



New York – New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program

August 6, 2001
Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting
10:00 – 12:00
Hudson River Foundation

Meeting Attendees:

Eugenia Flatow (CAC NY Co-Chair), **Steve Barnes** (CAC NJ Co-Chair), **Laura Bartovics** (NYSG, HEP), **Shino Tanikawa** (NYC SWCD), **Nancy Steinberg** (HRF), **Bob Nyman** (USEPA, HEP), **Dennis Suszkowski** (HRF), **Ethan Yankowitz** (MWA), **Capt. Bill Sheehan** (Hackensack Riverkeeper), **Anu Carroll** (River Project), **William Nieter** (APEC), **Kenneth Kowald** (EEAC), **Annette Barry Smith** (PANYNJ), **Joel Farber** (ReHo), **Marjorie Shea** (Women's City Club-NY), **Cindy Goulder** (Ecological Landscapes), **Meryl Greenblatt** (NRCS), **Bill Fink** (BPCPC), **Bernard Blum** (Friends of Rockaway, Inc.), **Kathy Urffer** (Hackensack Riverkeeper), **Ann Dillon**, **Russ Nicholson** (NYSCC), **Robert Alpern** (NYCDEP), **Manuel Russ** (NYCDEP CAC-P2), **Joseph Chesonis** (Urban Systems Concept Group, Inc.), **Morton Orentlicher** (CAC), **Steve Lang** (CUNY), **Adeline Michaels** (Concerned Citizens of Bensonhurst), **Joy Garland** (Stuyvesant Cove Park Association), **Cy Adler** (Shorewalkers, Inc.), **Dave Lutz** (Neighborhood Open Space Coalition)

1. **Eugenia Flatow** opened the meeting and introductions were made.

The meeting began with a discussion of the process for electing New York and New Jersey CAC Co-chairs. **Eugenia Flatow** (CAC NY Chair) and **Steve Barnes** (CAC NJ Chair) announced that they would be running for re-election.

2. **C O-CHAIR ELECTION PROCESS:** All CAC members (anyone regularly attending HEP CAC meetings) were invited to submit co-chair nominations to **Laura Bartovics** (HEP Outreach Coordinator) via mail, e-mail or fax by **September 14**. Anyone may be nominated, but self-nominations will not be accepted. The HEP Management Committee will approve the nominations and **Bartovics** will mail the list of candidates to CAC members by **October 1**.

The CAC Steering Committee will vote for the co-chairs at the next CAC meeting on **November 5**. The 24-member Steering Committee (SC) represents a diversity of interests and geography in the Harbor Estuary. SC members will be replaced if they miss more than two consecutive CAC meetings without advance notice. A list of current Steering Committee members will be sent out by October 1. SC members will also vote to amend the CAC By-laws on November 5. CAC members may submit amendment suggestions to **Laura Bartovics** by September 14. Proposed amendments will be sent out by October 1.

Citizens Advisory Committee Co-chairs

Steve Barnes, NY - NJ Baykeeper, 19 N. Adelaide Avenue, Highland Park, NJ 08904 ✦ 732-246-2038
Eugenia Flatow, Coalition for the Bight, 121 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 501, NY, NY 10013 ✦ 212-431-9676

3. UPDATE ON JUNE 14TH CONFERENCE: Nancy Steinberg (HRF) presented an overview of the June 14th HEP conference, *Making the Vision a Reality*.

Conference Proceedings

Steinberg distributed a draft Proceedings that she had prepared after listening to an audiotape of the conference. She suggested that the Conference Proceedings might be combined with a summary of the twelve *Help the Harbor* meetings and/or the STAC meeting to produce a comprehensive document.

Steinberg outlined the conference program, which included a recommitment to the HEP, a variety of morning presentations, a luncheon address, and afternoon panel discussions (see attached overheads). She said that the luncheon address by Bill Matuszeski, retired Chesapeake Bay Program Director, inspired many of the ideas that emerged during the panel discussions.

During his address, Matuszeski highlighted the importance of setting specific numeric targets to manage the estuary – e.g. “how much by when.” He suggested that targets should not be set by scientists, citizens, or bureaucrats but by politicians, as they set the most ambitious targets. Matuszeski encouraged the audience not to worry about missing the targets. Any progress is better than none, he said, and missed targets can lead to subsequent progress exceeding the original goals.

Major Themes

Steinberg reviewed the major themes that arose from the June 14th conference, which were:

- Stakeholders must work together to achieve a common vision
- We can have both an economically and ecologically healthy estuary
- Port development must consider environmental health
- There is overwhelming support for setting quantitative targets
- More environmental monitoring is needed
- Communication with the public should be a top priority
- We need to get the attention of elected officials in the upcoming election season
- We should set the goal of achieving a *World Class Harbor Estuary by 2011* (later revised to 2009).

4. HEP OUTREACH AND EDUCATION: Laura Bartovics began the discussion of a HEP Outreach and Education plan with an update on current projects.

