

## Public Meeting #1 Meeting Summary

**Project:** North/West BPC Resiliency Project  
**Topic:** Public Meeting #1 Meeting Summary  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 4th, 2021 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm  
**Location:** Virtual Zoom Meeting

### Project Team Meeting Facilitators

<b>Name</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Role</b>
Claudia Filomena	BPCA	Director of Capital Projects
Gwen Dawson	BPCA	Vice President of Real Property
Nick Sbordone	BPCA	Vice President of Communications and Public Affairs
Garrett Avery	AECOM	Leader, Project Definition & PDB Design Review
Heather Morgan	AECOM	Stakeholder & Community Engagement Lead
Nora Madonick	ASC	Stakeholder & Community Engagement
Karina Vangani	ASC	Stakeholder & Community Engagement

### Program Overview

On August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the AECOM team presented an overview of the broad goals and challenges associated with completing the North/West BPC Coastal Resiliency Project. This was the first public meeting for the North/West project. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom and attracted 53 participants, many of whom are Battery Park City residents and community members. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the North/West project to the public, answer questions and concerns and provide an overview of the path forward.

### Welcome and Introduction

Nora Madonick from Arch Street Communications welcomed everybody and explained housekeeping rules, including how to submit questions through the Zoom chat for the Q&A, as well as a request that meeting attendees provide their full name and zip code when asking questions. After notifying everyone that the meeting will be recorded, Ms. Madonick handed things off to President and CEO of BPCA, B.J. Jones.

Mr. Jones formally kicked off the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for taking the time to participate in the first public meeting for the North/West project. Mr. Jones also reminded everyone that BPCA posts a host of information regarding its resiliency projects on its website and encouraged attendees to use that as a resource to keep up to date with these projects.

## **Presentation**

Mr. Jones began the presentation with an overview of the meeting agenda, reiterating how crucial public feedback is to shape BPCA's path forward regarding the North/West project. He briefly explained to the public what a Progressive Design Build is, and why BPCA has chosen to develop the North/West project this way, emphasizing the many opportunities to integrate design and construction work as well as the benefits to cost and time savings.

Heather Morgan, Stakeholder & Community Engagement Lead (AECOM), gave an introduction of the project team. Displaying an image that shows a map of the 100-year flood plan of Lower Manhattan, Ms. Morgan explained that the North/West project is being designed to respond to a 100-year storm event in the year 2050. She then presented another map of Lower Manhattan that showed all the coastal resiliency projects that are either planned, in progress, or completed, explaining that all of these resiliency projects are interconnected and working towards the mutual goal of keeping Lower Manhattan residents safe from extreme climate conditions.

Ms. Morgan then moved on to a slide showing what area the North/West project covers, and where it is in reference to the South and Ball Field projects. She launched into a discussion about Design Flood Elevation (DFE), explaining what it is and why it is crucial to BPCA/AECOM's understanding of how to design a resiliency project. Heather noted that the current DFE values for the North/West project area are approximations and will not be exact until AECOM can complete coastal modeling for the project area. In order to create flood measures that meet those DFEs, Ms. Morgan explained, BPCA can implement a wide variety of flood measures, both static and deployable, that will aim to blend into the urban fabric of Battery Park City. The introduction to the project was wrapped up by reiterating the main goals of the project: 1) To design flood measures that will protect against a 100-year flood event in the year 2050 and 2) to blend these flood measures into the current urban structure and design of Battery Park City.

Ms. Morgan closed out her portion of the presentation by showing a map of Battery Park City that marked important community locations like Rockefeller Park, Stuyvesant High School, Brookfield Place, etc. and emphasized that the reason this meeting is happening is to ensure the community has a say in how these places are altered or changed to accommodate the flood prevention infrastructure. Ms. Morgan then passed the presentation off to Garrett Avery, Leader, Project Definition & PDB Design Review (AECOM), for an overview of the project areas.

Prior to unpacking the study areas, Mr. Avery reviewed the alignment they had developed for the North project, discussing what they learned from that process and the various challenges they faced at the time. From there, Mr. Avery began his discussion of the study areas as follows: Rockefeller Park, Belvedere Plaza/Ferry Terminal, North Cove Marina, South Esplanade, and South Cove. Mr. Avery outlined the areas, showing pictures of each, and discussed the unique challenges each area presents to the development of the North/West project.

Ms. Morgan then took over to discuss next steps for the project such as conducting site investigations as well as realizing procurement milestones, community engagement milestones, and environmental review milestones. She also stated that the next time BPCA will share information with the public in this type of forum will be in December 2021. Nicholas Sbordone, Vice President of Communications and Public Affairs (BPCA) then greeted the audience and reminded everyone where they can send questions about the project and how to get in contact with BPCA. This marked the end of the presentation and the beginning of the Q&A portion of the meeting.

