



Meeting Summary

Southeast Brooklyn Waterfront Planning Committee (includes Bergen Beach, Marine Park, Mill Basin, Mill Island, Georgetown)

Wednesday, August 21st, 7pm to 9pm

John Malone Community Center, 2335 Bergen Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11234

Attendance: (Members, Planner, Firm Representatives, Invited Guests)

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|--------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Joe Dai | Committee Co-Chair | Jamie Torres Springer | Planning Team |
| Alicia Hamill | Committee Co-Chair | Jee Mee Kim | Planning Team |
| Ike Sinesi | Committee Member | Jaclyn Sachs | Planning Team |
| Maria D'Alessandro | Committee Member | Sam Saliba | Planning Team |
| Shea Rubenstein | Committee Member | Pippa Brashear | Planning Team |
| Tom Whitford | Committee Member | Gena Worth | Planning Team |
| Daniel Schneider | attendee | Silvia Vercher | Planning Team |
| Yosef Segal | attendee | | |
| Chelsea Muller | GOSR Regional Lead | | |
| Chris Gorman | GOSR Community Planner | | |

Agenda Item: **Public Engagement #1 debrief**

Presenter: **Jee Mee Kim and Jamie Torres Springer,
Planning Team**

Summary of Discussion:

- Review of the schedule and Program goals:
 - We've reviewed existing conditions and the most critical issues in the Community.
 - We're moving toward the creation of a Final Reconstruction Plan in December, which will propose projects that align with six Recovery Support Functions (Infrastructure, Natural and Cultural Resources, Community Planning and Capacity Building, Health and Social Services, Housing, and Economic Development).
- PE#1 engagement debrief
 - Planning Team asks Committee members how they think the meeting went in terms of outreach and attendance.
 - Committee members were pleased with the turnout, especially considering it was summertime, and with the format.
 - Committee member further notes that community members are talking about the Program now, and this kind of buzz may encourage greater attendance at the 2nd Public Engagement Event. As the word spreads and people come back from vacation, there is the feeling that more people will show up.
 - Committee member also notes that having less people may have allowed community members to have more in-depth conversations with technical specialists on the Planning Team and with each other.

- The Committee comments that the input received, in terms of the issues most important to the Community, was largely consistent.
- Committee member notes that something that needs immediate attention, which may not have been brought up by others at PE#1 is the outflow from wastewater treatment plants, specifically the Coney Island Wastewater Treatment Plant in Sheepshead Bay.
- Committee member notes that there are community members that cannot travel easily or may be unable to come to meetings for other reasons; it would be useful for them to be able to leave input via a feedback phone line. Another Committee member notes that a contact at the *Marine Park Courier* was asking for a phone number.
- Planning Team responds that they will look into setting up a feedback phone line.
- Planning Team asks if the Committee has other ideas around publicizing PE#2 on September 10th.
- GOSR notes that they ran a blurb in Canarsie a week after PE#1, and we may want to consider something like this.
- Review of PE#1 feedback
 - Issues, needs, and goals
 - The feedback shows that clearly, the loss of power had a big impact on the Community, and there is a need for more resilient power.
 - Emergency preparedness is also an issue that we've talked about; there is a need for the Community to be better prepared and have resilient access to food and supplies.
 - Opportunities
 - Committee member comments that the "opportunity" named on the boards of many local residents having strong skills and resources really depends on coordination. This is only an opportunity if the structures are set up so that when a disaster hits, trained people can mobilize and don't necessarily need to address their own issues.
 - Impacts from Superstorm Sandy
 - Planning Team notes that the comments on flooded areas on these maps are concentrated in Mill Basin, Mill Island, Bergen Beach, and consistent with maps of Superstorm Sandy inundation.
 - Mapping and comments express that sewer backup occurred throughout the Community, as did power outages.
- Planning Team describes how the confirmation of needs and issues takes us to strategy development. The most useful place to begin with strategy development is to discuss existing plans. To that end, colleagues from Parsons Brinckerhoff are here to discuss existing plans with the Committee.

Decisions/Motions/Votes

- Outreach strategy used for PE#1 can remain largely as is for PE#2.

| Action Items | Person Responsible | Due Date |
|--|--------------------|--------------|
| Investigate setting up a feedback call-in number | Planning Team | Week of 8/25 |

Summary of Discussion:

