

ESCR CAG Meeting -- July 25, 2024
(via Zoom)

CAG members present

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[Link to slide deck for this presentation](#)

DDC Presentation of Updates

Desiree Gazzo, HNTB-LiRo

1. Emergency Preparedness Outreach Resources
 - a. OEM representative wasn't available tonight, but here some resources. It's up to you or your building to reach out to OEM to schedule a training or guidance with developing an emergency plan.
 - b. Ready New York Guides:
 - i. Hurricane preparedness guides
 - ii. Tips for developing your emergency plan
 - iii. Links to Ready NYC mobile app
 - iv. nyc.gov/site/em/ready/guides-resources.page
 - c. Hurricane Evacuation Zone Finder: maps.nyc.gov/hurricane or call 311
 - d. More coastal storm & hurricane preparedness information: nyc.gov/site/em/ready/coastal-storms-hurricanes.page
 - e. Attending September CAG – but you can reach out anytime!
2. Overview of Contracts (*see slide 6*)
 - a. PA1
 - i. We're very focused on rebuilding the park south of the Williamsburg Bridge and getting ballfields 1 & 2 open for September 1st.
 - ii. North of Houston Street and ballfields 3, 4, and 5 – deep sewer work; fill is starting to come in.
 - iii. Moving forward with the utility work at E. 10th Street
 - iv. Building the floodwall in the south
 - b. PA2
 - i. Building back Murphy Brothers Playground
 - c. PC (Parallel Conveyance)
 - i. Prep work for the interceptor gate
 - ii. Utility work by Water St.

3. PA1 Construction Update (*see slide 8*)
 - a. Esplanade reconstruction along the waterfront south of Delancey
 - b. Ongoing pile install, floodwall, and park drainage work
 - c. Park reconstruction: curbs, paths, and amenities
 - d. Corlears Hook bridge to be coming in soon; being staged in the same spot where the Delancey Street bridge was (in the passive lawn area)
 - e. Ongoing utility and floodwall work by Montgomery St.
 - f. E. Houston St. pile install and esplanade removal and survey work, preparing it to receive the preconstructed concrete pier caps
 - g. E. 10th St. utility work and preparation for microtunneling
4. PA1 Construction Update: Photos of microtunneling at E. 10th St. (*see slide 9*)
 - a. Vehicular and pedestrian detour there currently
 - b. Completed work
 - i. March – September 2023: ConEd gas and steam work
 - ii. Summer 2023: ConEd electrical work
 - c. 2024
 - i. Ongoing: excavation work, requiring daytime road & partial sidewalk closures
 - ii. Microtunneling currently on track to begin in mid-August/September
 - d. 2025
 - i. E. 10th Street Bridge demolition and reconstruction
5. Delancey St. Pedestrian Bridge Deck Pour photos (*see slide 10*)
 - a. Fence, deck, and pavement under construction now that “bones” of the bridge are in place
 - b. Bridge to open in September
6. PA1 Construction photos of esplanade paver mock-up near ballfields 1 & 2 and nature exploration area (*see slide 11*)
7. PA1 Construction photos of wick drain installation¹ at ballfields 3, 4, & 5 to help with soil settlement (*see slide 12*)
8. Reminder: As we get into the rebuilding phase of the new park, we urge those with specific design-related questions to see the [PDC \(Public Design Commission\) presentations](#) on our website. Feel free to submit questions, but since we’re not the design team we’re likely going to have to take them back if they’re very specific.
9. PA1 Safety Features at Entrances (*see slide 15*)
 - a. Delancey and E. 10th Street bridges (*see slide 16*)
 - i. Bollards at base of approach
 - ii. Vehicle barrier curb on bridge span
 - b. E. 6th St. bridge
 - i. No vehicle access to the park
 - c. Safety features at Montgomery Street near Pier 42 park entrance (*see slide 17*)
 - i. Removable bollards and a vehicle gate
 - ii. Stone barrier along the FDR ramp
 - d. Safety features at Corlears Hook Bridge (*see slide 18*)
 - i. Fixed bollards and a vehicle gate

¹ For further information on wick drains, see slide 10 of the [March 2023 CAG meeting presentation](#).