## Q&A

A facilitated question and answer session was conducted, with attendees having the option to type their message in Zoom using chat or request to say their comment aloud to ensure all attendee questions were addressed by presenters. Questions asked included:

- **Question:** How much will private developers be allowed to contribute towards coastal resiliency with their projects, e.g. seawalls?
  - *Answer:* BPCA does not anticipate any direct contributions from specific buildings or individual building owners. Building owners may choose to make specific improvements to their buildings in conjunction with the BPCA project.
- **Question:** I would like to see how much of the original green space is lost with this plan and what alternatives were and can be considered to preserve that.
  - *Answer:* There are currently no plans or alternatives. This meeting starts the process of developing plans and alternatives. However, the preservation of green space is one of the criteria that the project team is thinking through and an important design objective. The North project, when it was a stand-alone project, created new green space in BPC. The project team will work to integrate measures with the existing public spaces.
- **Question:** I have some questions about the finances thus far on each of the five projects and how much is budgeted, going forward for each of these five projects?
  - *Answer:* While there used to be four project, there are now three total projects. North and West have been combined into one project with an estimated budget of \$300 million. The South BPC project has an estimated budget of about \$200 million, with the final cost estimates pending. The total cost for the Ballfield project is about \$8 million.
- **Question:** I would like to understand the overall cost of this project and what part of the total cost it is estimated to be. And where is the funding coming from?
  - *Answer:* The preliminary budget, developed before any detailed analysis, is \$300 million. AECOM is currently conducting analysis and defining the project analysis, which will provide a more accurate budget. The preliminary budget is subject to change

in the coming months as more analysis is completed. BPCA will share updates as more information becomes available.

- **Question:** Where is the money coming from to fund these projects? Where is the financial information stored and is it public?
  - *Answer:* The financial information on completed projects is public. The budget for this project is still being developed and the estimated budget is very preliminary. As cost estimates begin to come in, BPCA will share updated budget information.
  
- **Question:** When will BPCA present the details of this proposal, particularly as it relates to the changes to be expected to the existing open space and the proposed. The public needs to see the before and after. For example, why and how will Belvedere Plaza turn into a “very tight corridor”?
  - *Answer:* There is currently no design and plan to present. Today’s presentation showed an image of the project area, which are the areas that will need to be utilized in some fashion to create the barrier to protect the North and the West areas of Battery Park City. How this will be done has not yet been determined. With respect to the North project, that project was started as a separate, standalone design-build project, and analysis on that project advanced to the point of identifying a preferred alignment and some design options. That work on the North project is not considered the final design and will be reviewed again through the process of this project. This project is different from other projects in the past, as AECOM is not working as a designer but as the party that will define the project. The project and the project definition will evolve over time and with community input, and information will be made available throughout the process.
  
- **Question:** The design plans are based on models on 2050 “100-year event levels”. We have all seen how poorly models work, including the estimates versus reality of Sandy. They are also, rightfully, worried about worst case. What sensitivity analysis was done on those models? Also, what impact of the climate change mitigation efforts are assumed in the models?
  - *Answer:* The models selected for the project use existing data, factoring current conditions and other inputs from intergovernmental panels. Our previous analysis seriously considered potential surge, how it impacts existing conditions, and the level of risk reduction. The coastal model factors in 30 inches of sea level rise for 2050, based on NPCC guidance. Models are the most powerful tools available to plan and are helpful in understanding a wide range of different storms. Because the data used is hyper-localized to Battery Park City, the models do not significantly factor in global mitigation efforts. Additionally, the project team has not yet started modeling on the North/West project because there is not yet an alignment to study, but modeling will be a part of the ongoing conversations about this project.
  
- **Question:** Are the BPCA plans incorporating green infrastructure strategies to reduce threats of coastal flooding and if so, how?
  - *Answer:* The BPC Green Guidelines call for the use of green infrastructure strategies. These strategies will become part of the project goals that are considered throughout design, construction, and operation.

- **Question:** What is the difference between our built community today, and how our community is projected to be in 2050?
  - *Answer:* Based on the Master Plan, existing commercial agreements, and other factors, it is not expected for Battery Park City's built environment to change significantly by 2050. Battery Park City's development parcels have been built on, so we do not anticipate additional building sites with today's available information.
  
