



## Open House Activity Summary

**Project:** North/West BPC Resiliency Project  
**Topic:** Open House Summary  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 29th, 2022, 4:00 pm – 8:00 pm  
**Location:** 6 River Terrace

## Project Team

<b>Name</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Role</b>
BJ Jones	BPCA	President/CEO
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
Varun Kohli	BPCA	Associate Vice President, Planning and Design
Achille Niro	AECOM	Services Director
Garrett Avery	AECOM	Leader, Project Definition & PDB Design Review
Hogan Edelberg	AECOM	Leader, Landscape & Urbanism
Marlin Peterson	AECOM	Leader, PDB Procurement
Thomas Heltzel	One Architecture	Associate Director
Deborah Howes	AECOM	Stakeholder & Community Engagement Lead
Nora Madonick	ASC	Stakeholder & Community Engagement
Karina Vangani	ASC	Stakeholder & Community Engagement
Tia Williams	ASC	Stakeholder & Community Engagement
Caroline Ibarra	ASC	Stakeholder & Community Engagement
Joseph Smith	ASC	Stakeholder & Community Engagement
Emma Sniegowski	ASC	Stakeholder & Community Engagement
Sebastian Kogler	ASC	Stakeholder & Community Engagement
Jaemie Bennett	ASC	Stakeholder & Community Engagement

## Executive Summary

Battery Park City Authority hosted an Open House on June 29, 2022. This marked the sixth official public engagement touchpoint for the North/West Battery Park City Resiliency Project (NWBPCRP) after Community Meeting #1 in August 2021, three Walkshops in October and November 2021 and

Community Meeting #2 in December 2021.

Upon entering the Open House, participants were encouraged to watch a brief video overview explaining the project's key objectives and the event's format. After watching the overview video, participants could learn about three proposed alignments from a series of nine boards (two general boards and seven boards exploring the proposed alignments at each reach), leave their feedback as comments on the boards and ask the project team questions.

Out of the 103 participants that pre-registered for the event, 55 attended the Open House. An additional 20 participants registered at the event, for a total of **75 participants**. To allow community members to view and add comments to the boards after the event, a virtual version of the boards was released on June 30, 2022 and will remain open until July 31, 2022.

## Discussions Around the Room

The following is a summary of conversations held between community members and the project team during the Open House. Throughout the event, at least two notetakers were circulating the room to capture these conversations.

### Project Overview

- Concerns were raised over how the height of the flip-up gate would impact first floor apartments at Liberty House and the gym at Liberty Terrace.
- Participants referenced the other BPCA resiliency projects and questioned if the approach for this project would be different.
- Participants expressed how important the opportunity for public comments is.

### Reach 1

- One participant suggested a combined sewer overflow (CSO) near the barriers.
- Another participant was concerned with how a barrier would impact cycling, specifically at West Street.
- Participants wanted more information on how tall the flip up gates would be.
- The project team was asked what details made one alignment better than another. The team discussed considerations such as needing permission from the nearby University and altering the location of bike lanes.

### Reach 2

- Some participants expressed interest in improving recreational opportunities, such as boating.
- Concerns were raised over the deployable barriers blocking emergency vehicles, but the project team explained that partial deployment could allow necessary people through.
- One participant asked why a bulkhead near the pier couldn't be used for flood protection, and it was explained that it is possible on the north side but not the west side.

### Reach 3

- Some participants felt more water access, such as boathouses, was not necessary.
- Participants expressed that it is very important to preserve Rockefeller Park, playgrounds, and other green spaces. They also brought up frustration over past projects in Rockefeller Park and Wagner Park.
- The project team received many questions about what a relieving platform is.
- Participants were hesitant about moving the Ferry Terminal. They did not want the noise from the Terminal to move north or for the Terminal to increase foot traffic in the park. One participant asked if the ferries could be electrified to reduce noise.
- Many participants wanted to know how stormwater management and drainage would be addressed.
- Participants were concerned about the aesthetics of walls and requested they either be visually pleasing or buried.

