



New York – New Jersey
Harbor & Estuary Program

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

of the New York – New Jersey
Harbor & Estuary Program
www.HarborEstuary.org

NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

June 14, 2013
NJTPA Conference room
1085 Raymond Blvd., 17th Floor
(One Newark Center)
Newark, NJ 07102

MINUTES

1. Introductions

2. Formal introduction of CAC co-chair alternates

Shino Tanikawa (NYC Soil and Water Conservation District) and Nellie Tsipoura (NJ Audubon) are currently serving as alternate co-chairs and were formally introduced to the CAC.

3. Fish advisories projects updates

Regina Keenan (NY State Department of Health) joined by phone and provided an update of the summit, which is planned for October 19 in New York City. The main goal for this event is to communicate fish advisories to a wide audience, including non-profit orgs, students, and people interested in enjoying our waters. In order to attract and retain such audience, the current plan is to address a broad range of aspects of the waters around us and how we interact with them—public access, fishing, habitat preservation and restoration. NYSDOH has been meeting monthly and interacting with many partners to shape the agenda, including HEP, NJDEP, NYC Health, NYC DEP, NY State DEC, the Harbor School, Rockaway Waterfront Alliance, and Hudson River Park Trust. While the agenda has not been finalized, it is anticipated that it will include tabling opportunities in the morning, a plenary session providing overviews of the afternoon sessions, a keynote speaker over lunch (likely John Waldman presenting on diadromous fishes), breakout panels in the afternoon, and a wrap up (likely Chris Bowser talking about NYCDEP's "A Day in the Life of the Hudson" and Capt Bill Sheehan talking about Hackensack Riverkeeper's eco cruises and making environmental stewards). The afternoon sessions will be repeated twice, so people will have a choice of attending two of three offerings, which will include: making healthy choices when eating fish, restoring our waters' ecology, and connecting to and using the waterfront. The meeting will likely be announced after July 4. The latest draft agenda is posted on [CAC's hidden page](#).

Bob Alpern suggested connecting to the Long Island Sound and objected to holding a meeting instead of reaching the fishermen directly. Regina explained that very little resources are available for NYC, and those are restricted to the Hudson River. HEP funds will enable expanding the scope of this project to the entire city and whole NY-NJ harbor estuary area. It is hoped that this meeting will help create and cement relationships with local organizations that will then be able to work more directly with the fishing population.

Citizens Advisory Committee Co-Chairs

Meredith Comi, NY/NJ Baykeeper ✧ meredith@nynjbaykeeper.org ✧ 732-888-9870
Rob Buchanan, Village Community Boathouse ✧ avironvoile@gmail.com ✧ 917-656-7285

Louis Kleinman and Maggie Flanagan suggested engaging the power boating community and reaching out to marinas and yacht clubs. Nick Tufaro suggested bringing to the meeting some of the volunteers that have worked upstate and celebrate them.

Action items:

- The draft agenda for the summit will be sent out to the whole group.
- CAC members can also get in touch with Gabriela Munoz gabriela@harborestuary.org if they want to get in touch with Regina and participate in summit planning.

Clay Sherman (NJ Department of Environmental Protection) provided an update of the NJ fish advisories project. NJDEP is working closely with Future City, Inc. and five of the Watershed Ambassadors for northern NJ. The ambassadors are doing an assessment in the ground to gain a perspective of post-Sandy damage, determine whether fishing is happening at the same or new, locations, what species are being caught, whether there is signage at these locations, etc. The Watershed Ambassadors also do an urban fishing program for school children and will use that opportunity to educate about fish consumption advisories. The assessments will be conducted in 8 to 10 sites in the Arthur Kill, Rahway River, Hudson up to Hoboken, and Lower Passaic River. Some of the local organizations have noticed that many people are harvesting snails and there is currently no information regarding health risks of snail consumption.

4. Sandy Supplemental Funds update

Bob Nyman went over the draft Sandy funding summary, which is posted on [CAC's hidden page](#). The primary focus for many agencies is getting people back into livable homes; many federal agencies have funds set aside for specific tasks.

There were questions regarding how citizens can observe accountability for spending of these funds. It was also suggested that the Community Block Development Grants might be an opportunity for citizens to propose specific projects.

Action items:

- HEP will look into how the general public can be informed of how funding is being spent.
- HEP will try to organize a webinar about Community Block Development Grants.

Roselle Henn gave an overview of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study to identify types of projects and options to address the flood risks of vulnerable coastal populations affected by Superstorm Sandy. After sequestration, there is \$19 million to conduct the study, which will be submitted to Congress by January 2015. The report will be made public well in advance (March 2014) for open discussion. The slides are posted on [CAC's hidden page](#). Roselle suggested that the best way to keep abreast of any news about this study is to check out the website and subscribe to the email notifications: <http://www.nad.usace.army.mil/compstudy>. She also encouraged all to read the two interim reports that are available at the same website. These reports lists projects that provide protection (such as levees and barriers) that had been constructed in the area and were affected by Sandy, as well as projects that were approved but not yet constructed and will provide protection.