- **Question:** Gwen, I'm confused... what are those figures you just shared? Are they what has been spent? What has been paid for design work to date? Are they projections of total cost?
  - *Answer:* The \$300 million is a preliminary estimate on how much the North/West project will cost, which is subject to change as cost estimates are completed. The figures for all three projects are total estimates, they have not yet been spent.
  
- **Question:** What engrained green energy will be considered for powering any and all mechanical needs. What future power needs are being considered to be included?
  - *Answer:* Power is not a specific area that has been planned for yet, but due to the importance of power—especially in emergencies—reliable power will be non-negotiable for this project.
  
- **Question:** Please describe the estimated timing for the NW planning and implementation and where you are today in the process and how and when the design build will be integrated into the schedule.
  - *Answer:* BPCA will solidify a project schedule for the public by the next public meeting. As an overview, the progressive design-build (PDB) team request for qualifications (RFQ) will be released at the end of August to identify qualified design-build teams. Several qualified entities will be invited in early 2022 to submit a Request for Proposals (RFP). A final decision on the PDB Team will be made later in 2022. As PDB selection is happening, AECOM will be developing the components that might be advanced into a design and approaches that the PDB team will need to consider. The final design will not be available for another 18 months – at that point, the DB team would begin construction. BPCA will share updates throughout this process.
  
- **Question:** In designing this and the other two projects, what thought if any is given to the impact of diverted flood waters on areas north of Battery Park City that (so far) had no flood protections planned.
  - *Answer:* This is an important consideration. As a BPCA project, BPCA's goal for this project is to protect Battery Park City and its assets. In the South and North stand-alone projects, the boundary was extended beyond Battery Park City to be most effective in protecting Battery Park City. BPCA is sensitive to the importance of protection North of Battery Park City. However, BPCA is prohibited from extending the project beyond a certain point. One of our goals is to find a good endpoint for the City or another entity to extend the project. We have also met with Hudson River Park to understand the potential impacts to their property both with or without the BPCA project. With regard to flooding and any specific project, a number of factors (including the storm timing, tide timing and wind direction) also impact where flooding occurs. The project will undergo FEMA review to ensure the project will not induce flooding in surrounding areas.

- **Question:** In speaking about green infrastructure, will the projects utilize nature-based resiliency strategies, (addition of oyster beds, rocky landscape beds, etc. along coast?)
- **Question:** Other than resiliency, what other goals are being included in the scoping of this project? I.E. - public amphitheater seating, estuaries, etc. Please be specific to what the goals BPCA has set to be served for other purposes that are being included.
  - **Answer:** The project team need to define the project and develop the goals that will inform the project parameters that are addressed by the PDB Team. These are all examples of factors the final project may include, and the project team invites you share your feedback about what the project should include in the coming months.
- **Question:** As an overview of all of BPC was touched upon, is there any consideration being given to one of the elephants in the room - on the zoom - i.e.: the Essential Workers Monument. To reiterate - first and foremost, not in BPC.... But as changes are being planned.... Where, if any place, does the Monument fit in?
  - **Answer:** There will be a new advisory committee, the Battery Park City Essential Workers Monument Committee, formed to develop recommendations for the design, location, and installation of the Monument. The committee has not met but includes community members, Community Board representatives, essential worker unions and State officials. Once more details about the Monument are available, we will determine how the Monument factors into plans without impacting resiliency work.
- **Question:** Has the BPCA met with State DOT to pursue the community's interest in incorporating the median along route 9A as part of the NW resiliency strategies?
  - **Answer:** The project team acknowledges the community support for this approach and has met with the State DOT. The project team will also coordinate with State DOT and the City DOT in the future. In those conversations with the State DOT, the project team learned that the median is above a DEP sewer connection line, so structures cannot be placed above or parallel to the line.
- **Question:** When will there be a public engagement panel and surveys done for the new targeted goals that are not included in resiliency for the North and West Areas - the only type of public engagement taken in thus far was targeted directly for Wagner Park and several years ago.
  - **Answer:** Please use the website and Battery Park City email to share ways that might be helpful to give a broader avenue for input as to what you think should be the goals for the project that are not resiliency related. The next public engagement meeting for this project will be held in December.
- **Question:** Happy to work with you as the email address and website are not a full nor meaningfully diverse way to gain a cross reference of engagement and meet the community perspectives or needs. Happy to work with you via the CB on how to engage via public session, charrette...
  - **Answer:** This comment was made as the meeting was ending and was not responded to.

## Closing Statements

Ms. Madonick thanked everyone for attending and reminded community members of where they can send additional questions. She also stated that the recording of this meeting will be posted online, in

addition to a written document providing answers to all questions asked during the Q&A. The team said goodbye, and the meeting host ended the Zoom call.