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**July 14, 2020 Virtual Town Hall
Roosevelt Island Community Forum
Unanswered Questions**

Topic: Southpoint Park Shoreline Project

Maria Orraca: When the community was polled about their preferences and voted to have greater access to the river, were they aware that the price for that access would be the destruction of trees?

RIOC Response: Yes, they were aware. RIOC conducted surveys in-person and online. We will post the survey on our website.

How can we ensure the project is environmentally friendly?

RIOC Response: The proposed plan was reviewed and approved by federal, state, and local agencies charged with protecting the environment, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) – Fish and Wildlife Services, the National Marine Fisheries Services (NOAA), the New York State Departmental of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the New York City Small Business Service (SBS); among others.

Are the trees being destroyed to be replaced with the same type of trees?

RIOC Response: Native naturalized trees will be planted consisting of a mix of trees, shrubs and plantings. Of the 99 trees that will be removed from the construction site, approximately 79 trees, in addition to shrubs and plantings, will be replaced upon completion of the project. Please visit the RIOC website for specific planting schedule.

Linda Becker: Concerned about RIOC and the Landscape and Horticulture company. How can we ensure the trees planted will be properly managed?

RIOC Response: Our Landscape contractor is responsible for managing the full 19 acres of the island including South Point Park, Lighthouse Park, Blackwell Park, Firefighter’s Field, Capobianco Field, Pony Field, all plant beds, etc. The nature of the work includes grass cutting/treatments, edging, seasonal planting, pruning, curbing reseeding, integrated pest management program, weed/fungus control, fertilization, aerification, tree sourcing and installation, irrigation repairs, and water management.

Susan Phillips: Why would RIOC destroy the slightest bit of natural vegetation?

RIOC Response: As a matter of health and public safety, the reformation to the island seawalls are a necessity to ensure resiliency of the southern end of Roosevelt Island. RIOC has engaged professional engineers and specialists to analyze all aspects of the Southpoint Park to provide a solution that will serve the community today and for future generations. The work in this area requires removals, however, as previously shared with the community via town halls, public committee meetings, board meetings, and online, we will be replacing trees, shrubs, and plants that are from this region.

Delia Leon de Cameo: How old are the trees that are being cut down?

RIOC Response: Majority are less than 8 years old, however the larger diameter trees are older.

Is it sustainable to cut down older trees, and replace them with younger ones?

RIOC Response: The loss of marginal habitat in the project area will be short term and temporary. As shown on the project drawings, the plant species the project proposes are those that are either naturalized or are naturally occurring (i.e. native) to the region. More importantly, native plants are those which native, local and migratory wildlife and avian species have evolved with and are dependent upon. Also understand that we are only working on a small region of the park and the wildlife will still be able to habitat on Roosevelt Island.

Can you share the results of the survey?

RIOC Response: We will post them online.

Louella Streit: What percentage of the community participated in the survey to make such decisions?

RIOC Response: 186 community members answered, *“What are your top five priorities for Southpoint Open Space?”*. Of the 186 respondents, 44.6% requested River Access.

Joyce M. Short: What type of material will be used for pathway?

RIOC Response: Stone salvaged from the removal of the existing seawalls will be reused for the stone pedestrian path. (Sustainability).

What is the amount of trucking coming to Main St. on this project?

RIOC Response: RIOC will review and respond after coordination with contractor.

What is the risk to Island residents from the contaminated soil if they have been exposed to it for years?

RIOC Response: Low. The area in question has been fenced off and access to the area has been limited in an effort to protect the public from the contaminated elements. According to our consultants, the contaminated soil consists of metallic elements and is not air born; so long as the contaminated material is not ingested or touched, preventing public access to this area was sufficient protection.

How much trucking will be involved in the project?

RIOC Response: RIOC will review and respond after coordination with contractor.

Katina Metzidakis: How dangerous is the wall in case of another natural disaster? Can it withstand another Sandy?

RIOC Response: The existing stone seawalls will continue failing if the seawalls are not replaced. Based on these conditions and impacts from previous storms, the seawall will most likely sustain significant damage if another superstorm occurs.

Ellen Polivy Is it true that environmental cap and fill already exists in Central Park area?

RIOC Response: Yes.

Susan Ceely Philips: What is the type of toxin in soil?

RIOC response: On site soils contain elevated concentration of lead and other heavy metals consistent with urban fill.

Vicki Feinmel: Will the new area with shoreline access have shaded areas?