#### **Reach 4**

- Several participants had questions about how the project will impact the Ferry Terminal, including whether the size of the Ferry Terminal will change and if it will be moved. One participant asked that the Ferry Terminal not be moved closer to the playground.
- On the topic of the Ferry Terminal, another participant said that when the Terminal was moved closer to Rockefeller Park, it was disliked by community members because it created a bottleneck in foot traffic. The nearby apartments are also negatively impacted because of the noise from the ferries.
- Participants showed concern about how the Lily Pond will be impacted, with some expressing concerns over the design option recommending an 8-foot wall surrounding the pond. Interest was shown in options that preserve the Lily Pond, but participants also expressed that if it needs to be removed, it should be replaced by green space, a playground, or nature preserve.
- Participants also displayed an interest in preserving green space in Rockefeller Park. Participants made comments referencing green space in Battery Park City as a “critical haven” and expressing that the community has an emotional attachment to the neighborhood’s green spaces. One participant also suggested creating more gardens by the Esplanade.

#### **Reach 5**

- Participants expressed concern about preserving accessible space in North Cove
- A participant asked why the red alignment (flood barrier in the water) is not feasible throughout the other reach areas?
- Another participant expressed a desire for more greenery in Reach 5
- In reference to the idea of building a crossing at North Cove, a participant expressed concern over the amount of reconstruction that would require. If a crossing was built, project team would need to be mindful of retail space and foot traffic flow while building.
- Participants expressed interest in creating a gradual change in grade in the North Cove area
- One participant asked how the project team can protect the artistic integrity of the design of the North Cove area as it exists today? Also said that they would rather preserve the area as it

is, and do not care if the area “gets wet” now and then.

- A participant specifically asked what the blue square in Alignment B represents.

## **Reach 6**

- Participants had comments about managing foot, bike, and vehicle traffic, with several participants expressing the importance of maintaining access for emergency vehicles.
- Participants were concerned about enforcing “bike only” rules in bike paths, also expressing that perhaps BPCA should follow Hudson River Park in banning bikes on the esplanade.
- Participants reacted positively to the idea that the resiliency project could fix existing navigability issues and disliked the idea of adding traffic lights to smaller roads.
- Participants asked if there will be deployables used in this area, and project team members explained that deployables will likely be used in Plans A and B, while in C the wall curves around a planted area.
- Participants asked what will happen to the buildings along the flood wall, with project team members responding that the flood wall would replace the current privacy wall. One participant compared the flood wall to a “barbed wire wall” and asked if they are inevitable/fully necessary.
- Participants showed interest in a glass top flood wall.
- One participant expressed fear that the flood wall will decrease real estate values because it will limit views.
- One participant also asked how much the ground will need to be raised in this area, also asking how deep the bedrock goes there.
- Participants expressed a desire to change/improve the public art installations in this reach area, and others
- One participant expressed that flood protection is key to preserving the area.
- Some participants expressed they would rather see the area occasionally flood than permanently change it.
- One participant said “South Cove is a work of art. This whole campus. These designers worked hard on preparing for a hundred-year flood. And some years later...I mean some of these buildings [aren’t] that old. North Lawn, in a major hurricane, will get water on it. That’s why I say the yellow line makes the most sense.”

## **Reach 7**

- In South Cove, participants wanted to know more about existing flood barriers, as well as how future flood barriers might impact the privacy walls at this reach.
- Participants asked about the environmental impact of the project at South Cove. Specific topics that participants asked about included opportunities for ecological restoration and whether active greenspace and the natural shoreline would be maintained.
- One participant asked if South Cove could be replaced with a salt marsh.
- Several participants shared that the board could be clearer about explaining the differences between alignments and the potential impacts of each proposed idea on the community,

