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PARKS & WATERFRONT COMMITTEE

July 2019

The Parks & Waterfront Committee of Community Board #2, Manhattan, held its monthly meeting on Wednesday, July 24, 2019 at 6:30 P.M. at MS 297, 75 Morton St., Cafeteria – a joint meeting with the Hudson River Park Trust.

The meeting covered one topic:

* Presentation of the preliminary concept design for the Gansevoort Peninsula section of Hudson River Park

There were no resolutions created from this meeting

Board Members Present: Rich Caccappolo (Chair), Jeannine Kiely, Donna Raftery, Shirley Secunda,

Public Members Present: Nancy Brous

Other Board Members Present: Chair Carter Booth, Matthew Metzger, Brian Pape, Katy Bordanaro, Robert Ely

Board Members Absent with Notice: Susanna Aaron (Vice Chair), Coral Dawson, Kristin Shea, Jonathan Geballe, Georgia Silvera Seamans

Public Members Absent with Notice: Elizabeth Gilmore, Sharon Woolums

In addition, approximately 100 community members attended.

MINUTES

1. Presentation of the preliminary concept design for the Gansevoort Peninsula section of Hudson River Park:

Lisa Tziona Switkin, Senior Principal, James Corner Field Operations consultants, presented renderings of design concepts which she described as synthesis of community input and technical feedback. They were generally well received by the large crowd in attendance. The presented preliminary plan included an upland beach with kayak access and the *Day's End* art installation on the south side, a lawn with seating just north of the beach, a sports field, a dog run, a one-story building with restrooms, concessions and maintenance storage, and a salt marsh to the north, on either side of the access road, and a promenade with trees, picnic tables, and lounge chairs on the western edge (see images below). Ms. Switkin explained that the peninsula, which measures 5.5 acres, will only have 3.5 acres of usable space after buildings and access roads are positioned.

Two versions of the sports field were presented. The first measured 280' x 200' (i.e., roughly 90 yards by 70 yards). Later in the presentation, Ms. Switkin showed a version of the design featuring a larger field (316' x 220') and explained that going with the larger option would require reduction in the size of the lawn, some of the promenade, and various other features.

Feedback from attendees:

- Field design: Representatives from the leagues and some local schools pushed for larger field option explaining the need for space in our community for sports activities. The larger field would enable U13 regulation fields for soccer and baseball as well as practice opportunities for older leagues. In addition, the need for artificial turf was expressed and agreed to by the Trust. A point that requires further review: the

height of fences surrounding the fields to protect against balls flying into the road, river, and rest of the park.

- Beach design and water access: disappointment was expressed by some about the ability to “touch the water” not being as easy as hoped and that an “upland beach” separated from the water’s edge is not a real beach – kayak access is worthwhile, but access by people / children will be less a focus. Also, there was discussion about the risk of the walkways from upland beach to the water getting slippery due to algae, i.e., safety issues. The Trust representatives and an attendee from the Department of Environmental Conservation explained that a beach directly on the water would not be able to be sustained due to wave energy that hits the south side of the peninsula - either the sand would have to be continuously replaced and/or a huge breakwater would have to be created further in the river.
- Drainage and resiliency: The Trust was clear that the peninsula cannot and will not be a means of protecting the neighborhood to the east from flooding as was experienced during Hurricane Sandy. It is expected that the field (along with other features) will be flooded from time to time; the Trust stated the design will be done to ensure the playing field will drain as quickly as possible.

Construction is expected to kick-off in late 2020 and finish by mid-2022.

Budget for this project is \$50M.

There will be two more meetings held with the community in the coming months for further review.

Deck that was presented can be found here:

https://hudsonriverpark.org/assets/content/general/19_0724_CB_mtg_3_reduced_slides.pdf

One image from it:

North Edge Aerial View - looking southwest with smaller (280' x 200') field



Respectfully submitted,

Richard A. Caccappolo
Chair, Parks & Waterfront Committee
Community Board 2, Manhattan