



# Meeting Summary

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

Wednesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 7pm to 9pm  
Fillmore Real Estate, 2990 Avenue U, Brooklyn, NY 11229

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

Joe Dai	Committee Co-Chair	Chelsea Muller	GOSR Regional Lead
Alicia Hamill	Committee Co-Chair	Chris Gorman	GOSR Community Planner
Maria D'Alessandro	Committee Member	Jamie Torres Springer	Planning Team
Tom Whitford	Committee Member	Jee Mee Kim	Planning Team
John Piccirillo	Committee Member	Jaclyn Sachs	Planning Team
Yosef Segal	attendee	Sam Saliba	Planning Team
		Marla Weinstein	Planning Team

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Agenda Item: **Public Engagement Event #2 debrief**

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

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### Summary of Discussion:

#### Calendar overview:

- The Planning Team explains that we're going to go over Coastal Protection and Power at today's meeting. We're scheduling a meeting with DEP on Drainage for either Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> or Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>. We'll cover Emergency Preparedness, Housing, and Economic Development at the next PC meeting on Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Committee members ask if the meeting with DEP will just involve GOSR, or the Committee, too.
  - The Planning Team responds that representatives of the Committees from both Canarsie and Southeast Brooklyn Waterfront will be involved.
- Committee members ask if separate meetings – one for Canarsie and one for Southeast Brooklyn Waterfront – might be possible instead.
  - GOSR and the Planning Team respond that it is very difficult to schedule even one meeting and is unlikely that we would be able to schedule two within the next few weeks. They add that common issues have come up for both Communities – including around potential negative impacts from the CSO Facility – and so there likely will be overlap in the discussions. That said, the Planning Team is currently reviewing a few different meeting options, and it is possible that if there are enough members from each Committee present, we can break out into two different Community-specific discussion groups after a general presentation from DEP.
- The Planning Team is hoping to get questions from the Committee for DEP. The Planning Team will compile a list of drainage-related questions that have come up at PC meetings and Public Engagement Events thus far and circulate to the Committee for any additions later this week.
- Committee member asks if DEP will be responding to stormwater-related questions as well, and if they should add those to the list. For example, in light of the large amount of park space in the Planning Area, a good project idea might be to install rainwater capture tanks or other infrastructure in one of those parks, like Marine Park.
  - The Planning Team responds that those should be added as well, and that they will provide clear direction on the types of questions that may be appropriate when circulating the list later this

week. Additionally, a drainage engineer from Parsons Brinckerhoff will moderate the meeting with DEP and help to frame Committee questions in the context of DEP's work.

- We will come back together for PC#5 on October 1<sup>st</sup>, and then we will submit a preliminary list of project ideas on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. It is important to note that this list will be a work-in-progress, and that it is understood that the projects will continue to be developed over the next month.

Rising to the Top Competition:

- The Committee has already expressed interest in this, so has fulfilled the “Intent to Apply” deadline of Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>. The actual application will be due at a logical point after the Final Plan is due in December.
- Committee members ask if special projects need to be developed for this, or if it the projects we apply around need to be identified as the “top” projects of the Committee.
  - GOSR responds that no, the Competition is just around any projects that have already been developed.

Public Engagement Event #2 debrief

- The Planning Team notes that thirty people came to the event. We can increase that number and should think about how to increase attendance for the next meeting. This could include leaving palmcards at popular stores and restaurants, and coordinating with school principals and teachers to have students take palmcards home to their parents. We do not have to decide on a particular strategy tonight, though need to lay the groundwork in order to do targeted outreach around a week before Public Engagement Event #3 in November.
- The Planning Team reviewed the strategy voting and noted that, while the particular numbers don't matter, the difference in the size of the dot clusters reveals where the priorities were for the members of the public that attended.
- The Planning Team indicates that it would be worthwhile to consider consolidating some of the strategies and even taking some out, like commercial corridor resiliency, which received no dots. The concepts could still be incorporated into other strategies. For example, power-related projects could focus on commercial corridors. Additionally, the strategies around coastal edge protection, discouraging development at at-risk locations, and mitigating negative impacts around new projects should be grouped together.