## **General Project Conversations**

### ***Basic Project Information***

- Participants asked questions about the project timeline and process. These questions including how long the project would take to build, what permits BPCA would need to complete the project, what phase the project is currently in, and how long the environmental review process will take.
- Participants wanted to know when construction will start and whether “priority areas” will be built first.
- Participants asked for clarification on AECOM’s role in the project and how the project team will decide on the final alignment.
- Participants asked the project team to clarify why the project is necessary. Questions included why the project is needed in addition to the measures individual property owners have taken and why flood rise would require current park space to be impacted. Other participants asked the timing of the project, as “we have the luxury of time prepping for the 2050s,” and wanted clarification for why portions of the alignment that did not flood during Superstorm Sandy needed to be a part of the project.
- The project team received several questions about the project’s cost. Participants also asked why federal/FEMA funds were not being used, as well as for clarification on how the BPCA bonds are funded.
- Participants asked for examples of similar projects that were successful in other cities.
- Participants wanted to know more about the project’s lifespan once it is completed. The project team shared that the project, if properly maintained, will provide protection for about 75 years.
- Participants asked what deployables are and whether flood barriers would be raised manually or by a machine. Additionally, participants asked if fixed or deployable barriers would be more expensive; the project team said that deployables generally cost more.

### ***Modeling and FEMA Certification***

- Participants had several questions about the modeling used to inform the project. Participants asked if the same models were used in previous projects, whether previous construction was also built to withstand a 100-year storm, and for more information about data sources used by the models.
- Participants asked for clarification on what was meant by a 100-year storm.
- The project team answered questions about FEMA certification. The project will work with FEMA to certify the project, which will be important for ensuring that condo owners can secure the appropriate flood insurance—especially important for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor stores/residences.

### ***Project Alignment***

- The placement of the overall alignment was raised by several participants. Participants asked why some proposed alignments raised inland locations over areas directly along the coast

and why the proposed alignment could not be built further into the river.

- Participants wanted to know which areas would be most important to protect through the project; the project team said they were most concerned with areas that were impacted by Superstorm Sandy.
- Participants asked for clarification on who had developed the three proposed alignments and if each proposed alignment could be broken up so that the final alignment is a combination of different solutions. One participant observed that the red alignment seemed to be the “least reversible” and asked if the Open House materials were avoiding that topic.

### ***Environmental and Landscaping Impacts***

- Participants had a number of questions about flooding. They wanted to know if landscaping will be “flood friendly” after the project and if there is a preference for park land to flood rather than buildings. Additionally, they wanted to know more about which areas of the alignment were covered by flood water in the past and asked that the project protect against basement flooding.
- Participants asked included whether the soil had been tested in the project area and whether trees and greenspace will be lost.
- One participant said they wanted the trees selected for the project to be the right height and cautioned against overplanting.
- Participants asked about the environmental impacts of the construction process and the project team clarified that the project would take precautions against negative environmental impacts.

### ***Day-to-Day Life Impacts***

- Participants asked how the project would impact day-to-day life in Battery Park City. Specific topics included changes to traffic and access to other parts of New York City, the amount of open and active space that will remain after the project is completed, and how existing views will be impacted by the project,
- Participants asked how public art and significant architecture will be impacted by the project.
- Participants asked about construction impacts and noise.

### ***Connection to Other BPC Projects***

- Participants wanted to know more about other Battery Park City projects and how they related to this project. One participant questioned previous construction work over the past several decades, asking why drainage at specific sites couldn’t be improved so that multiple renovations would not continue to be necessary.
- Some participants said they were cautious about this project as they were unsatisfied with the South Battery Park City Resiliency Project.

### ***Public Outreach***

- Participants asked how feedback received through public outreach would be incorporated into the project and the project team responded that feedback will be incorporated into the design plans. Additionally, participants asked for more information on how the public can “be

helpful and stay involved.”

- Some participants said they did not feel that enough had been done to raise awareness about the Open House, as well as that the timing of the open house (especially after the end of the NYC school year) made it challenging to reach all community members.
- Some participants asked for more frequent updates about the project and expressed frustration that BPCA could not answer the questions directly.
- Some participants said that they liked the format and timing of the Open House, as it allowed them to come at a time that was convenient for them.
- One participant asked that the project team meet with superintendents to understand current flooding and project impacts.

