

THE
TRUST
for
PUBLIC
LAND



February 25, 2005

Dear RIOC Board Member:

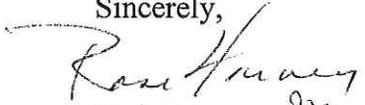
Mid-Atlantic
Regional Office
666 Broadway
Ninth Floor
New York, NY
10012
T. 212-677-7171
F. 212-353-2052
www.tpl.org

As you may know, at the request of RIOC and the State, the Trust for Public Land began a conceptual master plan for Southpoint in early 2004. Since that time, a great deal has been accomplished.

Herb Berman and RIOC Board Member Patrick Stewart were part of an Advisory Committee, that also included other Island residents and outside experts, which guided the project. Interviews with 38 local "stakeholders" as well as many current visitors to Southpoint provided us with significant information, leading to project visions and goals, as well as three alternate conceptual plans. Well-attended public meetings were held to obtain feedback on the three plans, and later to get input on and gain support for the preferred plan known as "Wild Gardens/Green Rooms." We also presented at our December public meeting a scheme for implementing a Phase One park development, to stabilize the Renwick Ruin and other parts of the site and provide basic park infrastructure. The attached materials provide much more detail.

At your March 10th meeting, we will be presenting our work to date, for your information, with a special focus on our proposed Phase One. It should be noted that while the proposed FDR Memorial is not part of the Wild Gardens/ Green Rooms plan which was preferred by our Advisory Committee and residents who participated in our public meetings, Phase One implementation does not preclude development of the memorial at a later date.

Sincerely,


Rose Harvey *Jm*
Senior Vice President
& Regional Director



Andy Stone
Director, New York City Program

Southpoint Park

Project description

Prepared by Charles McKinney

February 24, 2005

In late 2003, the State of New York and the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation requested the Trust for Public Land to lead park creation efforts at Southpoint because of the organization's extensive park experience in New York City and nationwide.

The Trust for Public Land began its planning process in April 2004 under the guidance of Andy Stone, director of the New York City Program. Mark K. Morrison Associates LTD, landscape architects, examined the Southpoint Park site and catalogued its attributes such as unique places, habitats, views, and microclimate. They identified the site's opportunities and constraints. The Hall Partnership, Architects, examined the Renwick ruin and its structural documentation.

Charles McKinney, the project director, and Joanne Morse, the New York City program coordinator for the Trust for Public Land, conducted structured interviews with 38 community leaders and group representatives from Roosevelt Island. They interviewed a cross-section of ages and interests as well as the leadership of the Roosevelt Island Residents' Association and the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation to inform the program of uses and principles that should guide the park design. Karen M. Steinmayer, M.A. conducted detailed interviews over 6 days, with 55 users of the Southpoint site in its current state. She also documented their activities in order to understand current patterns of use. The team learned what people knew about the site and what they dreamed the park could be. Roosevelt Island residents reviewed and commented on the site analysis and the results of these community interviews on the project's interactive web site www.markkmorrison.com/roosevelt.

The Trust for Public Land formed an advisory council composed of Roosevelt Island community leaders and park experts from New York City. The council reviewed the results of the community interviews and the site analysis. They guided Charles McKinney in the preparation of a **park vision** and a set of **principles** to guide the park design. They also prioritized a set of **goals** and **uses** for the park.

Our work with the people of Roosevelt Island uncovered a dream. They knew Southpoint Park was a spectacular site, unique in the world, prominent in the view of millions; they wanted to use the romantic ruins and landforms to provoke the imagination of viewers as well as residents and visitors.

PARK VISION

Create a dynamic park that resonates with the spectacular island site, its ruin and landforms, as well as the "egalitarian and multi-cultural promise of Roosevelt Island." Enhance the shoreline, the wild and natural landscape, and the ecology of the site for the communal enrichment of the Island community. Use the architecture and landforms of the site to create performance venues and environmental art that will attract large numbers of visitors from the rest of the world.

