

Jeannine Kiely, *Chair*  
Susan Kent, *First Vice Chair*  
Valerie De La Rosa, *Second Vice Chair*



Antony Wong, *Treasurer*  
Amy Brenna, *Secretary*  
Ritu Chattree, *Assistant Secretary*

## COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE  
NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899

[www.cb2manhattan.org](http://www.cb2manhattan.org)

P: 212-979-2272 F: 212-254-5102 E: [info@cb2manhattan.org](mailto:info@cb2manhattan.org)

Greenwich Village ✦ Little Italy ✦ SoHo ✦ NoHo ✦ Hudson Square ✦ Chinatown ✦ Gansevoort Market

February 3, 2023

Jamal Sulayman  
Technical Manager, US Army Corps of Engineers  
26 Federal Plaza  
New York, NY 10278

Dear Jamal Sulayman:

At its Full Board meeting December 20, 2022, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

- 1. Resolution providing CB2 comment as part of the initial public comment period for the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Study (“EIS”) and Tentatively Selected Plan (“TSP”) of the US Army Corps of Engineers (“USACE”) New York / New Jersey Harbors and Tributaries (“NYNJHAT”) Study.**

### Study Background

- 1. Whereas**, following Superstorm Sandy in 2012, President Obama signed into law the Disaster Appropriations Act of 2013 to assist in the recovery in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy; and
- 2. Whereas**, the Disaster Appropriations Act authorized the US Army Corps of Engineers (“USACE”) to commence the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study in order to study coastal storm risk management strategies, which was completed in 2015 and which identified the New York / New Jersey Harbors and Tributaries (“NYNJHAT”) area as one of three focus areas; and
- 3. Whereas**, USACE embarked upon the NYNJHAT study in partnership with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (“NYSDEC”) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (“NJDEP”), and NYC, a cost-sharing agreement being executed amongst these entities in 2016; and
- 4. Whereas**, following years of work on the study, including the release of an interim report in 2019, the USACE released in September 2022 the study’s final Tier 1 Environmental Impact Study (“EIS”) and Tentatively Selected Plan (“TSP”); and

### Current Project Timeline

5. **Whereas**, a public comment period has now been opened for the Tier 1 EIS and the TSP, and is currently set to close on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, following an extension announced in December from the original public comment period closing date of January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023; and
6. **Whereas**, as part of this public comment period, representatives from the USACE presented to CB2's Quality of Life ("QoL") committee on the evening of November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022; and
7. **Whereas**, following USACE's presentation on November 7<sup>th</sup>, CB2 Manhattan approved a resolution in November calling for an extension of this public comment period – which has now been granted – to allow for broader and more meaningful community engagement; and
8. **Whereas**, the proposed timeline following the initial comment period contemplates a chief-of-engineers report to be released in mid-2024, followed by a Tier 2 EIS, a design phase lasting from 2024-2030, the start of construction in 2030, and the completion of the project by 2044; and

### **Overview of Tentatively Selected Plan and Impacts to CD2**

9. **Whereas**, the USACE chose as their Tentatively Selected Plan ("TSP") Alternative 3B out of the range of alternatives considered, which includes a series of multi-basin storm surge barriers along with Shore-Based Measures ("SBMs") across New York City (including CD2), New Jersey, and other New York counties outside of NYC; and;
10. **Whereas**, at 2022 price levels, the TSP has an estimated upfront cost of approximately \$52.6 Billion, of which 65% would be federally funded and 35% would be funded non-federally, with additional maintenance costs throughout the expected life of the constructed infrastructure amounting to approximately \$23 Billion, all of which would be funded non-federally; and
11. **Whereas**, the report released in September 2022 comprises a 569-page main report<sup>1</sup>, and thousands of total pages across a range of appendices and sub-appendices; and
12. **Whereas**, amongst the various sub-areas within the NYNJHAT study region, lower Manhattan, including parts of Community District 2, is specifically impacted under the TSP, with a range of Shore-Based Measures ("SBMs") proposed running along the west side of Manhattan all the way up to 34<sup>th</sup> street, including the entire CD2 shoreline from Canal Street to 14<sup>th</sup> Street; and
13. **Whereas**, the SBMs initially proposed along the CD2 shoreline under the TSP consist of a series of 20+ foot high floodwalls and deployable barriers running parallel to the shoreline, from Canal to 14<sup>th</sup> street, and a proposed seawall around the Gansevoort Peninsula (see Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 below); and

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.nan.usace.army.mil/Portals/37/NYNJHATS%20Draft%20Integrated%20Feasibility%20Report%20Tier%201%20EIS\\_3Oct2022.pdf](https://www.nan.usace.army.mil/Portals/37/NYNJHATS%20Draft%20Integrated%20Feasibility%20Report%20Tier%201%20EIS_3Oct2022.pdf)