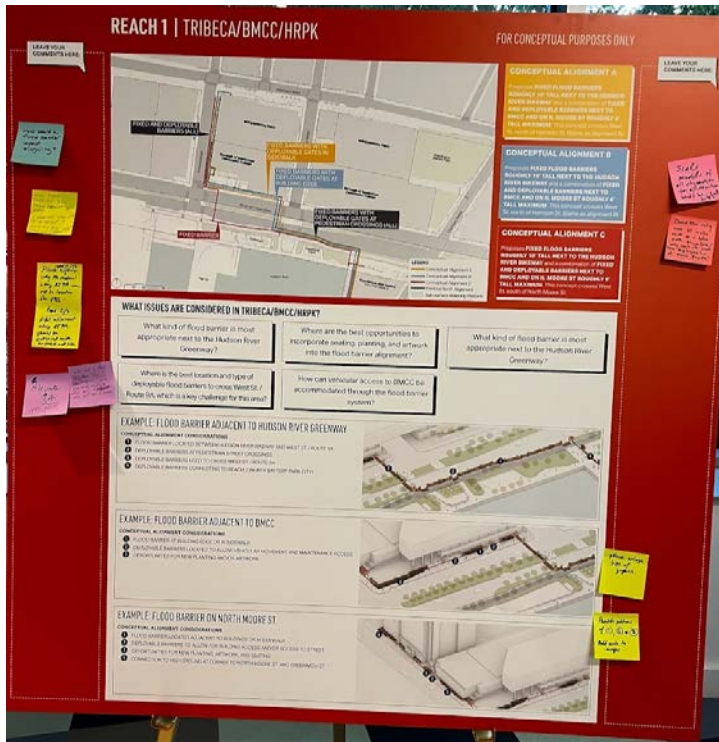
### *Miscellaneous Comments*

- One participant stressed the importance of making sure that “everything is safe,” especially when “you build near the water.”
- One participant said: “make easy minimalist choices where it matters, make hard expensive choices where it matters.”
- Several participants shared their support for the project, noting that they are “concerned about storms becoming more frequent” and feel that “If nothing is done, outcomes will be much worse.”

## **Comments Received on Each Board**

A total of **178 comments** were placed across the different boards and project map during the June 29 Open House.

## Reach 1



### Cycling

"How would a fixed barrier impact bicycling?"

"Does the city use 10 foot walls next to a bike path anywhere? Why can't we just have deployables at pinch points?"

### Graphics

"Scale models of all alignments would be helpful."

"Provide pictures of Reaches 1, 2, and 3. Add scale to images."

"Please enlarge size of graphics."

### 9A

"Please explain why the median along RT 9A cannot be location for FBS."

"Elevate 9A."

"FBS alignment along RT9A should be continued north to protect west side."