Roselle also indicated that there will be follow-up discussions to ensure that HEP and other National Estuary Programs in the region are part of the process. An extensive discussion and Q&A followed, and the CAC offered many suggestions for Roselle.

Action items:

- The CAC may send any additional questions for Roselle to Gabriela (gabriela@harborestuary.org).
- Roselle will convey a request to conduct a public meeting to allow for public input.

5. Sediment Management in the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary

Bryce Wisemiller provided an overview of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' sediment management projects in the harbor estuary. He provided background and an update on the 50-foot deepening project for the 35 miles of navigation channels in the harbor. Bryce also gave examples of projects that beneficially reuse dredged sediments and summarized projects planned for the short, mid, and long-term. The slides are posted on [CAC's hidden page](#). Discussion and Q&A followed, and it was agreed that John Tavolaro would provide an update of the [Regional Sediment Management Plan](#) for the Estuary at the next CAC meeting.

6. Public Access: Hudson River Waterfront Walkway

Helen Manogue, Hudson River Waterfront Conservancy, provided an overview of the past, present and future of the Hudson River Waterfront Walkway, which spans nine municipalities in NJ. Helen indicated that the new Public Access Rules do not apply to the Walkway but mentioned many of the challenges facing the Walkway, including conflicts with property owners, improper design, damage, and gaps. She showed many pictures exemplifying these issues—the slides have been posted on [CAC's hidden page](#). Helen also indicated that [Assembly Bill 3933](#) is proposing to allow development in coastal high-hazard areas.

Action items:

- Rob Buchanan asked Helen to draft a letter about Assembly Bill 3933 that the CAC could consider endorsing.

7. HEP updates

a. HEP Water Quality monitoring workshop update

Rob Buchanan provided a brief overview of the Water Quality Monitoring Workshop planned for September 18 (World Water Day). Several CAC members have been working with the HEP office and others to plan this workshop, which will focus on pathogen indicators. There will be a series of panels in the morning and a live demonstration of water sampling and analysis for pathogen indicators in the afternoon, run by The River Project, a partner in the [NYC Water Trail Association water quality monitoring project](#), which is entering its third year. Panel topics will include an overview of water quality issues affecting our waters, how the agencies monitor the waters and communicate results to the public, and lessons learned by citizen science efforts. The draft agenda has been posted on [CAC's hidden page](#). Any CAC members or participants that are interested in collaborating in the workshop's planning are welcome to contact Gabriela (gabriela@harborestuary.org).

b. HEP transition

Rob briefed the CAC. EPA released a request for non-federal entities to submit Statements of Interest to host the NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program, which has been shared with the CAC (and is now posted on [CAC's hidden page](#)). A public meeting will be held on June 26 at the EPA offices.

c. 2012 and 2013 Stewardship & Public Access grants (Gabriela – 10 min)

The progress reports for grants awarded in 2012 were shared prior to the meeting and are now posted on [CAC's hidden page](#). Nine projects were selected for funding in 2013—these are also posted on the website and will be included in the grants page and announced in the e-newsletter after the contracts are signed.

d. New HEP CAC members

Voting to accept new members will be done via email after the meeting.

8. Open forum, announcements, closing thoughts (all – 10 minutes)

Louis Kleinman announced Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance's [City of Water Day](#) (July 20) and invited groups to participate. For more information, check MWA's website. He also indicated that MWA was about to release a [petition](#) for NYC candidates for public office to commit to the waterfront platform. He also invited everybody to the public kayaking at Stuyvesant Cove on June 22.

Carolina Griggs ask everybody to provide comments on a [new document on public access best practices](#), which focuses on human powered boaters. She asked input on the type of information you would like to have. **Please submit any comments to Carolina at cgriggs@dep.nyc.gov**

The meeting was adjourned at 1 PM.

ATTENDEES

Kate Boicourt, NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program
Rob Buchanan, Village Community Boathouse
Don Chesley
Bart Chezar, Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club
Meredith Comi, NY/NJ Baykeeper
Maggie Flanagan
Roselle Henn , USACE
Tarun Johnson, Future City, Inc
Ousmane Kara, Future City, Inc
Regina Keenan, NYS DOH Center for Environmental Health
Louis Kleinman, Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance
Robert Laumbach, Rutgers University – EOHSI
Glenn Lautenbach, Future City, Inc
Helen Manogue, Hudson River Waterfront Conservancy of NJ, Inc.
Brian Mitchell, Interstate Environmental Commission
Ivan Morales, Future City, Inc
Harvey Morginstin, Passaic River Boat Club
Gabriela Munoz, NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program
Robert Nyman, NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program
Angel Rodriguez, Future City, Inc
Jorge Ruiz, Future City, Inc
Manuel Russ, Concerned Citizens of Bensonhurst
Clay Sherman, NJ DEP DWM
Isabelle Stinnette, SUNY SOMAS
Bill Surena, Future City, Inc
Shino Tanikawa, NY Soil & Water Conservation District

Nellie Tsipoura, NJ Audubon Society
Nick Tufaro, Middlesex County, NJ Planning Department
Bryce Wisemiller, USACE NY District