Fig. 1: NYC West Side Shore-Based Measures (SBMs) – Jane Street to 34<sup>th</sup> Street



Fig. 2: NYC West Side Shore-Based Measures (SBMs) – Chambers Street to Jane Street



- 14. Whereas**, when asked about the specific siting and design features of the SBMs planned along CD2's shoreline, USACE representatives stated that the exact location of the SBMs vis-à-vis the existing waterfront condition is not to be determined until a later phase, even though the map included in the TSP appears to show SBMs on top of the existing bike path; and
- 15. Whereas**, while specific design schematics are included in the report appendices for the various SBMs within CD2 (see Fig. 3, Fig. 4 and Fig. 5 below), USACE representatives indicated that more specific detail as to the actual design of the SBMs would be determined during the Design Phase beginning in 2024; and

Fig. 3: SBM Large Floodwall Cross-Section

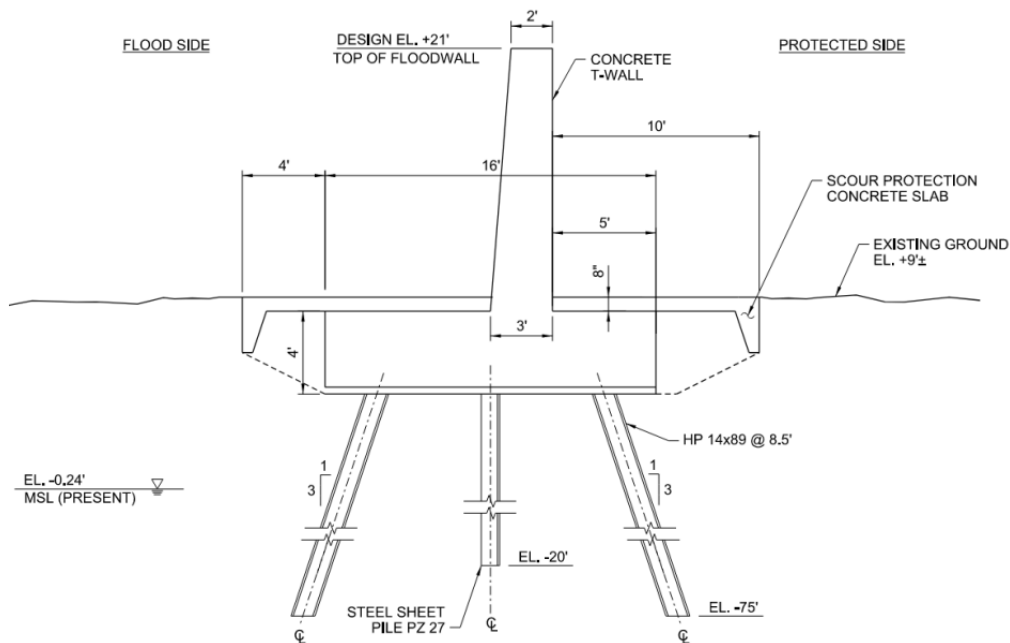


Fig. 4: SBM Extra-Large Floodwall Cross-Section

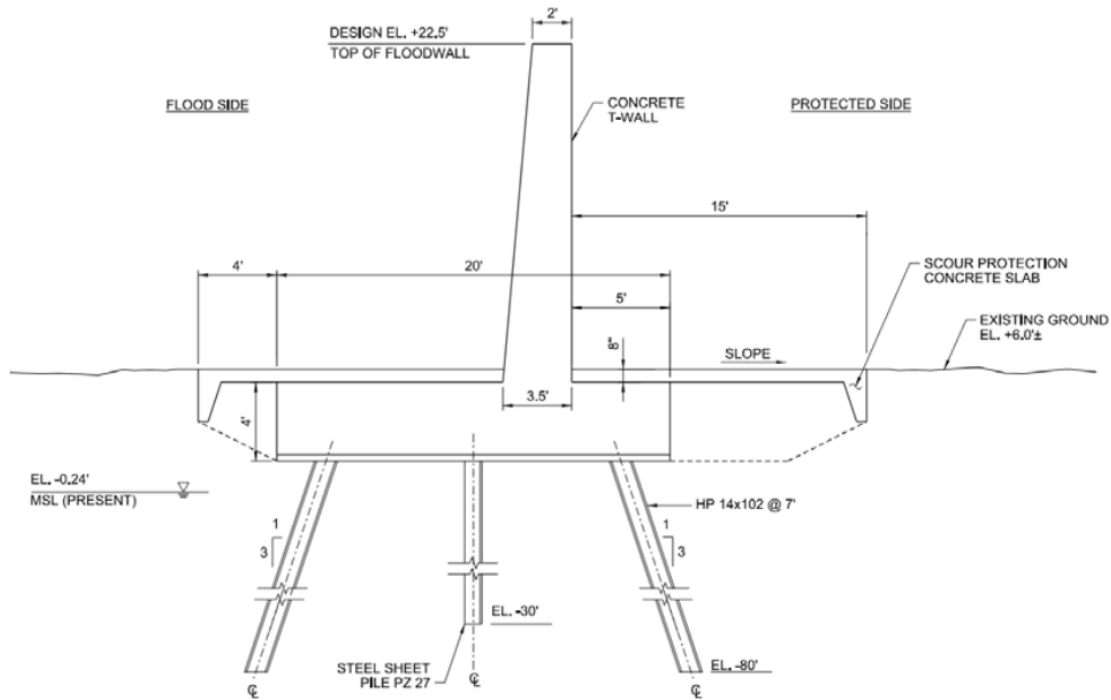
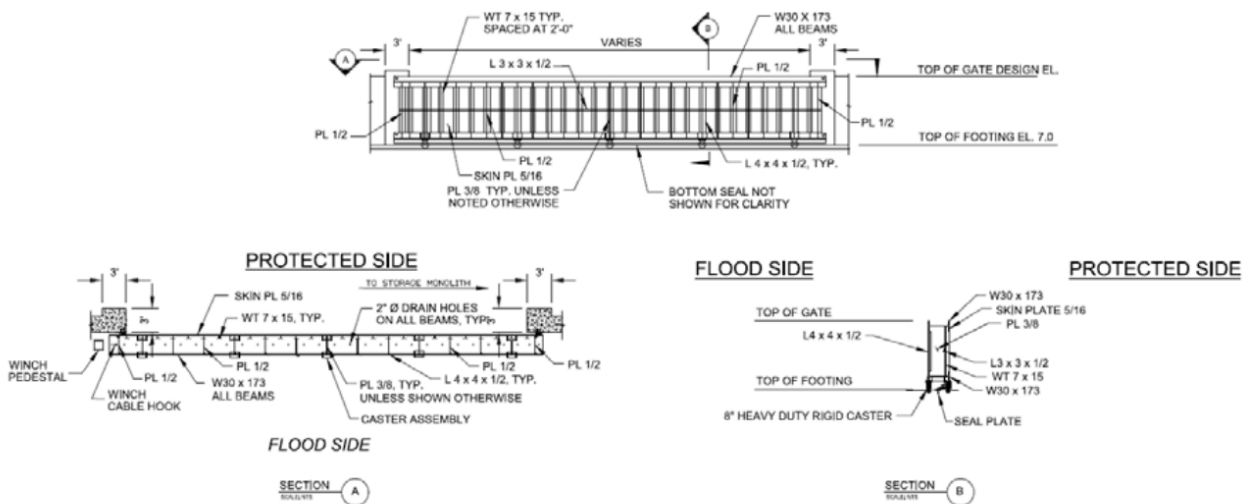


Fig. 5 - Roller Gate (Deployable Barrier) Cross Section



## Issues to Be Addressed

- 16. Whereas,** while CB2 understands that many aspects of the plan for SBMs along CD2’s waterfront are still in the early stages, it is clear that should the plan move forward as it is currently designed, it would have an unprecedented and substantial impact on the waterfront along the west side, with a 20+ foot floodwall completely transforming and re-defining the community and the public at large’s access to the waterfront (see Fig. 6 below for a rough rendition of such floodwall); and

Fig. 6: Rough Rendition of Floodwall along West Street



- 17. Whereas,** as outlined in CB2’s prior November 2022 resolution on this topic, it is CB2’s view that several key constituencies need to be promptly and meaningfully engaged during the public comment period, including the Hudson River Park Trust, which has jurisdiction over Hudson River Park, comprising all of the shoreline within CD2, and the New York State Department of

Transportation, which has jurisdiction over State Route 9A (i.e. the “West Side Highway”) running along the west side of CD2, just to the east of Hudson River Park; and

**18. Whereas,** there are a clearly a range of other relevant factors that are outside the scope of the USACE study that are nonetheless likely to have an impact on the planning and construction of the TSP, or any other future resiliency measures on the west side, going forward; and

**19. Whereas,** as part of the initial public comment period on the TSP, CB2 Manhattan believes it would be prudent to outline in detail the range of issues and concerns currently foreseen by the Community Board as well as members of the public, which could broadly be classified into categories of Process, Content, Engagement and External Factors; now