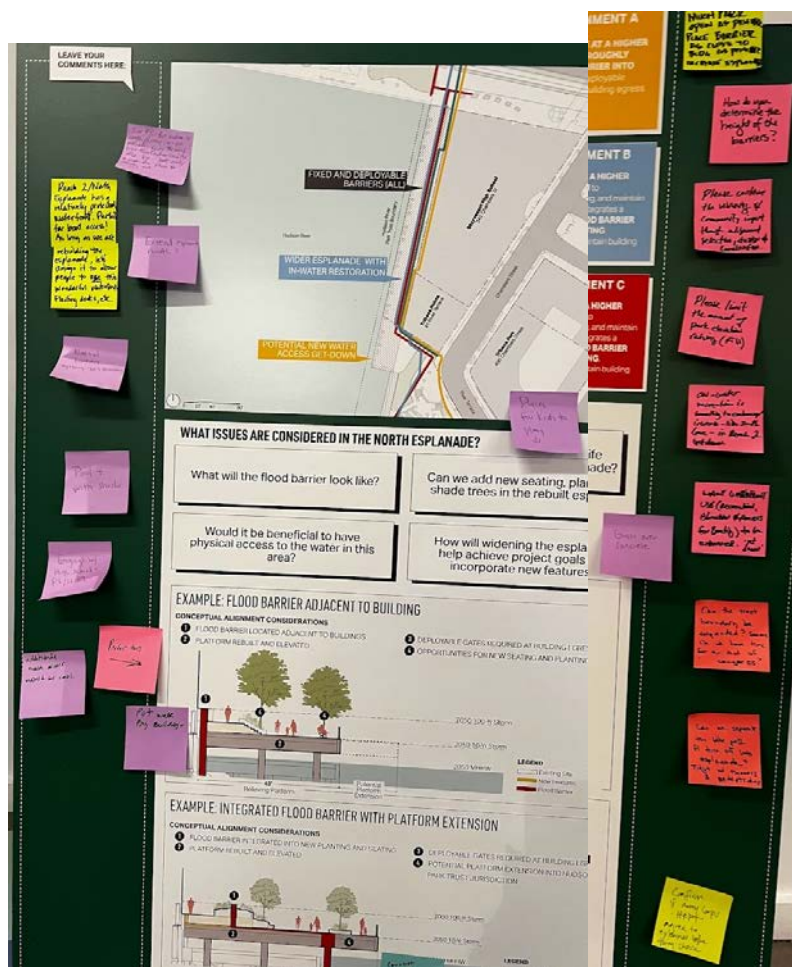
### Miscellaneous

"Will flood barriers be transparent or not? 10 foot barriers look like the waterfront a century ago—views cut off/access limited."



“Why not a flood absorption, like landscaping, to hold soil and also act as a drain?”

## Reach 2



### **Water Access**

“Want waterfront use (recreation, education, and places for boating) to be enhanced.”

“Water recreation is something to enhance/increase - like South Cove – in Reach 2.”

“Reach 2/North Esplanade has a relatively protected waterfront. Perfect for boat access! As long as we are rebuilding the esplanade, let’s design it to allow people to use this wonderful waterfront. Floating docks, etc.”

“Additional water access would be cool.”

“Consider water access.”

### **Barrier Height**

"How do you determine the height of the barriers?"

"Height of walls? For each option."

### ***Expand Boundary***

"Can the trust boundary be expanded? Seems like we have time for an act of congress?"

"Extend esplanade north?"

### ***Barriers by Building***

"Leave as much park open as possible, place barrier as close to building as possible, increase esplanade."

"Prefer this." (in reference to flood barrier adjacent to buildings)

"Put wall by building."

### ***Additional Communities for Engagement***

"Confirm Army Corps and HRPT agree to extension below aligning choice."

"Engage w/high schools. PS/IS 89."

### ***Miscellaneous***

"Places for kids to play."

"Can we separate the bike path and turn off into esplanade? Tight w/ runners and pedestrians."

"Grass over concrete."

"Please limit the amount of park elevation raising (fill)."

"Please continue the visualizing and community input through alignment selection, design, and construction."

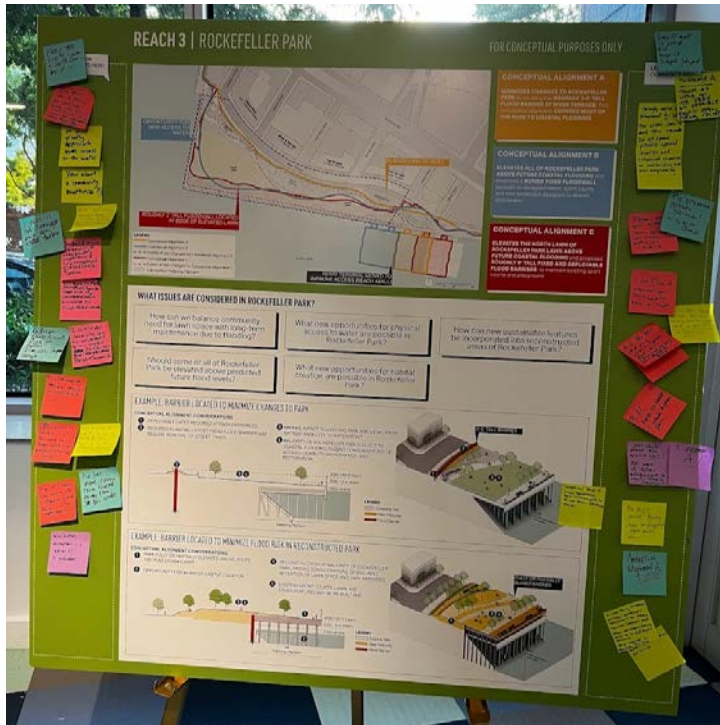
"Cost comparisons."

