

Brooklyn Bridge Park Community Advisory Council Meeting

334 Furman Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Tuesday, May 7, 2019 6:30 PM

MINUTES

Attendees

Community Advisory Council

Sandy Balboza, Nat Rubin, Howard Kolins, Nancy Webster, Howard Graubard, Benette Kramer, Cynthia McKnight, Melissa Prober (for Matthew Warren), Doreen Gallo, Katrin Adam, Todd Castilow, Ariana Martuscello, Bartow Church (for Aldona Vaiciuas), Linda Derosa

Brooklyn Bridge Park

Sarah Krauss

Preliminary Items

Todd Castilow welcomed Howard Graubard as the CB6 representative and talked about his background.

The minutes of the March 5, 2019 meeting were approved. The minutes of the April 2, 2019 meeting were approved at the end of the meeting.

Park President's Report

Pedestrian/Bike Count

Sarah Krauss reported that activity was picking up in the Park. As Dan Schack (from Sam Schwartz Traffic Engineering) reported at the January meeting, there was a pedestrian/bike count on the existing Greenway from Pier 6 to Fulton Ferry Landing. The count showed that the ratio of pedestrians to bikes is five to one. The Park plans to widen the pedestrian lane and create a more visible bike lane. The project will take place in the fall and will be complete before winter. The lanes will be in asphalt and the Park will use cobblestone to make the delineation between the pedestrian and bike lanes more clear. The current surface does not have bike lane marking, but the asphalt surface will. A commenter said that there should be a physical barrier. Sarah Krauss responded that the Park is narrow and the concern is that a child might be trapped in the bike lane. There will be new signage at the cross points.

Concession at Fulton Ferry

Ample Hills will open in mid-June on the ground floor of the Fireboat House. There will not be a concession upstairs this year. The Ample Hills facility has been approved by the Landmark Preservation Committee (LPC). The Pincus Brothers went to the LPC last month. They have revised their plan and sent it back to the Brooklyn Bridge Park. More than half of the people attending the LPC hearing spoke against building a structure in the Landing, but did not speak against the design. The LPC cannot say that nothing should be there; they can only review the structure. They will have to rule on it.

There was a discussion as to whether a building for the café was disclosed in the RFP for the concession. The CB2 and LPC hearings reflect a discussion about the nondisclosure. Pincus Brothers will revise the plans, take them to the BBP Corp., and then they will go together to the LPC.

Brooklyn Bridge Plaza

BBP is still working with the EPA on Brooklyn Bridge Plaza. There has not been any update. The Park is seeking bids to perform preventative maintenance on the plaza.

July 4 Fireworks

The fireworks will be offshore from the Park and closer to it this year. The barges will be between Piers 1 and 6. The Park will let people know the details once they have information.

Pier 2 Parking Lot

The Pier 2 parking lot will reopen by Memorial Day.

Nancy Webster – Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy

Nancy Webster provided an update on the activities of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy. She announced that summer calendars were available. She said that the Conservancy works in partnership with the BBP to do programming in the Park. The Conservancy does not do all the programming, but does organize 500 free and low-cost activities. The activities fall into three categories: cultural, such as a camp, workshops, book reading, movie series (on Thursday evenings); educational; recreational; and volunteer programs. The Kite Festival will be this weekend (May 4-5). There are also STEM activities.

The educational programs focus on land and water. The Harvest Festival takes place in October. For environmental education, the Conservancy will work with the schools to develop curricula. The programs will draw kids from Title I schools from all over the City. They serve 9,000 kids per year from 300 classes. All in all the programs will serve 200,000 young people. There are tons of recreational programs: basketball, fitness classes, soccer leagues. The Conservancy will also work with the BBP boathouse. They will have kayaking, a youth kayak program, and programs for kids from underserved neighborhoods to learn boating skills for four days a week this year. The public programs for kids and adults will service every zip code in Brooklyn.

The Environmental Education Center underneath the Manhattan Bridge has hands-on exhibits and live animals. There is a 250-gallon aquarium. There is a new fishing program on Pier 5, which is all catch and release. The Park has soft edges where you can get into the water, which enables it to offer a much richer suite of programs. There is a "screening program" which uses a long fishing net in the water under the Manhattan Bridge. The net goes into the river and the kids can see the river as a habitat because the net brings up blue crabs, small fish, shrimp, sea horses, etc. The river becomes a place you care about.

The Volunteer Program has a regular green team of people who come in on Saturday mornings from 10 to 12. It is a walk-in program. There are also community service learning programs and a group for special needs adults. There will be a teen program in the fall. The programs combine environmental education and community service.

Committee Reports

Design Committee

No report.

Operations Committee

No meeting, no report.

Membership Committee

No report.

Traffic Committee

Linda Derosa reported that the CAC is working with DOT (Keith Bray, Borough Commissioner) to re-stripe the lanes on Furman Street from the Pierhouse to 360 Furman. The lanes will be shifted. The south lane will be nine feet wide to accommodate cars stopping at the hotel and 360 Furman. There will be a barrier along the north-bound lane to prevent cars from scraping along the wall. They don't know yet about the signage.

Second, the Dumbo Action Committee had a meeting on May 6 to discuss issues at the north end of the park. There is debris falling from the Manhattan Bridge which is all over the Park walkways. A solution is needed. The committee will ask DOT to sit down with them, but falling debris is a city-wide issue where there are trains on the bridges.

Third, last spring there were school bus issues around the Park. Eric Landau suggested creating a school bus register to get some control over the buses. During the summer it is a mess with all the summer camps. Todd suggested seeing what happens to the buses at Pier 2. Doreen Gallo said that Water Street is a big traffic issue, maybe because it is a pick-up spot for ride-sharing services. Fulton Ferry Landing Association is advocating to have Water Street turned into a one-way street. The River Café is no longer against it because GPS will now route drivers to go down Dock Street. They have heard the Park supports this. Todd Castilow said that they will draft a letter from the CAC supporting the proposal. There is no safety where the No. 25 bus unloads. The traffic comes from three directions. Doreen said that they are working with DOT, but did not qualify for a light. They should go to the CB Transportation Committee.

Other Business

CAC members present discussed moving to bi-monthly meetings. Todd said that he thinks monthly meetings are good, as long as they are kept short. Sarah Krauss said that she thinks every two months is adequate. The consensus was to continue monthly meetings.

There was a discussion about clarifying the April minutes in connection with the discussion about the Fulton Ferry Landing Concession Agreement.