- ii. Deterrent furniture
- iii. Non-mountable curb
- e. Safety features at E. Houston Street (*see slide 19*)
 - i. Walls
 - ii. Vehicle gate
 - iii. Stone barriers
 - iv. Fixed bollards

10. PA1 What We've Heard²

- a. Responses to CAG Questions: in progress
- b. Ballfields 1 & 2: space will be available for spectators to bring chairs for game viewing
 - i. Parks Department will handle Ballfield 1 & 2 closures at dusk in the same manner as other parks throughout the city: closing the fields at the base of the Delancey Street bridge and reopening it the next day
- c. Public hearing: Parks Department proposing to change its rules to clarify requirements for ballfield and court reservations August 8, 2024, at 10 am in Chelsea Recreation Center (430 W. 25th St.)
 - i. Some of the proposals specifically address issues that CAG members have raised about inequitable permitting process and access to the park's ballfields.
 - ii. Press release here: <https://www.nycgovparks.org/news/press-releases?id=22170>

11. PA2 Construction photos of Murphy Brothers Playground (*see slide 22*)

- a. Early fall opening is hoped for (last park for PA2)

12. PC Construction progress (*see slide 24*)

- a. Most of the work is in the Jackson St. & Water St. & Corlears Hook Park area
 - i. Utility relocation & test pits
 - ii. Prep for excavation for south interceptor gate chamber
 - iii. To begin sewer work
 - iv. Water Street from Gouverneur Slip E to Jackson St. closure in effect 24/7 for continuation of new 24" sewer work (microtunneling)
- b. Ongoing utility relocation at other locations
- c. Intermittent bus stop closure at Columbia St. on hold

13. PC Construction photos (*see slide 25*)

- a. Hydrant installation on Baruch Dr. & Delancey St. North, ConEd work on Water St., test pit to locate interceptor sewer

14. Brooklyn Bridge - Montgomery Coastal Resiliency (BMCR) Floodgates Quick Update

- a. We don't cover BMCR at CAG meetings, but we wanted people to be aware that the flip up gates have arrived, and many of them have been installed (*see slides 27 and 28*).

15. ESCR in Your Community

² Luc Alicea of NYC Parks covered the points about how the ballfields will close and the public hearing about changing Parks Department rules related to making ballfield and court reservations.

- a. You can request a tabling event in your neighborhood through the inquiry tool or email ESCRCCL1@ddccr.com
- b. Recent and upcoming engagement events
 - i. July 16: Tabling near Gouverneur Gardens
 - ii. July 30: Tabling near Corlears Hook Park
 - iii. August 1: Riis Houses ESCR update
 - iv. August 10: Tabling at Riis Family Day
 - v. September: More NYCHA Family Days

Q & A

Michael: Thank you for the slides on all the entrances. For the ones that have vehicular gates and removable bollards, who's able to move them?

Luc: We need to iron out the specifics with the local emergency services. We have a similar set-up going into the East Midtown greenway; there's a key-style thing we share with the FDNY and NYPD so that we can use it for maintenance and regular operations, and they can get in there for emergencies. The preferred method is those gates with the traditional lock.

Michael: What does that mean for the amphitheater? Will they still be allowed to drive trucks full of stuff for things like Summerstage, or is it only emergency vehicles?

Luc: That's a conversation we need to have. I would imagine that, for example, LESEC is going to have some vehicles. I don't think our stance is going to only allow emergency vehicles, but we don't want more vehicles than necessary. I think would be a case-by-case basis for the amphitheater.

Michael: Regarding PC work, there have been a lot of supplies and equipment stored along the Jackson Street border of Corlears and then it seems to have disappeared overnight. Is that area being used for a staging area for equipment for all places, or is that just Corlears' stuff?

Desiree: I'll have to get back to you on that one. *Note: Right after the meeting, Ethan Kraft (of HNTB) shared that the contractor has removed the storage on Jackson Street and is now using Water Street for storage in order to provide more parking for the community on Jackson Street*

Dianne: Regarding the PDC document, I've been spending a lot of time looking at it, and I'm realizing that there are certain places that lack enough detail to answer some of CAG's and community's questions. For example, you can see that there's seating at ballfields 1 and 2, but it's not clear if they're benches or bleachers or what, and there's nothing in the appendices to explain that. What do you recommend for getting more specificity from them about some of those finer details?

Desiree: Similar to how you've put together a list of questions based on a certain topic, you can prepare a letter of the park's finishing touches that are not in the PDC document. It's helpful if you use the PDC document as a reference source; cite the page in question. Also, you should look at both the preliminary and the final because things that didn't change from the preliminary plan are not necessarily in the final one; they work hand in hand.

Dianne: Shortly after the July 4th weekend, there was a lot of focus on the tragedy at Corlears Hook Park. There also was an incident at Houston Street, where someone seems to have gone onto the FDR, maybe through the slip ramp. Do you have comments on that, and what kind of safety precautions are being taken in that area?

Desiree: There was an incident, but as far as I know the details about exactly what happened aren't clear. As a result, there was a review of the area, and extra barriers, barricades, and I believe a gate have been installed. More signage was added, and crosswalk striping was reinforced.

Dianne: Are the exits and entrances to the park still a shared responsibility between the contractor and DOT? And is Parks involved in this at all?