"Just FYI: This section is north facing, as you probably know. The wind rips this area and it's cold. Not really a super fun place to hang out."

"Natural barriers, oysters, salt marshes."

"Pool + with shade."

### Reach 3



#### ***Support for Conceptual Alignment A***

"Conceptual alignment A would be the most preferred. The most important is preserve all open lawn of North lawn."

"Conceptual alignment A."

"Conceptual alignment A because Rockefeller Park unchanged so do not block building views."

"Plan A – seems like dealing with a flooded field for a 1 in 100 year storm."

"Minimizing disruption (e.g. option A) is preferable."

"Prefer half always available during construction. 'A' is a good solution for a less urgent/pressing situation."

"I prefer A!"

"Plan A is the best and only viable option. But... not convinced existing wall should be higher."

"Like Plan A because you don't have to tear up lawn."

"Strongly agree with alignment A. Let the water come in and then recede. Do not spend precious natural resources and financial resources on overbuilding and over-engineering."

"You can't plant trees around wall! Put wall at yellow alignment so more trees in landscape."

"Out of the three options, like yellow best. Increased wall should think "kids play".

### ***Ferry Terminal***

"Please keep ferry terminal as far south as possible. Away from residential apartments."

"If move ferry terminal consider passenger movement to Vesey. Current location best. Other consideration: noise at 218 River Terrace. CB1's request to electrify ferries and add needed electric infrastructure for ferries."

"Do not move ferry terminal north away from bus users."

"Dislike moving terminal nearer playground."

"Do not move ferry closer to playground; open park."

"Please do not move the ferry terminal too far over."

### ***Open Park Space***

"Do not move ferry closer to playground; open park." (repeat from Ferry Terminal)

"Please keep the trees and don't break up open continuous lawns. Please!"

"Open lawn space is needed—not the same as green space (non playable planting area)."

"Please maintain open uninterrupted lawn space—not broken by paths or seating."

### ***Preserve Park***

"Minimize impact to park."

"Keep the North Lawn and the South Lawn as it is."

"Plans B+C make no sense. C would destroy the park."

"Leave playground. It was just redone?"

"Touch as little of the park as possible. Keep it open during construction."

"Please preserve green space! And sight lines."

"No sculpting needed. We like the lawn as it is, but we would like it to be protected. Like playground as it is."

### ***Questions About Conceptual Alignment A***

"Replace lawn in instance of flood."

"How often are we expecting the lawn to flood with Plan A? How much would maintenance cost in time and money?"

"Why doesn't plan A follow the existing River Terrace wall? (I.e., why wrap the playground away from the lawns?)"

## Water Access

"How about a community boathouse?"

"We would greatly appreciate more access to the water."

## Miscellaneous

"I don't understand why anyone would object to this project. It's a very good idea and would benefit the community. It's easier to prevent something than to deal with the consequences of a hurricane or flood afterwards. Instead of trying to prevent, try to understand the importance and help to implement. I've lived here for 9 years."

"Redesign sports courts area for better, flexible program usage."

"Where is the drainage and rainwater capture?"