PARK PRINCIPLES

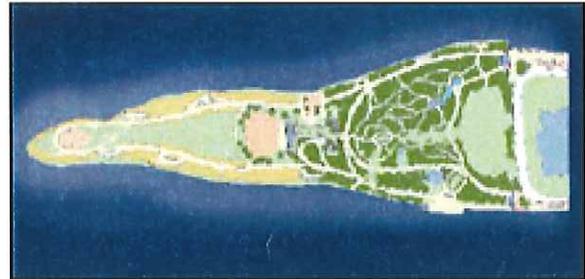
- Roosevelt island was born of a promise, to be "an egalitarian, and multi-cultural community. " Help fulfill that promise by making a great park and cultural venue. Help make Roosevelt Island an economically sustainable and culturally vibrant urban island village.
- Southpoint is a spectacular site, unique in the world, prominent in the view of millions; use the romantic ruins and landforms to provoke the imagination of viewers as well as visitors.
- The shoreline and ruins are fun to explore; visitors are lulled by the rhythms and majesty of the river, and thrilled by views of the surrounding metropolis. Preserve and enhance these attributes.
- Make an engaging, beautiful, fulfilling, intellectually stimulating and participatory park that meets the needs of all residents, including the large population of special needs users.
- Make a compelling park that will attract visitors from the rest of the city and the world. Design and program the park so visitors are drawn to its unique character and spectacular events thus contributing to the economic health of the community and the operating costs of the park.
- Make the park a source of pride and community identity.
- Provide times of solitude and quiet, and times of communal gathering and celebration. Plan for rhythms of use, without conflict or compromise.

CONCEPTUAL PLANS

The landscape architecture firm of Mark K. Morrison Associates LTD created three different conceptual plans for the park, in collaboration with the architects of the Hall Partnership. These imaginative plans, Visionary, Wild Gardens / Green Rooms, and Parc Ville, illustrated three different landscape characters and explored alternatives for the park uses.

Wild Gardens/Green Rooms

A mysterious place, a ruin surrounded by a dark forest that gradually reveals a succession of sunny garden rooms and public gathering places.



Park Ville

An urban park and strolling garden with an arc of interesting revenue generating buildings that enhances the architectural, cultural and economic promise of Roosevelt Island.



Visionary

A park composed of iconic architecture, The Louis Kahn designed Roosevelt memorial, bold landscapes, and site-specific environmental art.



- Other components of the *Wild Gardens / Green Rooms* conceptual plan that were top five priorities include the *stabilized ruin with café / performance space; perimeter path with waterfront overlooks, gatehouse visitor center, winter landscape and ice skating, and a boat dock.*
- The *Stabilized ruin with café / performance space* was judged to improve the economy; intrigue people from afar; and make the park a source of pride and identity. The *4-story glass building in the ruin* was also judged to improve the economy and cultural vitality of Roosevelt Island as well as intrigue people who see the island from afar. This is the area of greatest ambiguity in the worksheet evaluations and bears further exploration.
- The *Roosevelt Memorial* was seen as intriguing visitors who see the island from afar and as source of identity for the island. None-the-less, it received the third highest "don't want this" rating because people saw it as is too much "concrete" and as "blocking their view." Many people suggested making the memorial smaller.
- The *Village crescent with commercial rental space and the three floors of interesting speculative rental space* received the highest "don't want this" rating.

THE PREFERRED PLAN

TPL staff tabulated the worksheets, Charles McKinney, and Mark Morrison's office reviewed the worksheet results and the public comments. They recommended proceeding with the *Wild Gardens / Green Rooms* Concept, and modifying it to respond to public comments. The Advisory Council supported this fact. The team modified the *Wild Gardens / Green Rooms* conceptual plan to respond to concerns voiced at the workshops, public meetings, and by the Advisory Council. They met with engineers familiar with the ruins, restaurateurs who operate in parks, and presenters of events and public art like the Public Art Fund, to assess the feasibility of the plan components.

The team presented the revised **Wild Gardens / Green Rooms** conceptual plan at a public meeting December 9. **The attendees reviewed the proposed preferred plan and spoke in favor of its implementation.** Since lack of funding has, for three decades, prevented park development at Southpoint, **the team proposed a first phase, which the attendees also endorsed.**

BUDGET

The operating budget for the phase one park is \$115,000 per year for one full time gardener and two seasonal workers. This will provide Central Park-level maintenance. The budget includes a \$25,000 expense budget allowance for plantings and repairs. The budget assumes security, garbage basket emptying, and snow plowing will be performed by existing staff. Start-up equipment costs are included in the construction estimate. The full operating cost can be offset by concession income. Any surplus potentially can be applied to programming costs and an administrative position to coordinate non-profit partners.

NEXT STEPS

TPL's next step is to obtain approval from the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation for Phase One of the *Wild Gardens/Green Rooms* conceptual plan, and to work with the state to raise money for a roughly \$12 million Phase One. The centerpiece of this phase is the restoration of the rapidly deteriorating ruins of the Renwick Smallpox Hospital and the creation of an imaginative garden and concessioned cafe within.