**Therefore Be It Resolved** that CB2 Manhattan seeks to provide comment on the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Study (“EIS”) and Tentatively Selected Plan (“TSP”) of the US Army Corps of Engineers (“USACE”) New York / New Jersey Harbors and Tributaries (“NYNJHAT”) Study ahead of the current expected public comment closing date of March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023; and

**Therefore Be It Further Resolved** that given the current stage of the project, CB2 Manhattan believes it most prudent at this time to provide a list of issues and concerns voiced by the Board and the community, which broadly fall into the categories of Process, Content, Engagement and External Factors and are outlined below:

#### **Process**

- Ensuring full engagement of community boards at all parts of the process
- Clear outlining of the project timeline in more detail at the appropriate time
- Ensuring that there is a clear outline for involvement of non-federal partners - New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (“NYSDEC”) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (“NJDEP”), and NYC
- Outlining the legislative process for funding the project
- Providing more clarity on what the Tier 2 Environmental Impact Study (“EIS”) will look like
- Promptly engaging key constituents including HRPT and State DoT as outlined in the “Engagement” section

#### **Content / Design**

- Ensuring that green infrastructure is included where possible and relevant
- Considering alternatives to the “concrete wall” solution – including “flip-up” barriers (such as those being built currently in the two bridges area) and deployable barriers that could be stored offsite (in an area such as Pier 40) and brought into place ahead of a storm
- In addition to green infrastructure, consideration of other multi-benefit infrastructure that could be used - i.e. other benefits that can be leveraged from the investment other than direct storm surge protection

- Ensuring strong consideration of drainage issues – resilience to heavy rain events that don’t necessarily include a storm surge – as well as “normal” non-storm flooding due to sea level rise
- Consideration of other climate/environmental risks impacting CD2 that could be considered including heat and air pollution
- Clarification of the exact location of the SBMs
- Clarification on how much of the design of the SBMs is open to modification and what the process for such modification would be
- Consideration of the significant amount of disruption that would occur to Hudson River Park and the waterfront on the west side should flood walls be constructed as currently proposed – given the narrow width of Hudson River Park in many areas, such construction would be highly disruptive to the park itself, to the bike lane and to the west side highway
- Consideration of traffic impact - construction is likely to cause disruption around already high traffic areas such as the Holland Tunnel with cascading impact
- An overall consideration of the “cost” of the project – what is the cost of the severe impact to a valuable amenity like the Hudson River Park and the cost of cutting it off the shoreline from the community with a 20+ foot wall, both during and after the construction phase

### **Engagement**

- Prompt and ongoing engagement of Hudson River Park Trust
- Prompt and ongoing engagement of State DoT
- Engagement of community boards in all parts of the process (as outlined in the “Process” section)
- Engaging with State DoT and ConEd to conduct a study of relevant infrastructure underneath the west side highway and Hudson River Park, as this is likely to have a major impact on the project’s timeline and design
- Comparing the current design against other locations globally of where similar projects have been undertaken and sharing such comparison with the public
- Working on ways to make the project more accessible to the public, given the extreme length of the report which runs into the thousands of pages including appendices
- Helping community boards and other relevant community stakeholders find ways to incentivize the engagement of elected officials in this process

### **External Factors**

- Learning and sharing with the community more detail about the current infrastructure situation under the west side highway and Hudson River Park – including the makeup of the ground/soil, location of conduits, electrical lines, sewage, etc., all of which will have a major impact on project design and construction
- Considering the impact of the project on the bike lane expansion which has been previously proposed along the west side highway



- Considering the possible impact of congestion pricing on the project, given that the west side highway is a major thoroughfare
- Considering issues of emergency access along the west side highway, during the construction phase as well as after the project is completed

**Vote:** Unanimous, with 39 Board Members in favor.

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Jeannine Kiely, Chair  
Community Board #2, Manhattan



William Benesh, Chair  
Quality of Life Committee  
Community Board #2, Manhattan

JK/em

cc: Hon. Brad Hoylman-Sigal, State Senator  
Hon. Brian Kavanaugh, State Senator  
Hon. Dan Goldman, Congressperson  
Hon. Deborah Glick, Assembly Member  
Hon. Mark Levine, Man. Borough President  
Hon. Christopher Marte, City Council Member  
Hon. Erik Bottcher, City Council Member  
Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Council Member  
Johanna Lawton, Rebuild By Design  
Edward Pincar Jr., Manhattan Borough Commissioner  
Adam S. Levine, Traffic Safety and Mobility Director  
Sue Donoghue, NYC Parks Commissioner