Decisions/Motions/Votes

- The Committee is interested in applying for the Rising to the Top Competition.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
Circulate list of questions for meeting with DEP to Committee	Planning Team	9/20
Schedule meeting with DEP	Planning Team	Week of 9/22
Circulate list of revised strategies to Committee for review	Planning Team	Week of 9/22

Agenda Item: **Project brainstorming: Coastal Protection**

Presenter: **Sam Saliba, Planning Team**

Summary of Discussion:

- The Planning Team indicates that the goal of this session is to go over some potential project approaches to coastal protection for Southeast Brooklyn Waterfront, providing the Committee with information that will help them to make informed decisions about how to proceed with related project development. For thinking about potential approaches, we need to consider event-based hazards and gradual hazards. For

event-based hazards, we look at the 100-year and 500-year storms. Gradual hazards include sea level rise and erosion.

- Event-based hazards
  - One approach for protecting against surge is regional: leveraging existing plans, including the USACE Reformulation Study and 2009 Hudson Raritan Estuary (HRE) Comprehensive Restoration Plan (CRP).
    - The SIRR report calls for a surge barrier at the mouth of Jamaica Bay and/or at Sandy Hook.
    - USACE East Rockaway to Rockaway Inlet Reformulation Study is examining flooding and coastal protection measures across the Jamaica Bay Region, including the feasibility of a surge barrier at the inlet to Jamaica Bay. We can make a recommendation to USACE that these measures continue to be looked at with a focus on the Southeast Brooklyn Waterfront Planning Area.
    - CRP sites were identified as opportunities for restoration before Superstorm Sandy. CRP sites within the Southeast Brooklyn Waterfront Planning Area, such as in Bergen Beach and Mill Island, can be leveraged to provide protection against more frequent storms as well as gradual hazards of erosion and sea level rise, and can be recommended to include coastal protection measures. Committee member requests information again on CRP sites, which the Planning Team agrees to circulate.
    - USACE is reevaluating **some** of these sites for potential coastal protection benefits as part of the USACE Jamaica Bay Feasibility Study which includes the Dead Horse Bay site in the Planning Area.
  - Neighborhood approach: protects entire area, though is cost-prohibitive and can disrupt waterfront access over the long-term. Additionally, there is private property along the shoreline, which brings up issues of eminent domain, which can keep the process in the courts for several years.
    - Committee member notes that a lot of the coastal edge land is parkland/public as well, which is an advantage.
  - Targeted approach: selecting particularly vulnerable locations for targeted interventions.
    - A challenge for this area is the complexity of the shoreline – there are water basins on either side of some neighborhoods, which makes them difficult to protect. Coastal protection measures need to tie in to high ground on either side, and there are issues with only protecting one side of a neighborhood – water can come in on the other side. Example: if a measure were implemented on the west side of Bergen Beach, water could still come in on the east side; it is important to do something on both sides in order to provide any degree of meaningful protection.
- Gradual hazards
  - Sea level rise: the Planning Team used City metrics to estimate sea level rise. If it continues, the Planning Team predicts that the locations shown in the map will be affected.
- What approaches should we consider for Southeast Brooklyn Waterfront?