RIOC Response: Yes, the proposed landscape includes shade trees on both shorelines.

Susy Del Campo Perea: Are you going to use barges? Or, are you going to use trucks? Concerned about pollution from trucks.

RIOC Response: Trucks will be utilized for this project.

How are you going to protect all the children that use this park from not falling down to the water?

RIOC Response: Design has curbs installed at paths edge and the slope of the wall is very gradual. Path will be managed by RIOC and closed at certain hours of the day.

Janet Linville: Concerned about the animal shelter on Queens side. Will that also be cut down and capped and then re-grown?

RIOC Response: A new permanent and larger cat sanctuary has been created with running water, lighting and power. It is positioned in a central location of the park that is safer for the feral cats and other animals, and more visitors will have access to view.

Is the cap only on the West Side?

RIOC Response: No, both shores.

Is there any rendering for the east side with visuals of the wildlife area?

RIOC Response: No, the east side renderings included the previous design.

Topic: Cat Sanctuary

Kathryn Heintz from NYC Audubon: What plans does RIOC have for birds in the native-plant areas with regard to the ongoing "feral" cat colony?

RIOC Response: We don't have a plan at this moment.

Melissa Godwin: How did the "cat chalet" come to be? How and why are public funds allocated to the cat project, when it is contrary to public health and environmental best practices?

Dezama Dezama: Are the cats allowed to roam outside sanctuary. If not, will they destroy the birds? Have you consulted the NYC Audubon or American Bird Conservancy?

RIOC Response: The relocation and construction of a new cat sanctuary was necessary in order to facilitate the larger construction project in Southpoint Park. Since construction on the east seawall will occur in the exact area where the old cat sanctuary is located, it was necessary to repurpose and relocate the feral cats in order to ensure their safety during this much needed health and public safety construction project on the seawalls; and it is for that reason that the new cat sanctuary was built.

However, as part of the review process for this construction, it being near and in the East River, the project, the project plans, and project designs were reviewed and approved by several federal, state, and local agencies/authorities that oversee wildlife and land preservation, including: the Office of General Services' Bureau of Land Management; the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; the United States Fish and Wildlife Services of the Department of Interior; the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; FEMA; the Army Corps of Engineers; and the National Marine Fisheries Service's Protected Resources Division.

RIOC has also received required permits from these various entities as a result of their review of the construction project, which has been deemed by them to cause little impact to the wildlife in that area. Further, Mr. Michael Nevins, a Sr. Project Manager and professional level scientist, of Langan Engineering, has studied this project and what impact if any the project would have on the wildlife and per his professional opinion, the wildlife will return upon completion of the project and the new aesthetics of Southpoint Park will further attract native wildlife in addition to the wildlife that is already there.

Topic: Public Safety Department

Barbara Parker - RISA President: Will there be more security and presence of Public Safety in the Roosevelt Landing Buildings? It is the only building that does not have lobby door stations.

RIOC Response: Currently there are no plans for additional officers in the Roosevelt Landing buildings. One officer per shift, 7 days a week is assigned to the Roosevelt Landing buildings to conduct verticals and patrol the buildings. PSD responds to all calls for service in the buildings. Additionally, there is no uptick in calls for services or crimes in buildings. Roosevelt Island remains one of the safest neighborhoods in all of New York City.

What is being done concerning bike safety issues on Roosevelt Island?

RIOC Response:

PSD is handling the bike concerns in three phases:

- Education: PSD for the past month has been giving out information on bike safety. We have distributed over 2,500 flyers to bike riders on both the east and west promenade, on Main Street, in and around all parks.
- Engineering: PSD, along with our Capital Planning and Projects department, has produced signage with specific bike directions. Our engineering department is also erecting all the signs on both the east and west promenades, Main Street, and around the parks. These signs will be installed in the following days.
- Enforcement: PSD is in the enforcement phase of the bike issue. Our officers have been directed to issue summonses to any violators of bike rules and regulations. Currently we have 16 officers in training who are not yet State, or NYC certified. This means they cannot take any enforcement action (Arrest or Summonses) at this time. In order to become a Peace Officer, a training must be completed. Once the officers are designated special patrolmen/women they can then enforce the bike laws and all other laws. We currently have on 2-3 officers per tour who are Special Patrolman and who can write summonses. PSD has been giving numerous warnings and

admonishments to bike riders. We are working with the community and have been reluctant to issue bike summonses. The issuing of summonses comes with a greater negative contact between the community and the PSD officers.

