



To: NY/NJ HEP Habitat Workgroup
From: Nancy Welsh, Habitat Workgroup Chair
Date: June 7, 2004
Subject: Summary of the May 17, 2004 HEP Habitat Workgroup Meeting

Location: Hudson River Foundation, 17 Battery Place, Suite 915, New York, NY

Present at Meeting:

Carl Alderson (NOAA), Robert Alpern, Mary Arnold (TCC), Bernard Blum (FOR), Alexander Brash (NYCDPR), Paul Brunn (NYCDCP), David Burg (WM), YiTing Chen (NYC DPR), Jane Cleaver (NYC DPR), Charles deQuillfeldt (NYSDEC), Michelle Doran-McBean (Future City, Inc.), Alvaro Franco (Future City, Inc.), Cindy Goulder (Brookland Landscapes), Catherine Greene-Manzi (Coalition for SBPPP), Dana Gumb (NYC DEP), Ellen Hartig (GEE, Inc.), Ilene Harrington (NYCDEP), Paul Mankiewicz (Gaia, NYCSWCD), Anthony Marraccini (Turnaround Friends), E.J. McAdams (NYCAS), Manny Russ (CAC NYCDEP), Rosalie Siegel (PANYNJ), Robert Spiegel (EWA), Frank Steimle (NOAA NMFS), Jean Tahler (Pratt), Veda Truesdale (NYC DEP), Bill Tai (NYCDPR), Kim Tripp (NPS-Gateway), Clark Wallace (TPL), Steven Wallander (NYC DEP), Nancy Welsh (NYS DOS), Christopher Zeppie (PANYNJ)

Agenda Items:

Port Authority/NYC DEP Bluebelt partnership to acquire Northern South Beach Wetlands, Staten Island, NY (Nancy Welsh; Chris Zeppie, PANYNJ)

Dana Gumb (NYC DEP Bluebelt) made a brief presentation on the Bluebelt and current acquisition efforts. Chris Zeppie presented goals and status of the Port Authority critical habitat acquisition program. The proposition relates to utilizing Port Authority acquisition funds to acquire a key parcel in the identified Bluebelt area in this region, adjacent to the Northern South Beach Wetlands HEP Site. This action is beneficial as a catalyst to acquisition of the entire Mid-Island bluebelt (including the adjacent HEP site), and through establishment of comparables for other Staten Island acquisition efforts. There is the potential to establish a long-term partnership between PANYNJ and the Bluebelt that would allow Bluebelt parcels to be acquired through the PA acquisition program to facilitate the transaction, with this program subsequently being reimbursed.

David Burg (WildMetro) made a motion for the Habitat Workgroup to endorse the proposal, including 1) approval of the geographic scope of the proposal, 2) approval of the partnership to acquire parcels as presented, and 3) approval for exploring the potential revolving fund partnership. Mary Arnold (Teaneck Creek Conservancy) seconded this motion. The HWG voted and recorded 14 in favor, 1 opposed, and 4 abstentions.

Revision of Great Kills Harbor, Staten Island HEP Site/Nomination of new acquisition opportunities (Clark Wallace, TPL; Jane Cleaver, NYC Parks)

Jane Cleaver (NYC DPR) presented a proposal to expand the existing boundaries for HEP Site RB16 (Great Kills Harbor Park/Nelson/Sweetwater/Fitzgerald Woods/Plum Marina) to include the entire Crescent Beach ecosystem. In addition, proponents of the proposal would subsequently like to utilize

PANYNJ habitat acquisition funds to acquire several small parcels in this ecosystem that prevent NYC DPR from protecting the Crescent Beach ecosystem as a whole. Acquisition of these parcels would complete this large stretch of shorefront as publicly owned land.

Paul Mankiewicz (Gaia Institute) made a motion to extend the boundary of the HEP site to include the additional areas as presented during the meeting. David Burg (WildMetro) seconded the motion. The HWG voted on this motion and recorded 19 in favor, with 5 abstentions.

Acquisition Site Nomination: PRR Harsimus Stem Embankment Habitat and Access Project, Jersey City, NJ (Maureen Crowley, 6th Avenue Embankment Association; Greg Remaud, NY/NJ Baykeeper)

This agenda item was postponed to a future meeting at the request of the proponents.

Presentation on the Property Analysis Record (PAR) methodology to calculate land management costs (Mario Paula, USEPA)

This agenda item was postponed to a future meeting at the request of the proponent.

New Jamaica Bay Initiatives (Eugenia Flatow, Jamaica Bay Task Force)

This agenda item was postponed to a future meeting due to the absence of the proponent.

Additional Items:

Harbor Estuary Program Proposed Budget Items

The Habitat Workgroup discussed proposed Harbor Estuary Program budget items for the current cycle. These include: 1) funding for Phase II of the NYC OASIS/HEP Sites project (\$11,000) and 2) conducting a one-time, small grants program to conduct conceptual planning for HEP Priority Restoration Site to advance implementation (\$15,000). Some of the funds in the HEP budget that may be allocated to these HWG items will be derived from funds formerly allocated to the National Habitat Conference, which, at the request of the Program Office and agreed to by the HWG chair, will be rolled back into the HEP budget and re-allocated. The need for a habitat conference was reviewed and discussed, with Bob Alpern volunteering to spearhead these efforts on behalf of the HWG.