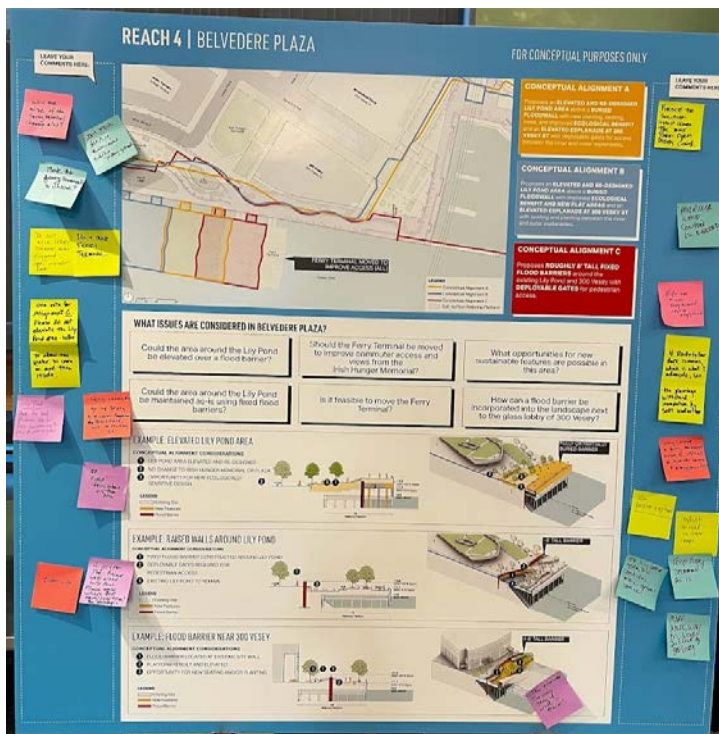
"The trees on the West Side of the street are important."

"Please estimate the timing that the park would be unavailable under plans B and C."

"Follow Green Coalition design principles, keep trees, active grass, places for kids to play."

"Small wall is good. Keep it simple stupid."

## Reach 4



### ***Ferry Terminal***

"Keep ferry terminal as is."

"Why move a ferry terminal away from offices and towards homes and playgrounds?"

"Prefer not to move ferry terminal next to playground."

"Moving ferry terminal interesting."

"Ferry Terminal a noise nuisance."

"Don't move ferry terminal near playground."

"How can the Ferry Terminal exist past the pierhead line?"

"Do NOT move Ferry Terminal near playground and open recreation area."

"Don't move Ferry Terminal."

"Move terminal where and why? Rationale?"

"Ferry commuters go up Vesey and towards Brookfield, not to Murray St."

"Will the size of the ferry terminal change also?"

"Move the ferry terminal to where?"

### ***Lily Pond***

"If lily pond goes, pls consider more green space!"

"Lily Pond. Ask the head gardener. He has been maintaining the pond for over 20 years."

"One vote for Alignment C. Please do not elevate the Lily Pond area – better to allow the water to come in and then recede."

### ***Trees and Greenery***

"This eliminates too many trees w/ wall in berm!"

"Make green. Add green over concrete."

"If walls, then for kids to play. Natural elements."

### ***Cost and Time***

"Cost? Construction time?"

"Cost comparisons."

"Who is paying? Sources and uses of funds?"

### ***Miscellaneous***

"More walk way on lower in front of 300 Vesey."

"Difficult to read – use larger images."

"Use passive systems."

"If Rockefeller Park remains, which is what I advocate, can the plantings withstand inundation by salt water?"

"Marina wave control is needed."

"Design principles of Tear Drop."

"Pursue the solution which leaves the most park open during construction."

"I prefer this – raised wells around lily pond – place walls where don't have / need trees! Be strategic."

"No views from inland on this one." (placed next to Example: Elevated Lily Pond Area)

"Wrong reasons to move it!"

"What about the ducks?"

"Make clear how high the wall will be."

"Models and data underpinning assumptions."

### Reach 5



### ***Views***

"C unclear. Do not block views."

"Need views of river."

"Umbrella trees not high view blocking."

"Maintaining views of river from plaza is a priority."

"Don't block view."

