



New York - New Jersey  
Harbor Estuary Program

# CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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of the New York – New Jersey  
Harbor Estuary Program

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## **HEP CAC Minutes July 19, 2004 Meeting The River Project Manhattan, NY**

**Present:** Carter Craft (MWA), Debbie Mans (NY/NJ Baykeeper), Porter-Ann Gaines (MWA), Anne Carpenter (NYCSWCD), Jordan Baker-Caldwell (Future City), Dan Mundy (Jamaica Bay Eco-watchers), Manuel Russ, Clay Sherman (NJDEP), Joel Banslaben (HEP), Anthony Marraccini (Turnaround Friends, Inc.), Anthony Caserta (Inspecto Inc.), Jane Jackson (NYRP), Scott Wingerter (TRP), Steve Lang (CUNY), Jennifer Aase-Remedios (BBPC), Tara DePorte (LESEC), Linda Eskenas (North Shore Waterfront Greenbelt), Bob Nyman (USEPA-HEP), Richard Patterson (Ocean Journal Films), Cathy Drew (TRP), Joy Garland (Stuyvesant Cove Park Association), David Burg (Wild Metro)

Carter Craft called the meeting to order around 10:20 am. There was a slight delay due to a majority of the participants having trouble finding Pier 26. Thanks to the River Project for letting us use their space for the meeting!

### **Committee Reports: HEP Committees and Work Groups**

Craft gave a brief overview of what the different work groups were and why they exist. All the work groups should be working together/in tandem and then act as a collective bridge to the Management Committee.

*Management Committee:* B. Nyman reported that NY/NJ HEP maintained the same level of funding from last year (approx. \$506,000). Notably, some of the CAC-requested projects that were funded are the Mini-grant Program (also funded last year) and a new one for the completion of the public access database inventory.

- + National Estuaries Program (NEP) legislation and funding is up for reauthorization this year.
- + D. Mans asked if there is anything CAC members could or should be doing in terms of this legislation.
- + B. Nyman responded that the “window of opportunity” is passed (a letter is circulated every spring) but that it still would not hurt to contact your legislator.
- + C. Craft added that this piece of legislation is not usually a hotly contested one so if you let our legislator know that this is something voters in his district care about, it’s quite easy for him to sign on.

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#### **Citizens Advisory Committee Co-chairs**

Debbie Mans, NY/NJ Baykeeper, Building 18, Sandy Hook, Highlands, NJ 07732 ✦ 732-291-0176  
Carter Craft, Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance, 457 Madison Avenue, NY, NY 10022 ✦ 212-935-9831

- + B. Nyman added that the funding is only for \$24 million (for the 28 programs nationwide) so, comparatively, it's not a huge amount of money being authorized
- + The next Management Committee meeting is scheduled for August 19 at 10am at the Hudson River Foundation offices and is open to the public.

*Habitat Work Group:* Manny Russ shared a recent conversation he had with Congressman Nadler concerning contaminants from upstate New York washing downstream (in the Hudson) and causing contamination and problems down here, which the Congressman seemed surprised to hear.

- + Chesapeake Bay: modeling system set up to monitor/account for environmental clean up and health of the Bay was being criticized when compared with actual monitoring measurements; called into concern which method is truly more effective – modeling or actual measurements.

*Nutrients Work Group:* B. Nyman reported that they're trying to get the TMDL modeling/measurements back on track. Meetings haven't taken place for a while.

*Dredged Material Management Integration Work Group:* Current dredging issues include: Fresh Kills and the proposed NASCAR track on Staten Island. Also, D. Mans reminded everyone that comments on the EIS for the cross-harbor tunnel are due by Sept. 30 and may be submitted via fax to Ms. Alice Cheng at 212-799-2206. D. Mundy briefly described an opportunity for the re-use of clean dredged material in Jamaica Bay. The group questioned him as to the status of the "jet spray projects." Mundy reported that 80 – 90% of the plants have survived and even new seedlings have resulted from the project. NPS will be hosting a reception and site visit on Sunday, he believes, if interested arrange with him after the meeting.

*Education and Outreach:* J. Bansleben, the new HEP Program Associate, reminded the group that the revised teacher's handbook was completed last year. He has taken over finishing the stewardship database which has gathered, and continues to gather, information on the different non-profit organization dealing with the NY/NJ harbor estuary. This information will eventually be available to the public (online and in print) and will include topics such as public access opportunities different organizations can provide, where it's missing, what geographic areas they work in and other pertinent information. This tool is in response to feedback from many different groups who wish they were able to make more connections with other groups working in their same topical and geographic regions.

*National Estuaries Day Subcommittee:* applications are due TODAY and awards will be announced in early August.

*Waterfront Access Subcommittee:* MWA and Baykeeper have put in a funding request to finish the public access database as well as solve the problem of developing a quantitative measure for qualifying and categorizing public access points.