- Planning Team notes that something to keep in mind with large infrastructure projects, like a neighborhood-wide surge barrier, is that all of these communities along Jamaica Bay, some of which were even more devastated, are all competing for funds for projects.
- Committee member notes that the water table is rising in Bergen Beach and residents have seen groundwater come up in their toilets. High tide has definitely increased over time, and can continue to increase dramatically during our lifetime. We should prioritize protections against sea level rise.
- The Planning Team indicates that it can be a good idea, then, to leverage USACE identified restoration projects, which can have the co-benefit of reducing coastal erosion / protecting against sea level rise.
- Spring Creek in Howard Beach serves as an example of how a Committee leveraged an existing CRP site for a project.
- Approaches for protecting the homes around Avenue U, Mill Basin, and Bergen Beach, which were most dramatically impacted.
- Committee member asks: what kinds of interventions do these lines on the map represent?
  - The Planning Team responds that this is just showing locations/lines – not particular interventions.
- Committee member suggests berms around Bergen Beach as a potentially low-cost, and yet effective, intervention.
- The Planning Team runs through a list of research tasks, based on Committee comments thus far:
  - 1) Look into most cost-effective solution for protecting Bergen Beach, Mill Island/Mill Basin, and Avenue U from future flooding from surge events.
  - 2) Look at sea level rise approaches/strategies in these areas, and if can tie to USACE CRP opportunities. Review all of the CRP sites for incorporating protective measures against high tide, sea level rise, and erosion.
  - 3) Look at potential interventions to protect Avenue U and surrounding houses, particularly those by the marina that were affected.
- Committee member notes the concern that community members have expressed over NYC DOT's Seven Bridges Reconstruction Project, and particularly, around the bridge at Gerritsen Creek. During Superstorm Sandy, water came in over Plumb Beach. Community members suspect that with the angle of the new bridge, the pressure of water coming over the bridge will increase into Marine Park.
- The Planning Team comments that this concern is real, and that they are working to meet with DOT and other agencies and better understand the situation. The NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) noted the risk from the bridges in their meeting with the Planning Team.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
Recirculate information on HRE CRP sites	Planning Team	week of 9/22
Conduct research into the Committee's prioritized approaches	Planning Team	ongoing
Schedule meeting with NYC DOT	Planning Team	TBD

Summary of Discussion:

- Potential resiliency techniques: Protect distribution system
  - Measures for protecting utility lines include tree maintenance, smart grids, hardening, and burying power lines.
  - The Planning Team notes that it is unlikely that ConEd will bury powerlines.
  - Some substations were inundated, including one on 63rd Street off Avenue U. An example of an approach is to make recommendations around protecting particular substations.
- Potential techniques: Alternative power
  - Solar is a tried-and-true technology, yet doesn't work at night and needs to be connected to a backup source.
    - Committee member asks if solar can power a house. The Planning Team responds that it depends on roof area and sun exposure, but typically, solar cannot power a whole house, but just certain functions.
    - Committee member asks how much solar-powered street lights would cost throughout the Planning Area. The Planning Team responds that they would have to cost it out, though admittedly, DOT has expressed concern over maintaining solar-powered streetlights. Committee member suggests that Belt Parkway, which has good wind and is dark, may be a good location for a pilot, or Avenue U, which serves as a main pedestrian area. Another potential location may be the intersection of Avenue U and Flatbush Avenue.
    - Committee member comments that the Brooklyn Navy Yard is home to a company that manufactures a technology that combines both solar and wind. We may want to investigate this.
  - Wind is great for offering both day and night functionality, but it is more site-specific.
  - There has been interest in backup generators in the Community, particular at Community assets that provide key emergency services. One of the biggest requirements for generators is fuel.
  - Committee member asks if specific sites (e.g., Flatlands Volunteer Ambulance Corps) can receive backup generators through the Program. The Planning Team responds that specific grant subrecipients cannot be named in the plan, but that the Committee can establish criteria for funds that would make these places eligible.
  - Committee is interested in alternative power that can have multiple co-benefits.

Summary of Discussion:

- The Planning Team will work on finalizing the meeting with DEP (either Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> or Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>) and circulate questions later this week for the Committee's review. We already have the additions of:
  - 1) Creating stormwater retention infrastructure under park space

2) Addressing the rising water table

- The next Committee meeting will be on Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>. The Planning Team is finalizing the Carmine Carro Community Center as the venue, and will finalize the venues for all of the upcoming Committee meetings.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
Circulate DEP meeting questions to Committee and finalize meeting date with DEP	Planning Team	9/20; Week of 9/22
Finalize venues for all upcoming meetings	Planning Team	Week of 9/22