vulnerability
  - Overall Committee likes the project
- Project: Youth programming and environmental education
  - Education overlay to existing facilities
  - Project would be to implement signage and educational spaces
  - Consulting team to proceed with project development