- In strategy development, there is an opportunity to leverage existing projects.
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)'s projects in Jamaica Bay
 - There are two general groups of studies being conducted by the USACE in Jamaica Bay: coastal protection and ecosystem restoration (enhance habitat and improve water quality). Coastal protection is being studied through the East Rockaway Inlet to Rockaway Inlet Reformulation study (the study), which examines beach nourishment and erosion control protections on both the ocean side and bay sides of the Rockaway Peninsula. Study findings from the ocean side will be available November 2014, and findings for the bayside released in November 2015.
 - The City has asked the USACE to also include in the study smaller inlets highlighted in the SIRR report.. Additionally, the State has proposed that USACE expand the scope of its bayside study, to include additional neighborhoods and interventions, which has been well-received by USACE.
 - Planning Team reviews some examples of collaboration with USACE on NYRCR projects from Round One of NYRCR, including Howard Beach, which put forward a recommendation that had been identified as a potential ecosystem restoration project.
 - USACE is studying a few general strategies that can be undertaken:
 - Can try to stop the surge from getting into the Bay – USACE is looking into a surge barrier at the request of the City. But this is very expensive, very complicated environmental review, and some argue against a heavy infrastructure approach such as this one.
 - Another strategy is to invest in protecting the entire coastline with individual interventions (around 100 miles).
 - A third approach is using more natural solutions, like soft edge protection, to reduce the amount of surge that comes in. If this is a priority, we can look into it.
 - Committee member notes that this is definitely a priority. There are two primary issues: sewer backup and storm surge.
- Committee member asks if USACE has published anything yet.
 - Planning Team responds that no, the bayside study will be published in fall of 2015. While a minus is that we have to wait to learn what their plans are, a plus is that we can use this planning process to make recommendations and try to inform their plan. Red Hook, for example, did a good job in Round One of the NYRCR program, coming up with community design principles to inform a project.
- Committee member asks if we could ask USACE to speak to the Committee. Concern from the Committee that the plan will be published and will not reflect the interests of the Community. The draft report does not include any content related to protecting homes or people, which is worrisome.
 - GOSR responds that, yes, we could ask a representative to come and explain their plans.

- USACE is also doing ecosystem restoration projects. Pink dots on a map shown represent ecosystem restoration opportunities, with an associated conceptual plan and cost estimate. There are identified ecosystem restoration opportunities at Gerritsen Creek and Mill Basin, where projects that have been formulated to some degree. Broad Channel in Round One put money toward a project that had been identified as an ecosystem restoration project, and now that project is going forward.
- Committee member asks if the USACE is the primary decision maker regarding the development of these projects.
 - Planning Team responds that the State, City, and USACE will work in close collaboration.
- Committee member distributes article on outfall issue from the NYC DOT bridges. Article suggests that this outfall should really go to Plumb Beach, part of the Gateway National Recreation Area. There is a huge amount of water coming off of the bridge, which must have a major impact on the communities. The houses that are on Gerritsen Creek cannot allow their rainwater to go into Gerritsen Creek, and yet the outfall from this six-lane bridge, with oil, is entering the Creek.
 - Planning Team responds that they have not yet met with DOT, and that when they do, they will find out more about this situation.
- Final existing plan: the National Park Service just released their preferred alternative in their General Management Plan, which is called Discovering Gateway.
 - Committee member asks if the Planning Team has more information about this.
 - Planning Team indicates that they will circulate it.

| Action Items | Person Responsible | Due Date |
|---|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Share information on the NPS General Management Plan | Planning Team | Week of 8/25 |
| Ask NYC DOT about bridge outfall issue | Planning Team | TBC (contingent upon schedule of DOT) |
| Investigate inviting USACE representative to future meeting | GOSR | TBD |

Agenda Item: **Strategy development**

Presenter: **Planning Team**

Summary of Discussion:

- Strategies should be forward-looking and comprehensive. The goal is not to come up with specific projects tonight, but rather to focus on the development of comprehensive approaches.
- Preliminary strategies identified by the brainstorming groups:
 - Group A:
 - Manage stormwater to prevent flooding and backup.
 - Manage wastewater to prevent backup and overflow at regional and community scales.
 - Educate about water management and residential resiliency.
 - Make power supply more resilient and redundant.

- Create a network of spaces (existing or new) that can provide services during and after a storm.
- Enable communications before, during, and after a storm.
- Leverage and supplement existing plans for coastal protection – at the neighborhood and comprehensive Bay scales.
- Manage urban forests for resiliency (power supply, stormwater tree hardiness, air quality).
- Leverage existing physical assets, including wetlands.
- Groups B and C:
 - Enhance emergency preparedness and response through creating centralized coordination around, and strengthening the capacity and reach of, existing organizations and programs.
 - Ensure access to critical supplies through providing backup and alternative sources of power.
 - Take advantage of plants and vegetation (e.g., phragmites) to stabilize the coastal edge.
 - Identify at-risk undeveloped locations and discourage development there.
 - Identify and protect vulnerable locations where floodwaters entered during Superstorm Sandy and affected residential neighborhoods.

Agenda Item: **Future meetings and outreach**

Presenter: **Jee Mee Kim, Planning Team**

Summary of Discussion:

- Planning Team came up with a sample schedule for the remaining meetings with the Committee Co-Chairs. If anyone has any issues with these dates, please notify GOSR by the end of the week (8/22).
- Planning Team brought PE#2 flyers for the Outreach Subcommittee (Maria and John) to distribute.
- GOSR circulated a draft questionnaire to the Committee a day ago. If anyone has any comments, please send those by the end of the week (8/22).
- Planning Team has tentatively scheduled a conference call to prepare for PE#2 on Monday, September 8th. Please let GOSR know if this presents any conflicts. The point of the call is to review the material for PE#2 (which will be sent the week prior) and become familiar with the content in advance of the meeting.

| Action Items | Person Responsible | Due Date |
|--|--------------------|----------|
| Send comments, if any, on questionnaire and meeting schedule | Committee | 8/22 |
| Send PE#2 material to Committee | Planning Team | 9/5 |