### ***Trees and Greenery***

"Yes! More greenery."

"Which ever solution has more trees leafiness!"

"Lawn is not sustainable, it requires a lot of maintenance. Use plantings instead."

"Prefer 'A' if more trees are added to that area."

"More shade, more green."

### ***Accessibility***

"How can universal accessibility be improved in North Cove? Build a community boathouse."

"Which options improves accessibility?"

### ***Cost and Time***

"Cost and time comparison for each scheme."

"Will Brookfield help fund improvements to their esplanade? They have fixed lease rates unlike us."

"Cost difference among 3 options? Construction time difference? Disruption to residents time frame?"

"Costs born by corporations who use to recruit employees."

### ***Miscellaneous***

"Bring back original designer of the campus to retain 'art.'"

"Pursue most minimally impactful solution."

"Follow green coalition design principles."

"Flexable open space is NEED for walking. Traffic in plaza."

"Good luck!"

"More places that kids play."

"Please make renderings to show effects from Kowsky Plaza."



"Show where section is taken in plans."

### Reach 6



### Esplanade

"Shade trees and proximity to water are best features of esplanade."

"Collect water and use for irrigation."

"The esplanade is a pathway to Statue. Play features just don't fit when this is a passage. It's an alley. Please keep it that way."

"Esplanade is already crowded enough – narrowing would be a problem."

"Do not reduce planted areas in order to widen the esplanade."

"Please limit construction impacts and leave the esplanade as is."

"Prefer this option – maintains more of esplanade space."

"Prefer this solution. Simpler, keeps more green for public. Consider hybrid where esplanade is raised and lawn has more graceful profile." (placed next to Example: Buried Flood Wall at South Esplanade)

"Don't increase width." (placed on top right of board, assuming it's referring to esplanade)

"How narrow can you go? It's already tough to get through, especially in warm months. I.e. tourist." (placed on bottom left of board, assuming it's referring to esplanade)

### ***Views***

"All vistas to the river should be preserved w/ deployables, not fixed."

"Plan B – what happens to views? A lot of folks take photos with Statue of Liberty in background."

"If a wall is going to obscure views from an apartment an active flip wall should be used."

"How will views be impacted?"

"So how are all street views affected? What about quick access to FDNY and NYPD emergency situ?"

### ***Cost***

"How is all of this financed?"

"Cost comparison."

### ***Graphics***

"Would be helpful to have rendering illustrating street views, showing what the pedestrians experience of these walls would be."

"Graphics are not accurate all adjacent buildings currently look out."

### ***Miscellaneous***

"Like this niche [arrow pointing to graphic in "Example: Minimal Changes to South Esplanade]."

"Use deployables at intersections."

"What is more protection A, B, or C?"

"Important to design not only for worst case. What will we be living with during non-flood events."

"How high is the existing wall?"

"Limiting impacts of construction is a plus."

"Intersections are too narrow for art or play. They become choke points."

"Green over concrete."

"Data and assumptions?"

"Green coalition design principles."

## Reach 7



### *South Cove*

"Do NOT lose the on water recreational capabilities of South Cove."

"Right now, South Cove is a work of art. No boating access allowed. But if you are considering taking away this work by Eckstut / miss / child, then please make the most of this protected cove. Could be another site for boating access."

"Proximity to water is a big plus of South Cove."

"A marsh at South Cove is a great idea, + boulders."

### *Natural Shoreline*

"Like natural shoreline [arrow pointing to graphic on Example: Restoration Opportunity in South Cove]."\*

"[arrow pointing to \* comment] We like! How to manage garbage."

"Like this [arrow pointing to graphic on Example: Restoration Opportunity in South Cove]."

"Natural shoreline would be cool."

***Miscellaneous***

"Why are the barriers 7' tall?"

"Green coalition principles."

"Love that the Forest Walk is mostly untouched Plan A seems great."

"Must talk to MetroKids Battery Park Montessori, etc."

"Prefer solution with deployable."

"Rain water collection system."

"Passive solution preferred."