Phase One will install paths to the ruin, install native plantings, reconfigure and upgrade fences, construct waterfront terraces, install utilities sufficient for the entire park and concession, install park lighting, construct a comfort station, and construct a small boat landing.

We have met with engineers familiar with the condition of the ruins. It is clear the ruins do not need to be completely disassembled but they do need immediate scaffolding and weatherproofing or they will collapse. We recommend obtaining \$600,000 for this as soon as possible.

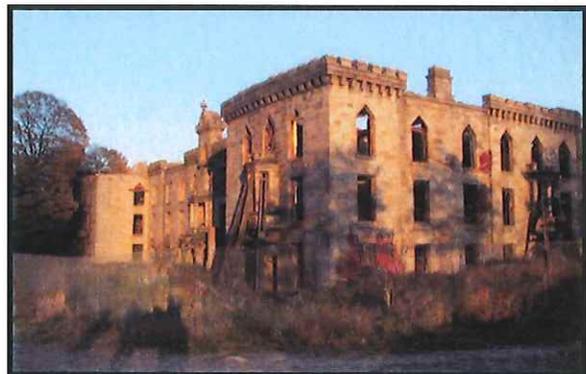
The Preferred Plan: Wild Gardens / Green Rooms

Mark K. Morrison Associates Ltd and Charles McKinney February 24, 2005



A mysterious place. A mountain of stones, a ruin surrounded by a dark forest that gradually reveals a succession of sunny garden rooms and unparalleled public gathering places.

The genius of this place is its wildness. Time and destructive forces have shaped an enigmatic place. Seen from afar, the island stimulates intrigue and a desire to explore. The Gothic revival ruins of the James Renwick designed Smallpox hospital reign over an engaging English landscape, spectacular on the sunny southern tip of Roosevelt Island surrounded by the East River. Up close, the ashlar walls of the ruin are tumbling. The landscape is scruffy, composed of self-sown trees and rubble piles.



We will convert this provocative view into an engaging, healthy landscape, fit for exploring on foot or boat, rather than telescope. We propose to create a series of landscape experiences that will provoke a sense of discovery and adventure, encouraging visitors to imagine they are on a quest through a picturesque forest. The discoveries include the romantic ruin, rocky shoreline perches, panoramic views of the metropolis, the long view south, a winter landscape

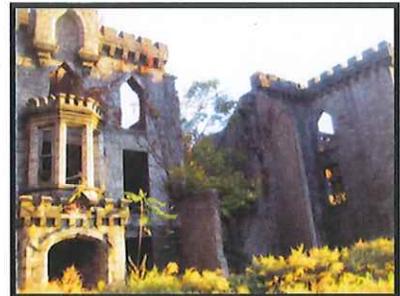
with ice skating, and a slope of lawn that will provide an unparalleled venue for cultural performances and spectacles.

Description

A rustic stone gatehouse greets visitors. It serves as a landmark for visitors looking from the tram, and provides information about Roosevelt Island's nature, history, and events. It provides a place to gather, to purchase something simple to eat and enjoy on the stone terrace overlooking the East River. A wide shady path meanders along the top of the rugged shoreline through dense trees. Glimpsed through the trees are a variety of river level terraces, accessible areas for picnics and enjoyment of the river's magnificent views. The shoreline offers places to sit among the rocks, to listen to the lap of the river, and watch birds and wildlife. Sitting low, near the water, the sounds and sights of others fade. There are frequent opportunities for solitude. These will be attractive to everyone, including Goldwater patients and friends.



Another path offers the visitor a chance to climb, or roll, up a modest rugged mount. From the top of the mount, views of the sunrise and the sweep of a distant metropolis are possible, as are the twinkle of the Queensboro bridge lights and the gliding tram. On the way down, visitors are drawn by glimpses of sunny lawns and the sounds of a cascade tumbling into a pool where rocks lay half covered by water, providing places to sit and walk. A succession of winding paths through clumps of trees leads to a rustic wall and then an opening. It is the Renwick ruin, stabilized, but weathered, filled with ferns. A brick floor is dappled with moss; it is a beautiful room, open to the sky. Windows offer glimpses of bright green lawns, a broad stone terrace facing the river and a small hedge-enclosed garden.



Through the arch, into the space beyond, is an artistic building housing a restaurant, perhaps even a theater. A crystalline form of glass emerges bright against the sky. On its roof is a terrace, a place for dancing or sitting. Here the ruin's windows reveal a sweep of the river extending into the distance. In the foreground, is an oval of shimmering water, sheltered from winter winds by stone steps and an artistic planting. In the winter, the plants form a winter garden, the oval of water an ice rink, and the hill behind offers sledding and protection from the winter winds. In the summer, this slice of hill slopes gently to the point, providing a place for large-scale musical performances, spectacles, movies, or weekend picnics.