### **HEP CAC Steering Committee Appointments**

A request was made by D. Mans for steering committee appointments for the CAC. Duties include attending CAC meetings, reading all reports and minutes, communicating with and

reflecting their constituencies and voting on any matters before the CAC. D. Mans would like to have a list ready to present to the Management Committee at their August meeting; anyone interested in participating on the Steering Committee should contact one of the co-chairs. C. Craft pointed out that the Management Committee is an important tool as it offers us a chance to check and influence what the public agencies decide about HEP monies, projects, etc.

### **CAC Priority Areas**

- + C. Craft asked the group what their priorities on land and waterfront are?
- + L. Eskenas said she heard that DEP took over land slated to be parkland on Staten Island with no public involvement/input.
- + D. Mundy: preventing the auction of Jamaica Bay Marshlands by the City. These areas being called into concern are not on the HEP acquisition list but they should be. E.J. McAdams thought that the reason the City does not want them is because of the issue of having to maintain them but D. Mundy responded that they are maintenance free and went on to say that countless sites like this, even when identified and marked as a priority, suffer from a lack in follow-through after they've been recognized (examples: Staten Island big box sites and Flushing Airport).
  - + this begs the necessity for more joint meetings between the CAC and other groups – especially the Habitats Workgroup who can identify priority areas/sites and then the CAC can mobilize the citizens as to what they can do to help.
- + A. Caserta stated one of his priorities to be amphibious vehicles and their potential uses in NY Harbor.
- + J. Banslaben (representing Surfrider Foundation NYC Chapter as well as HEP): priority should be stormwater runoff and CSOs. CAC should consider doing some outreach programs with different communities on runoff floatables, nutrients, potentially even a stenciling project.
- + J. Garland added that it should be a priority to fix the combined sewer outfalls which need larger catchment holding areas so when it rains, the system won't emit raw sewage into our water.
- + D. Mundy has noticed that the 26<sup>th</sup> Water Plant, which is only supposed to accept sludge from Jamaica Bay (unless a plant breaks down) has been taking sludge from other areas, which could be a potential cause of increased nitrogen levels in the Bay.
- + T. DePorte would like to see one, central water quality monitoring place where all the different programs (public and private) that are conducting water quality testing can post and share their findings. B. Nyman offered that there is currently a harbor monitoring effort lead by NYCDEP and NJ Harbor Dischargers Group. Smaller groups (like the River Project or Lower East Side Ecology Center) won't be able to add their measurements to these databases. He suggested that a citizen-based monitoring database be developed that could compile non-agency data.
- + J. Jackson pointed out that the Harlem/Hudson monitoring group is beginning a program where they will pay for the training for a part-time water quality monitor.

- + C. Craft stated that a priority area should be access: it's hard to make all the water and waterfront issues seem like something the public should care about if they can't see or get to the water itself.
- + A. Carpenter noted that when providing access, we need to incorporate outreach as well.

### **Other Business**

NRDC, Environmental Defense and others are trying to pool resources to draw more attention to our oceans. Platforms they are doing this on are that we need more "friendly business" plans towards our oceans and their use and treatment; and more long term goals which should include a permanent, national committee on oceans, expanding cruise ships flushing laws (National bill currently in the house is bill # H.R. 4101, Clean Cruise Ship Act of 2004; a similar bill has been introduced in the Senate); need to look at the UN's ocean policy and the work they've completed in this field.

#### *Future CAC Meeting Dates:*

Next CAC meeting will be September 9 at, hopefully, the Greater Newark Conservancy with the Habitat Work Group. Additionally, we have reached out to the Long Island Sound Study to coordinate a joint meeting but they conduct a great deal of business at their meetings and would rather not have a joint meeting but rather make their next New York City meeting (December 19) open to all the HEP CAC members. D. Mans suggested that the two groups exchange minutes (LISS minutes can be found at <http://www.longislandsoundstudy.net>).

Request was made to look at the LISS's TMDL guidelines and see about expanding their scope to include Jamaica Bay. The system-wide Nutrient Workgroup is working on this already (Nutrient WG chair is Mark Tedesco).

#### *Listserve:*

There are now two listserve to serve the CAC members. The first is an administrative post-only list that announces official CAC business and is run by Laura Bartovics, HEP Outreach Coordinator. The second is a discussion-oriented listserve that is run by the CAC members. To sign-up for either listserve contact Debbie Mans at [Debbie@nynjbaykeeper.org](mailto:Debbie@nynjbaykeeper.org).

Meeting was adjourned around 11:20 AM with a 5 minute break and then a tour of the River Project's estuarium were given to small groups and provided by Scott Wingerter, Cathy Drew and some of the River Project's summer interns.