Louella Streitz: Disabled Association Support for Homebound, Disabled and Elderly (DASH)

Do not believe that the preservation of the birds and geese habitats have been properly taken into account. How will animals wait for one year before there are any plantings to serve as nesting grounds?

RIOC Response: The loss of marginal habitat in the project area will be short term and temporary. As shown on the project drawings, the plant species the project proposes are those that are either naturalized or are naturally occurring (i.e. native) to the region. More importantly, native plants are those which native, local and migratory wildlife and avian species have evolved with and are dependent upon. Also understand that we are only working on a small region of the park and the wildlife will still be able to habitat on Roosevelt Island.

Shula Chernick from rom the center @ Lenox Hill: When will various businesses reopen? e.g.: the new library and the Amalgamated Bank branch, etc.

RIOC response: Amalgamated Bank is currently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They plan to close the branch permanently at the end of September.

The NY Public Library is also temporarily closed due to the outbreak of COVID-19. We will provide more information as it becomes available.

Topic: Amalgamated Bank Closure

Judy Buck: Is there something residents can do about the forthcoming loss of our one and only bank?

RIOC Response: RIOC is currently marketing the space to organizations we have existing relationships with.

There is now an ATM at Nisi restaurant, but due to health precautions, the machine is not currently accessible. Do we know when ATM will open?

RIOC Response: Amalgamated indicated that they would service the ATM machines this week. There are also ATM machines in Duane Reade and Foodtown as an alternative.

Raye Schwartz: What are we doing to get another bank after Amalgamated closes in September? The ATMs on the island have been malfunctioning, leaving us with no place to get cash. What is being done to fix this?

RIOC Response: We are in the process of marketing the space with organizations we have relationships with, we have had several conversations thus far. Amalgamated indicated that they would service the ATM machines this week. There are also ATM machines in Duane Reade and Foodtown as an alternative.

Judy Birdy: Concerned about the closing of the bank. Can you postpone closing or find a replace immediately?

RIOC Response: RIOC is not in control of the bank's business decisions relative to closing the branch. Amalgamated cannot postpone as they indicated that they have submitted all the necessary paperwork to affect the closure. RIOC is not in control the bank branch marketplace so RIOC is not in a position to estimate a timeline of when Amalgamated can be replaced.

Topic: Bike Lane/Ramp

Conor O'Brien: What are the plans for Bicycle Street planning / Infrastructure / Wayfinding?

RIOC Response: In the coming weeks, RIOC's facilities team will be installing bike path wayfinding and safety signage along east and west promenades. Signs will be posted at the narrow portions of the promenades for bikers to dismount and walk their bikes.

Sangeeta Joseph: What are the plans to create a bike lane? The increased bike traffic has created some dangerous situations

RIOC Response: In April 2017, RIOC was approved for a \$2.96 million award from the New York State Department of Transportation's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) – Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) towards the estimated \$4 million ramp construction.

In 2018, RIOC procured Dewberry Engineers and their team including Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects to design a bike only ramp from the helix and a bike lane along the east promenade.

The proposed Roosevelt Island Bike Ramp and Eastside Bike Lane Promenade project aims to construct a bike ramp connecting bicyclists from the top of the Roosevelt Island Bridge down to the east promenade and provide a two-way ¾-mile safe path for bicyclists along the waterfront of the Island away from Main Street vehicular traffic.

In 2019, RIOC was approved for a second TAP award, \$5 million; to be applied to the construction costs of the bike lane which includes infrastructure improvements, along with new pavement, landscape, lighting and signage.

Currently both projects are in early design and layout phase, construction is expected to commence in 2022.

Topic: Miscellaneous

Marion Nturu: Why is the Westview conversion taking so long? How will they support affordable housing ownership?

RIOC Response: RIOC is unable to answer this question as is not within our jurisdiction.

Andrea Jackson: On Main St., waterside walkways and roadways are filled with litter and broken glass. Is there a plan to resolve the issue that RIOC has?

RIOC Response: Our team is challenged daily with creating a clean and aesthetically pleasing environment for the community. The Grounds Department is committed to this experience and is working diligently to address these issues.

What is the plan to address the influx of homeless loiterers on the island and in the building complexes hallways and stairwells?

RIOC Response: Due to the NYC transit system closure for overnight disinfection, our Public Safety Department (PSD) has received more complaints about homeless calls than usual. PSD responds to any incidents of trespassing and either arrest or if possible, refer to the nearest shelter. PSD has identified a few chronic homeless that we routinely escort to shelters.