



# Meeting Summary

## East Bronx Waterfront Planning Meeting#2

Tuesday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 6:30 to 8:30pm

Locust Point Civic Association Building 3300 Tierney Place Bronx, NY

**Attendance:** (Committee members, firm representatives, invited guests, members of the public)

John Doyle	Committee Member	Kate Dineen	NY Rising Policy Director
Marjorie Hooks	Committee Member	Claudia Filomena	NY Rising Regional Lead
Cynthia McIntosh	Committee Member	Alex Zablocki	NY Rising Regional Lead
Elbin Mena	Committee Member	Ronald Rizzotti	NY Rising Planner
Denise Noble	Committee Member	Tom Jost	Planning Team
Jane Protzman	Committee Co-Chair	Kevin Maddox	Planning Team
Ron Rauch	Committee Member	Chris Riale	Planning Team
Harry Rodriquez	Committee Member	Yao Lu	Planning Team
JoAnn Sohmers	Committee Member	Tanya Gallo	Planning Team
James Tynan	Committee Member	Arana Hankin	Planning Team
Valerie Wilson	Committee Co-Chair	Theresa Cassano	Planning Team
Dion Balcarr	Resident		
Patrice Conboy	Resident		
Tom Matich	Resident		

**Agenda Item:** Critical Issues

**Presenter:** Tom Jost, Planning Team

**Summary of Discussion:**

Tom Jost of the planning team presented a summary of critical issues identified during the first Committee meeting and discussed next steps in the process, including the need to develop an overall vision statement for the community and an assessment of key needs and opportunities.

Also included in the discussion was the following:

- A brief overview of the project schedule.
- Review of the current planning area boundary.
  - Committee members confirmed that the Throggs Neck peninsula and Silver Beach areas be included in the study area, and that more representatives from those neighborhoods should be engaged in the process.
  - There was general consensus that the boundary currently shown on the planning area map is appropriate.
- A Harding Park neighborhood representative explained that the neighborhood is attempting to improve community space available to residents during and after storm / emergency events.

**Agenda Item:** Community Vision

**Presenters:** Tom Jost & Arana Hankin, Planning Team

**Summary of Discussion:**

In order to facilitate a discussion of community vision, Tom Jost and Arana Hankin asked attendees to hand in their responses to questions that they were given at the last meeting. The questions were designed to solicit input regarding how members feel about the future of the community. To supplement the discussion, Tom and Arana

asked Committee members to identify adjectives, words or phrases that they feel accurately describes the community. The planning team also requested that the Committee members discuss how they envision the East Bronx waterfront in the future. Committee members' responses included:

- Preparedness is necessary.
- Need to facilitate interconnection between communities with centralized communication system.
- The East Bronx planning area should bridge “gaps” between neighborhoods and develop a seamlessly coordinated network between neighbors.
- Public waterfront access is needed in many areas for emergency response along the water’s edge. GOSR confirms that other waterfront communities have similar access issues.
- The community needs a consistent presence of emergency preparedness resources, not just during a storm event. Developing resources should be an ongoing effort that includes OEM resources and public education.
- Other comments /responses from Committee members included:
  - Tight knit, neighborly, village, informed, prepared, safe, values, protection of waterfront, survive, reliable emergency backup systems.

Tom commented that “Lack of Preparedness” should be added to the list of critical issues list. Tom concluded the Community Vision discussion by saying that the exercise will help the planning team craft a “vision statement” that will serve as a guide for the plan. The vision statement will be vetted by the Committee before being finalized.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
Revise vision statement	Consultant	8/4/14

**Agenda Item:** List of plans relevant to East Bronx **Presenter:** Tom Jost, Planning Team

**Summary of Discussion:**

Tom Jost summarized the compilation of recent regional and local level plans that may be of relevance to this study and noted that few neighborhood level plans have been developed for the East Bronx planning area. He asked the audience to name any relevant plans that the planning team may have missed during their research.

- Committee member says that the area needs a traffic study/plan.
- Edgewater Park representative says that many studies have not been done because some of the communities are co-ops that do not allow public access.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
Provide additional plan	Committee	8/4/14

**Agenda Item:** Community Assets **Presenter:** Kevin Maddox, Planning Team

**Summary of Discussion:**

Kevin Maddox provided the planning team’s initial assessment of community assets. He presented a series of maps that illustrated several categories of assets found within the East Bronx waterfront community, including infrastructure, transit and other key transportation routes, economic assets, natural resources, important civic buildings, and housing.