Desiree: It's a multi-agency project so we work as a team. There are contract drawings we have to follow and reviews with different agencies when we have to close lanes, ramps, and sidewalks. We continue to work with all our agency partners to make sure the project is running smoothly and that aspects of it are approved based on what the different entities need, including emergency personnel. When we have to, say, close a ramp, they come down and do radius turning tests to ensure they have access to everything. So for most of the project it's a multi-agency effort.

Dianne: Also, it's helpful to have the information about how individual residents and buildings can learn about emergency preparedness, but my question was about preparations to keep the construction equipment safe and off the FDR if Sandy happens again. If OEM could also speak to that when they come to the September meeting, that would be very helpful.

Desiree: Storm preparation is part of the health and safety plans that the contractors have to present before construction starts. Different city agencies send out alerts in advance of storms to tell contractors when they have to stop work and secure a crane, for example. There are different types of notifications that are specifically for the entities working in the city.

Robin: I was also concerned about what's happening at those crosswalks at Houston when you enter the park. Will there be bollards there to prevent vehicles from going in?

Desiree: (See slide 19) The bollards are set in from that initial entrance area, then there are the FDR Drive edge walls on either side of the crosswalks, and the other barriers exist right inside the park, off the FDR ramp.

Robin: I find the open pinch point concerning, that cars will fly up the ramp and into the park. I pointed this out when I was on the Parks committee. Also, who do we talk to about the shade issues, seating, and ballfields? The playgrounds at Pier 42 are useless with no shade. I don't know who else we need to talk to. Also, for Parks: it'd be great if there were signage about the permit meeting because there were people just sitting and waiting to play tennis.

Desiree: You can submit any questions about the ESCR project to us, and we'll get you the answers. If there are a lot of questions, it'd be helpful if they were organized by topic: design elements/amenities and safety elements.

Luc: Regarding the shade structure, we did look into it a little bit. There's no formalized shade over any of the dugout areas. We're still looking at what could work. Putting up a shade structure is not as easy as we initially thought; there are concerns about putting in a hard structure because it could be habitated, so we're looking at having an attachment point to which leagues can attach something more formalized. We're also looking at shade in Pier 42. For the permitting meeting, I agree that we should publicly post in areas that require permitting so people can give feedback on amending the permitting rules.

Desiree: Does Pier 42 have permitting, or is it free play?

Luc: I believe it's all permitted right now.

Christine: It's heartbreaking when someone is killed because they couldn't figure out how to find their way in or out of the park, but I also have more concerns about entering the park on Houston St. I enter it almost every day, and what I've observed is that people coming from the south up the ramp and go straight instead of making a left turn. The other day a bus did that,

and there was a woman with a small child on the other side who had the walk sign, and if she hadn't looked something bad would have happened. We need to get a conversation going with DOT; it's unsafe now, and once the park opens, it's not going to improve because more people will be exposed to the various hazards of that intersection.

Also, as Desiree said that the 10th St. pedestrian bridge won't be demolished until 2025, that leads me to believe that you have a schedule of what you're going to do in 2025 in terms of park closure. When are you planning on sharing that with the CAG so we have time to give input?

Desiree: I'll happily present that information as soon as I have it. Some of the larger items have tentative schedules, so we're working through the amenity closures and openings. I would hope that in the next few months we can provide an update.

Christine: I'd appreciate that because time runs.

Desiree: Are there specific things you have in mind?

Christine: We went through the same exercise last time when some sections around Houston St. were closed, and we had comments. That's why we're meeting, to give you the community's perspective to inform your decisions. It's supposed to be a dialogue, and dialogues take time.

Desiree: Yes, 100%. I just wanted to see if you had specific questions now. Also, regarding anything with DOT – similar to the other topic areas – if you write a memo or letter, we can pass it forward to that agency.

Luc: On the DOT front, it'd be helpful to capture what everyone said regarding street crossing concerns. I'm going to reach out about the Pier 42 access point, and I'd be happy to take the notes from the community and bundle them with the Pier 42 concerns and see what we can do to improve safety.

Dianne: Paula, didn't we send a letter from the CAG about when that Houston St. crossing was first changed?

Paula: I don't remember; I'll have to check. *Note: Paula checked and found that a letter had not been sent. However, at the May 2022 CAG meeting, someone asked if more detail could be provided about the proposed Houston Street entrance and retention wall, and that information was provided at the June 2022 meeting. It can be found on slide 18-20 here:*

https://www.nyc.gov/assets/escr/downloads/pdf/20220623-ESCR-CAG-Meeting-22_Final.pdf

Desiree: We've had walkthroughs at Houston Street and at the Montgomery Street/Pier 42 area. I think there were comments in the past, and we did go back and check these spaces out, but I just want to reiterate that you should send over your concerns, and we'll revisit it.