Primary Elements:

- Gatehouse for visitor orientation
- Stabilized Renwick ruin, with gardens and a large café / performance space
- Picturesque nature, artistic landscape spaces, and a "Mount" with elements of surprise and panoramic views
- Play and picnic opportunities integrated into the landscape.
- Rich variety of strolling experiences and easily accessible park experiences for special needs users
- Large sloping lawn for picnic or performances for up to 5,000, with a removable stage.

- Perimeter circulation system that will accommodate large numbers of visitors, as well as cyclists and service vehicles.
- River level terraces for sitting and fishing
- Large stone terraces between the ruin and the river for casual dining.
- Winter landscape and ice-skating
- Interactive information kiosks, and interpretive displays
- Outdoor learning environments for plants and habitats
- A boat dock with a workshop and storage
- Ferry and boat docking at the cafe

Characteristics

- Includes the uses from community interviews and prioritized by the advisory council
- Does not extend the seawall beyond its current configuration
- Makes use of the stockpiles of stone
- Offsets park operating budgets with revenue-generating park amenities and rental opportunities

Phase 1

Phase One of the *Wild Gardens/Green Rooms* Conceptual plan will cost roughly \$12 million. The centerpiece is the restoration of the fast-deteriorating ruins of the Renwick Smallpox Hospital and the creation of an imaginative walled garden and a space for a concessioned cafe within. Phase One will install paths to the ruin, install native plantings, remove or replace fences, construct waterfront terraces, install utilities sufficient for the entire park and concession, install park lighting, construct a comfort station and a small boat landing.

Southpoint Park, Phase One	Estimate of Probable Cost		
Wild Gardens / Green Rooms Conceptual Plan			
21-Feb-05	Funder	Funder	Estimate by
Prepared by Melissa Ix, Mark K. Morrison Associates Ltd. and Charles McKinney	Government and Philanthropy	Concessionaire and non-profit partners	
Elements in Phase One			
Comfort station	750,000		MKM
Entrance terrace and seawall stabilization	350,000		MKM
Fencing, benches, site furniture	120,000		MKM
River level terrace and plantings	55,000		MKM
Ruin restoration with public access John Milner Associates, Inc. 1993 estimate \$2,315,880 escalated @6% X 11 years; minimum disassembly, steel frame, rebed joints, public access)	4,400,000		CM
Café, 3000 sq. feet on three floors @ \$600 per sq foot Steel and glass box set back from ruin walls, roof terrace Ground level restrooms and cafe service with tent		3,000,000	CM
Café water taxi landing		300,000	CM
Amphitheater stairs, soil, ramp, planting	200,000		MKM
Boat house		750,000	CM
Floating dock and ramp	150,000		CM
Perimeter walk on east and west side to ruin	650,000		MKM
Site lighting	200,000		MKM
Sanitary sewer and utilities (pending site survey)	1,000,000		MKM
Grading, soil, planting	1,000,000		MKM
Signage	5,000		CM
Maintenance equipment	75,000		CM
PROPOSED PHASE ONE			
Construction	8,955,000	4,050,000	
20% Contingency	1,791,000	810,000	
	10,746,000	4,860,000	
Design and Engineering Services	1,074,600	486,000	
Total with Design and Engineering	\$11,820,600	\$5,346,000	

Southpoint Park				Estimate of Probable Cost	
Wild Gardens / Green Rooms Conceptual Plan					
Prepared by: Mark K Morrison Associates 242 West 30th Street New York, NY 10001					
	Item	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total
	Park Entrance / gatehouses				1,600,000
	Perimeter decorative fencing	1000	LF	\$300.00	300,000
	River terrace	9		\$50,000.00	450,000
	Skating Rink/Amphitheatre				2,500,000
	Ruin Stabilization				4,400,000
	Café	4000	SF		4,000,000
	Open Lawn				375,000
	Performance Space				1,500,000
	Habitat Enrichment	50000	SF	\$25.00	1,250,000
	Boat house				750,000
	Pier				2,500,000
	Circulation	7500	LF	\$350.00	2,625,000
	Site Lighting				500,000
	Site Utilities				2,000,000
	Planting				1,000,000
	Wild Gardens				5,000,000
	(the Mount and surrounding landscape)				
				Construction	30,750,000
				20% Contingency	6,150,000
					36,900,000
				Design and Engineering Services	3,690,000
				Total with Design and Engineering	\$40,590,000