Included in the presentation was the following discussion and comments by Committee members:

- Critical assets are categorized by recovery function.
- The State has created “risk zones,” based on FEMA criteria. “Extreme” zones get wave action during storm events, and also have incorporated a projected 3-foot sea-level rise due to climate change. The planning team explained methodology for developing the initial list of critical assets, which included identifying community facilities, housing, transportation, etc. which lie within FEMA designated risk zones.
- Identified critical assets may be located outside of the zones but still have a critical function in the community.
- Housing assets (not individual homes) – collectively and across the community – are seen as the most critical asset.
- Economic assets include economic corridors, where community members go for food, money, and gas during and after a storm event.
- Health and Human Services assets – Committee members confirmed that many people in the community did not know where the evacuation center was during Superstorm Sandy. Tom noted that the planning team conducted GIS analyses to compile and geocode the list of health and human service facilities, and asked Committee members to add or remove assets from the list as they deemed appropriate.
- Infrastructure assets - the planning team added bridges, pumping stations and docks.
  - Committee members noted that there is a pumping station at Harding Park.
  - Committee members expressed concern about Con Ed facilities that may not be identified on the map. Planning team committed to investigating further.
- Transportation – bus routes, bike routes, and ferry lines were included.
- Natural resources – parks should be included.

In response to questions from audience and Committee members:

- A Committee member asked if there is a deadline that the Planning Committee should be mindful of during the process. GOSR confirmed that the plan will be developed by the Committee and submitted in December 2014. The money is dedicated to the community for implementation projects, and there is no “use it or lose it” policy.
- Committee member noted that \$3 million is, in relative terms, not a lot of money, particularly for major infrastructure projects that may be proposed as part of this process. The member was concerned about how the community can propose infrastructure construction projects without adequate funds to carry them out:
  - Tom explained that the larger goal of the study is to leverage the \$3 million to identify projects that will help the community move toward a long term strategy for resiliency. Tom noted that the Committee can look at plans from the first round to see lists of infrastructure projects where communities are trying to identify larger pots of money.
  - A Committee member asked if the community can request additional funding from the state government. GOSR responded that the community cannot obtain additional funding above the allocated \$3 million as part of this study process. However, the State is an available resource that can help the community identify additional funding sources. The planning team will put together a packet of example projects and send to Committee members.
  - The allocation of dollars is based on FEMA data, which determines dollar amount; it is not determined by population / population density.
  - It was noted that the Governor wants communities to think big, and not box themselves in by the allocated \$3 million.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
Provide electronic version of asset maps	Consultant	7/24/14
Provide additional assets	Committee	8/4/14

**Agenda Item:** Assessment of Community Needs

**Presenters:** Committee Breakout Groups, Planning Team

**Summary of Discussion:**

Attendees were organized into three breakout groups to summarize their ideas regarding key community needs. Discussion in each group was facilitated and recorded by a planning team member. Each of the three groups spent approximately a half hour brainstorming. Following the brainstorm session, groups reported back to the Committee with a summary of what was discussed.

Committee reported back to the audience. The group report-back included the following discussion points:

- **Group 1 listed the following needs:** back-up pumping, back-up electricity, natural protection from wave impact, relief from traffic congestion, alternate means of traveling in and out of community, waterfront access to transport people in need, system to address localized flooding, notification to evacuate (e.g. a community siren), designated building for emergencies, stronger networks between communities, better drainage, stronger docks for boats, and tree removal.
- **Group 2 listed the following needs:** storm water management, drainage, central communication, protection of seniors, homeowner education around resiliency and insurance, guidelines for redevelopment, protection for community centers, and preparation of long-term recovery centers.
- **Group 3 listed the following needs:** designated safe havens during emergencies, emergency preparedness at local level, chain of command for communication, relief centers, improvement of existing City evacuation areas, better knowledge of emergency resources, better physical and social connections (particularly for high risk populations like renters), and alternate power sources.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
Finalize needs	Consultant	8/14/14

**Agenda Item:** Community Outreach for 8/4 public meeting      **Presenters:** Tanya Gallo & Claudia Filomena

**Summary of Discussion:**

Tanya and Claudia discussed details regarding the public meeting scheduled for August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014, which included the following items:

- The August 4<sup>th</sup> public meeting will be held at the Providence Rest Nursinh Home.
- Committee agreed that the ad for the public meeting should be translated into Spanish.
- The Planning team agreed to distribute flyers by email blast and deliver to drop off locations.
- Tanya explained that the ad will be published in the Bronx Times, and possibly also in the Bronx Reporter.
  - It was agreed that the following publications should receive meeting notifications:
    - Shore Haven
    - Bronx Chronicle
    - News 12
    - Daily News: Bronx Section

The next Committee meeting is August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
Provide electronic flyer	Consultant	7/23/14
Print and deliver flyer	Consultant	7/25/14

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**Agenda Item:** Community Vision Statement

**Presenter:** Arana Hankin, Planning Team

**Summary of Discussion:**

Arana developed a draft vision statement based on feedback solicited from Committee members and read it to the audience. Attendees applauded and generally accepted the draft vision statement as representative of how they feel about the future of their community.

The draft vision statement:

“The tight-knit villages of the East Bronx aim to protect their beautiful waterfront by building a more resilient shoreline and better preparing residents for extreme weather events, while also improving the network between neighborhoods and creating an overall self-sufficient community”

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**Committee meeting concluded at approximately 9:15pm.**