CAG-only

Dianne: Last time we met we agreed that we were going to put together a list of change requests from the CAG, including shade structure and tree placement. I had volunteered to help with that and looked at the PDC design document, but it didn't have enough details in it. I've never tried comparing the preliminary with the final (as Desiree mentioned earlier), but I'll give it a shot.

I made notes about:

- Wanting to have a clear sense of where all the trees were, but you have to piece that together by looking at individual slides
- I can't tell what kind of seating is near the ballfields.
- We know there are no shade structures, but we need to figure out where they might be placed.

- Where are the water sources for the new plantings and shrubs? I couldn't find a map of them in the document.

I can draft something for everyone to look at that would reference the PDC document, but I think a lot of what we're concerned about isn't actually visible, and I think we need to push them on that.

Christine: Thank you, Dianne.

Dianne: It'd be fine if there were enough detail in certain places, but a lot is glossed over. If there are other things people are concerned about, it would be great to get a list of those so we can check the document and see if those concerns are addressed at all.

Robin: Thank you, Dianne. Besides what you just mentioned, what are the next steps? Do you need some help?

Dianne: I'll put my notes in a Google doc. and share it with Paula and Tara, and then they can share it and see if anyone's interested in fleshing it out.

Paula: Tara and I have a work conflict on September 26, which is presumably the date for the next CAG meeting (since there will not be one in August). We'd like to propose having it the week prior, on the 19th. Desiree is okay with that.

Dianne: It seems like the sooner we get back together in September the better.

Robin: I just finally visited Stuy Cove Park, and I was quite surprised at how it's been designed. All the green stuff is up on a hill behind a wrought iron fence, and all the open space is just concrete and tables. I'm fearful about what the rest of the park is going to look like.

Richard: There's a wall between the bike path and the river...

Dina: We're not excited that they ignored all of our request for shade structures. There are many issues with the design of Stuy Cove, and we're trying to figure out how to mitigate it. We got funding from the Councilmember to put up shade structures. We're already thinking about how to cleverly deal with the fact they thought we needed more pavement. It's extremely frustrating; there are splash zones by the benches, and we're seeing white rust on the railings since they're not made of marine grade stainless steel. So far, they haven't complied with our request to move the benches. We have a whole punch list of items that they haven't addressed. We're starting to feel like they're not going to address the problems they've caused, and it's going to be up to us to figure out. That's probably going to mean raised beds on wheels. One of the elevated paths isn't ADA compliant, and they're supposed to address that but may not. We may just end up tearing up the concrete and taking that path out since it doesn't lead to anywhere anyway. If I knew how unresponsive they'd be and how tone deaf they are about what's actually needed in this space, I would have advocated for them to just build flipdown walls under the highway. I didn't bring it up because Desiree has no power to do anything about these things. It's disappointing and frustrating and all the more reason to get some specificity on some of the things that Dianne mentioned.

Robin: Thank you, Dina. Maybe the CAG should request more on-site meetings before things open. Maybe we could try to get another walkthrough before ballfields 1 and 2 are open to the public.

Dina: I can also share that any time we've said "this is not a good idea" or "you really should consider changing this element," the automatic and constant response is "we aren't design; we're just construction, so we have to do whatever is on the plan. Of course, they don't always do what's in the plan when it's inconvenient for the contractor. When we or EDC has tried to get in touch with DDC's design team, they don't respond

Christine: Did EDC accept the park as finished?

Dina: No, but they're acting as though we have anyway. From our and EDC's points of view, it is not substantially completed, they haven't done the things we've asked them to do to complete it, but the contractors told Candace that they're moving on. They don't honor their agreements; they've been some of the worst partners that I've worked with in 17 years.

Christine: What could we as the CAG do? That sounds unacceptable.

Dina: I agree, but they're unresponsive to any pressure from anyone.

Christine: where does the Councilmember stand?

Dina: Everyone says it's unacceptable, but there's nothing we can do to hold them accountable. Part of the reason Councilmember Powers gave us \$50,000 for shade is because people have been calling his office constantly, saying "why is there no shade?"

Robin: Isn't that what the CAG is supposed to be here for?

Dianne: Well, I think that's part of the reason we're talking about putting together this letter or set of letters to point out deficiencies in the design and get it in writing. However, what I'm hearing Dina say is that it's a start, but it may not be enough.

Dina: It's possible that it will take throwing a really big fit, going to the media, going to the mayor's office. So far, our pressure hasn't been effective. We're the smallest entity involved in this process, so they don't feel like they need to respond to us. They seem to be just as unresponsive to EDC as they are to us, which is not a good sign. I'm definitely not saying that we should give up though.

Robin: Thanks, Dina. Dianne, I can't wait to see your letter.

Paula: Yes, thanks Dina. Dianne, I'll share the letter with the CAG when you send it to me.