

# North/West Battery Park City Resiliency Project Community Meeting #4 Activity Summary

**Project:** North/West BPC Resiliency Project  
**Topic:** Community Meeting #4 Summary  
**Date:** Monday, September 19th, 2022, 5:30 pm – 8:00 pm  
**Location:** 6 River Terrace

## Project Team

<b>Name</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Role</b>
BJ Jones	BPCA	President/CEO
Gwen Dawson	BPCA	Vice President, Real Property
Claudia Filomena	BPCA	Director of Capital Projects
Nicholas Sbordone	BPCA	Vice President, Communications & Public Affairs
Eric Munson	BPCA	Chief Operating Officer
Varun Kohli	BPCA	Assistant Vice President, Planning & Design
Achille Niro	AECOM	Services Director
Garrett Avery	AECOM	Leader, Project Definition & PDB Design Review
Hogan Edelberg	AECOM	Leader, Landscape & Urbanism
Nora Madonick	ASC	Stakeholder & Community Engagement
Karina Vangani	ASC	Stakeholder & Community Engagement
Caroline Ibarra	ASC	Community Engagement
Moses Rifkin	ASC	Community Engagement
Sebastian Kogler	ASC	Community Engagement
Emma K. Sniegowski	ASC	Community Engagement
Tia Williams	ASC	Community Engagement
Sage Block	ASC	Community Engagement
Jaemie Bennett	ASC	Community Engagement
Kate Orff	SCAPE	Speaker
Jeremy Siegel	BIG	Speaker
Peter Glus	Arcadis	Speaker

### *Community Board 1*

Tammy Meltzer	Manhattan CB1	Chairperson
Alice Blank	Manhattan CB1	Vice Chairperson; Chairperson, Environmental Protection Committee
Justine Cuccia	Manhattan CB1	Chairperson, Battery Park City Committee
Wendy Chapman	Manhattan CB1	Co-Chairperson, Environmental Protection Committee
Jeff Galloway	Manhattan CB1	Acting Co-Chairperson, Battery Park City Committee
Betty Kay	Manhattan CB1	Chairperson, Transportation Committee

## Executive Summary

In partnership with Manhattan Community Board 1, the Battery Park City Authority hosted Community Meeting #4 on September 19, 2022. This marked the seventh 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, Community Meeting #2 in December 2021 and an Open House in June 2022.

Held in-person as well as livestreamed via Zoom, Community Meeting #4 provided project background information including vision and objectives, introduced the progressive design build team and presented the conceptual design alternatives by reach to the attendees. During the presentation, in-person participants were provided note cards to write down questions or comments, and online participants could enter questions and comments into the Zoom Q&A feature. The presentation was followed by a Q&A session where presentation panelists responded to the collected questions and comments. Concurrently, participants viewed 17 boards: 4 of which were general boards and 13 of which explored the proposed alignments at each specific reach. Participants had the option to leave their feedback as comments on the boards and ask the project team questions.

172 participants pre-registered to attend Community Meeting #4 in-person or virtually. 72 participants attended the event in-person and 110 viewed the event online, for a total of **182 participants**.

A virtual version of the boards was uploaded, and made available from September 26, 2022, to October 3, 2022 to enable community members to view and add comments to the boards after the event.

BPCA received a total of 240 comments from in person, livestreamed and virtual participants.

## Summary of Questions/Comments Received

The following is a summary of questions and comments received from community members during and after the Community Meeting. Throughout the event at least two notetakers were circulating the room to capture these conversations.

### General Project Conversations

#### *Basic Project Information, including Cost*

- Project Timeline: Attendees asked how long the project would take to build, and how the public will access parts of the park during different periods of construction.
- Participants asked the project team to clarify why the project is necessary, wanting clarification for why portions of the alignment that did not flood during Superstorm Sandy need to be a part of the project. Many were concerned that their cherished park would be removed without merit as it pertains to future flooding.
- The question of cost comparison between different designs was asked several times. Other attendees requested a cost-benefit analysis for the different options. The community sought to understand if the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey could/would pay for part of the project, and whether residents' taxes would be increased if the project moves forward.
- Many attendees stressed the importance of preserving trees.

