

May 8, 2003

Robert Balachandran  
President  
Hudson River Park Trust  
Pier 40  
New York, NY

**Re: Segment 5**

Dear Mr. Balachandran,

Thank you for the opportunity to hear the latest plans for Segment 5. The board's Waterfront and Parks Committee was generally pleased to see the progress, and for the most part found the programmatic changes well-conceived and exciting. We were also interested to hear from the three artists working in the segment, and found their plans to be excellent additions to the park.

We do have some comments, which follow below.

**Pier 64**

As you know, the board supported the removal of the shed, and some committee members were therefore pleased to see an open pier. While the model did not illustrate this, the board is supportive of a grove of trees that Michael Van Valkenberg described for the northern and southern edges of the pier, mostly for the shade it would provide in summer. Otherwise, since the model indicated nothing had been considered, we would like to see some shade structure or structures, kept light and open on the sides, especially at the end of their pier. This is a comment we received over and over again in public hearings.

Also, while no benches were shown on the model, we of course expect that they will be added to the pier, especially along the edges.

**Pier 63**

The board is pleased to see plans for the sloping lawn and the broad promenade at its base closest to the water. The bluestone slabs cum benches were very well received, as were the trees and benches up the hill nearer the highway. The concept for the floating get-close seems like a fabulous idea, and we love the concept of moveable deck chairs, since the float could be locked at night.

Meg Webster's concept for a meadow and boulder garden near the base of Pier 64 should be an excellent addition to the segment, as well as an interesting transition space between the lawn and the open pier.

### **Pier 62**

While the board supports active recreation at this location, we have questions about the choice of a skate park for several reasons. First, there will be two other skate parks in the park, and we question the need for yet another. Second, and this was perhaps the most common complaint about the design from the public, the music that accompanies skate parks is not something anyone looks forward to. If in fact this use remains at this location, all efforts must be made to contain the music to within the "bowl."

That said, the board would rather see a more flexible active space at this location, one that will not be out-of-style in five years and one that can be used by a broader demographic than just teenagers with wheels. We suggest putting a rink at this spot, rather than the cement bowl, since it can be used for hockey but also many other uses as well. It can be divided for separate sports; it could be used for events; it could even be outfitted for ice-skating in winter. And it would be the only hockey rink in Manhattan, since the one on Pier 62 currently is the last remaining.

The committee also suggests that some area at this place be added for unorganized exercise, i.e. stretching and calisthenics. Our thought is the area could be made of soft surfacing, such as that in playgrounds, for high-impact individual exercise, as well as sit-ups, push-ups, etc.

If indeed a third skate park must be included in the segment, we suggest exploring the area just south of the heliport, even though this is in a different segment. Noise at that location would have little impact on other park users, given its location next to the highway.

We look forward to seeing Lynden Miller's arrival garden realized, as well as the crabapple grove and carousel. When it comes time for administering the segment, we hope the trust will make every effort to keep the fees for the carousel low or indeed free. And we also suggest you seek out the antique carousel being restored by David Walentas, since it may not find an appropriate home in Brooklyn Bridge Park.

The board supports the end of the pier left open, both for enjoyment of views and for the off-hours use by dog owners in the neighborhood. It was unclear to us how the size of this open area compares to the one currently on the pier, and we hope they are comparable. Again, we ask that some shade structure, one that is open and unobtrusive, be added to the end of the pier, along with appropriate benches and especially for the dog owners, garbage receptacles.

### **Parts South and Pier 54**

The board is very excited about George Trakas' concept for a bridge spanning the bulkhead and Pier 59, in three segments, connected by two island bases. Not only will it be a great way to get pedestrians off the bulkhead and onto the water at one of the park's less appealing segments, but also it is an exciting opportunity for engineering as art. Mr. Trakas' proposal has the full support of the board, and its inventive approach to "bridging" promises to be a real experience. One member of our audience suggested that the two "islands" be designed as floating structures, so

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that the entire bridge would move up and down with the tides, and George Trakas, as well as several others, agreed that this idea would be an excellent addition to his design.

The committee was pleased with Justen Ladda's proposals for the planters on Pier 54, as well as the lit star at the pier's entrance. However, we suggest the benches built into the planters face the water as well as the interior of the pier. When the pier is not being used for events, most park users will prefer to face south, to look out on the water.

Also, since this pier is designated as a historic ship pier, bollards and cleats must be added to the bulkhead on the outside of the railing

Again, we thank you for the opportunity to see the designs at this point, and look forward to the completion of this phase of the project.

Sincerely,



Simone Sindin

Chair

Manhattan Community Board No. 4



John Doswell

Co-Chair

Waterfront & Parks Committee

Pam Frederick

Co-Chair

Waterfront & Parks Committee

This letter was passed at Manhattan Community Board No. 4's May 7, 2003 full board meeting.

cc: Local Elected Officials