



# Battery Park City Authority

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## **BATTERY PARK CITY AUTHORITY APPOINTS ANNE O'NEILL AS DIRECTOR OF HORTICULTURE, SUSTAINABILITY, AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN**

*Twenty-five Years of Horticultural Experience, Including Nearly Two Decades in New York City*

The Battery Park City Authority (BPCA) today announced the appointment of Anne O'Neill as Director of Horticulture, Sustainability, and Landscape Design, a role in which she will oversee and manage the highly specialized plantings, gardens, and public art in Battery Park City's 36 acres of parkland and open spaces. Ms. O'Neill, who begins work on September 6, will also be responsible for maintaining Battery Park City's parks and open spaces in world-class condition utilizing the "green" techniques, design, and vision the neighborhood has pioneered. Ms. O'Neill succeeds Eric "T." Fleisher, who retired in May 2016, and will lead a team of more than 20 staff members and seasonal employees. Ryan Torres, who has led Battery Park City Parks Horticulture Department while the search for a new Director was underway, has been promoted to Assistant Director of Horticulture to further enhance the management team.

"Our parks and open spaces are without a doubt the jewel in the crown of Battery Park City," said **BPCA President and Chief Operating Officer Shari C. Hyman**. "I'm therefore very proud to welcome Anne aboard, whose unique experience, talents, and passion for public horticulture will help ensure our parks remain the pride of this incredible neighborhood for years to come. I also thank our Foreperson, Ryan Torres, and the entire horticulture department for their tireless commitment to maintaining these public assets during the transition period. Our team has never been stronger."

"It is an honor to join such an amazingly dedicated team of professionals to continue what has been my life's work for more than two decades, said **Incoming Director of Horticulture, Sustainability, and Landscape Design Anne O'Neill**. "During my career I have worked to consistently improve horticultural practices to make them both sustainable and organic, and there's no better place to build on these efforts than in Battery Park City, which carries with it a reputation for excellence and innovation. I look forward to jumping in and getting started at this extraordinary urban oasis."

Anne O'Neill brings to BPCA extensive experience in managing large budgets, grounds, and gardens. Over the course of her 25-year career, Ms. O'Neill has worked closely

with landscape architects, implemented landscape designs, and designed landscape plantings, with several notable innovations in the management of large, complex garden spaces.

After work as a head gardener in her native Ireland, Ms. O'Neill first came to New York in the early 1990s as a community horticulturalist at the New York Botanical Garden. From there she moved to Fordham University, where she was responsible for all gardens in the Rose Hill Campus and introduced horticultural best practices throughout.

Ms. O'Neill's career then took her to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden where she served for more than a decade, first as Curator of the Cranford Rose Garden – where more than a thousand kinds of roses are cultivated in one of the largest collections in North America – and then as Curator of both the Shakespeare Garden and Fragrance Garden – the first garden in the country designed for the sight-impaired.

Most recently, Ms. O'Neill developed and maintained the gardens and grounds of a 70-acre estate including design and installation functions, as well as management of a multi-million dollar budget and team of professional gardener and grounds maintenance staff. In this capacity she introduced horticultural best practices for the grounds and converted it to completely organic gardening practices. Programmatically, Ms. O'Neill was responsible for arboriculture care, integrated pest management, turf and irrigation systems, and seasonal displays, while also managing capital projects including development of a large playground, multilevel tree houses, and pool gardens.

In her spare time Ms. O'Neill has also volunteered at Pratt Institute for more than a decade. Beginning in 2007, she oversaw and directed the restoration of Pratt's Rose Garden, a treasured resource open to the public year round. In this capacity Anne selected, placed, and planted new roses, conditioned and treated the soil, and trained Pratt's gardening staff on pruning and general care of the roses. She also served as an advisor to the President and executive staff on questions about the roses and the campus grounds in general.

"We're very excited about Anne's appointment. She's terrific!" said **Pratt Institute President Thomas F. Schutte, Ph.D.** "She's an incredible horticulture professional and we're looking forward to the impact of her vision and leadership on Battery Park City's parklands and grounds."

Ms. O'Neill holds a bachelor's degree from University College Dublin, Ireland, and resides in the Prospect Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn.

**About BPCA:** The Hugh L. Carey Battery Park City Authority is a New York State public benefit corporation with a mission to plan, create, coordinate, and maintain a balanced community of commercial, residential, retail, and park space within its designated 92-acre site on the lower west side of Manhattan. For more info visit [bpca.ny.gov](http://bpca.ny.gov).

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