- Many attendees asked if the recent Army Corps of Engineers HATS report will impact future plans for this project.
- Participants asked what projects of a similar nature have been completed by this consultant team.
- Participants asked if BPCA has the authority to conduct this project in Tribeca and if the public has the authority to prevent the project from moving forward.
- Some attendees requested more information about the administrative oversight in place.

### *Modeling Considerations*

- Several participants inquired how possible revised FEMA flood evaluations could affect the project. They wanted to know whether existing FEMA data is sufficiently reliable, and if these concerns were built into the timeline.
- The minimum elevation that FEMA requires for insurance was raised as an important topic.
- More information on the climate science behind this project was requested.

### *Environmental Impact*

- Many participants emphasized the importance of protecting Wagner Park and Rockefeller Park from significant change, stating that they preferred minimal impact and the preservation of existing trees.
- Many commented that the chances of flooding were too small to justify changes to the public space. However, others commented that they were concerned that planned changes may not go far enough to prevent future flooding.

### *Public Realm Impacts*

- Multiple requests were made that the sailing school at Reach 5 and volleyball court at Reach 6 remain intact.
- Regarding Stuyvesant High School, several attendees asked if flood gates would be in front of the school and how the changes would affect the property and nearby pedestrian access.

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

- Participants asked how the experience of the average pedestrian will be affected by construction and new design.
- Many people worried about noise pollution caused by construction and moving the ferry terminal closer to residential areas.
- Participants asked if/how this project would impact nearby neighborhoods.

### *Public Outreach*

- Several attendees asked if the presentations could be more viewer friendly and easier to understand.
- Several people watching the event remotely asked if the names of the panelists and their roles can be listed on the livestream feed and asked for better livestream quality.
- A participant asked if a 3-D model could be created.

## **Reach by Reach comments**

### ***Reach 1***

- Participants requested more visuals to be made available. They further inquired about what the gaps in the walls illustrated in the diagrams.
- More information was requested about how this reach can prevent future flooding like the flooding seen during Hurricane Sandy from Northern Tribeca that spilled onto Laight Street and as far east as the West Side of Washington Street.
- Multiple attendees wanted more information on how construction will impact pedestrian use of Washington Market and N. Moore Street.

### ***Reach 2***

- Participants asked if flood gates would be put in front of Stuyvesant High School and stated the need for more pedestrian space.
- Nature-based solutions, like marshes, were recommended by multiple attendees.

### ***Reach 3***

- On the topic of a proposed new wall, attendees asked if it would replace the stone wall and what that new wall would be made of.
- Participants asked about the difference in time that Rockefeller Park would be closed between the two alternatives shown during the presentation. Many people asked that the parks be as accessible as possible during construction and that greenery be preserved long-term.
- Several questions were raised about the implications of the drainage improvements.
- Attendees asked how many trees would be impacted in each scenario and what “impacted” means in the context of this project.
- There were several questions raised about what would happen to the duck pond.
- Replacing the recently renovated playground was objected to by multiple attendees.

### ***Reach 4***

- Many attendees asked if the ferry must be moved or if it can be moved out of Battery Park City (to a location like Pier 25, or one much further south), arguing the current ideas for the Ferry Terminal will increase noise and pollution issues for many Battery Park City residents.
- Several participants asked for more details on the temporary ferry terminal move mentioned during the presentation.

### *Reach 5*

- Multiple concerns were raised about the sailing school and Winter Garden at this reach potentially being removed.

### *Reach 6*

- Questions came up regarding the overall size/thickness of the proposed wall at this reach, potential impacts on its surrounding environment, and the construction timeline.
- Several attendees asked about potential impacts to the volleyball courts at this reach.

### *Reach 7*

- Multiple participants asked why the area outside the regatta (the lower-level platform)/Miramar is being improved now when additional changes are planned through the project and how proposed changes will affect its views.
- The project team received several comments about the privacy wall at this reach, including if the wall will be rebuilt to have deployable sections and about access to South Cove from 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Places.