Guide to Water Education Resources

In response to a question heard again and again at the *Help the Harbor* meetings - “What’s out there for teachers and students?” - the program began putting together a *Teachers’ Guide to Water Education Resources in the New York – New Jersey Harbor Estuary*. By the end of June, Nancy Tran (HEP’s summer intern) had mailed questionnaires to over 120 organizations to request information for the guide. Responses had been arriving steadily and Bartovics encouraged CAC members to fill out the questionnaire if they hadn’t done so already. She mentioned that a first version of the guide would be posted on the HEP website – www.harborestuary.org - in the next month or so.

HEP Mini-grant Program

Bartovics reported that the coming year’s HEP budget includes \$25,000 to reinstate the HEP Mini-grant Program. In 1991, 1993 and 1994, the program granted up to \$4,000 to community groups to conduct education projects throughout estuary. A Request for Proposals should be issued this fall.

Flatow mentioned that an Education Subcommittee of the CAC would be involved in evaluating the proposals. **Bartovics** expressed her hope that the CAC would participate actively in HEP outreach and education efforts. She asked that anyone particularly interested in this area let her know.

Barnes suggested that the CAC ask certain questions to determine the focus of an outreach and education plan. 1) Do your constituency know what the HEP is? 2) Do they know what an *estuary* is? 3) Do we need basic outreach or do we have a sophisticated audience? 4) We have tools available, but how and in what sequence should these tools be utilized? He felt these were very important to consider.

Bernie Blum (Friends of Rockaway, Inc.) said that HEP outreach is non-existent in Far Rockaway and that he has access to a 100-seat auditorium that could be used for the education of community members. He said that Far Rockaway has many problems and that there is a lot that could be done.

Flatow suggested that the CAC work with partners to sponsor field trips to sites around the estuary.

Joe Chesonis (Urban Systems Concept Group, Inc.) suggested that a “marketing plan” is really what the group was talking about. He said that the CAC should focus on developing a marketing plan, as a for-profit business would. He felt that an assemblage of small tools did not equal a plan. Others felt that this idea made sense, and that it would require great deal of effort on the part of many CAC members.

Barnes suggested that the product to sell could be the concept of a “clean estuary.” He said that the bottom line would be to get the public to *want* whatever we are selling. He asked if anyone would volunteer to write letters to marketing firms soliciting *pro-bono* work on developing a marketing plan.

Blum suggested producing a videotape for distribution. There was a general feeling that this was a good idea. **Bartovics** suggested that the HEP Newsletter might be another project for CAC involvement.

Manuel Russ (NYCDEP CAC-P2) asked if there were plans for a “count-down” to the 400th Anniversary of Henry Hudson’s first sail up the river. He also wondered if a HEP “report card” would be produced. **Flatow** responded that both were being considered.

Ethan Yankowitz (MWA) asked if HEP intended to consult the Board of Education in developing the Outreach and Education program. **Bartovics** responded that it should certainly be considered as HEP moves towards producing educational materials for use in classrooms. At the moment, the focus has been on cataloging materials and programs currently available from other sources.

Steve Lang (CUNY) remarked that there are many people don’t know what an estuary is, and that simply helping the public understand the importance of the harbor’s natural environment would be a good place to start.

Russ Nicholson (NYSCC) suggested that many government agencies also appear not to know the importance of the estuary. He expressed concern with the USACE’s plans to fill “borrow pits” by what he called “dumping toxic stuff.” **Flatow** reminded the group that the ACE planned to study borrow pits and determine whether they needed restoration and remediation. Only after completing these studies would they consider filling the pits with dredged material. She added that dredged material from the Kill Van Kull would be fairly clean because it would contain a high concentration of blasted bedrock.

5. SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE WORKSHOP: Dennis Suszkowski (HRF) presented a summary of the STAC workshop held in April.

STAC Workshop

Although the STAC does not meet on a regular basis, its members provide input to the HEP Work Groups. This meeting, attended by about 30 STAC members, was called to address two key questions: 1) how well is the HEP gathering and incorporating technical information and 2) what emerging issues should the HEP be concerned with? The workshop focused on the areas of concern identified in the CCMP (see attached overheads for conclusions).

Suszkowski noted that a key outcome of the workshop was the definition of the Science/Management Paradigm. The STAC recognized the three scientific arenas - **research, monitoring, and modeling** - that produce **data** for **synthesis** into **information**. This is the information that should then be used for **education, outreach** and ultimately, **resource management**.

In addition to discussions on toxics, habitat and water quality, the group tackled some cross-cutting HEP issues. They recommended investing in high quality models for researchers and resource managers. The STAC also encouraged the development of strong programmatic leadership to address interjurisdictional, complex problems (see overheads for other recommendations). **Suszkowski** also reported that STAC members were generally pleased with the concerted efforts that have been made to get money and good science around important issues.

Joy Garland (Stuyvesant Cove Park Association) asked if there is any graduate student involvement in HEP research. **Suszkowski** responded that students are not involved directly in the research, but that the Hudson River Foundation does fund two student fellowships. The River Project also sponsors an internship project. There was general agreement that we could all use more student power. **Bob Nyman** mentioned EPA's summer internship program and the HEP project that Nancy Tran worked on.

Bill Neiter commented that there should be more coordination with the Long Island Sound Study and the Hudson River Estuary Program to stress that there is a larger, interconnected ecosystem. **Russ** asked what effects rainfall and hydrology have on the estuary. NJ DEP has a watershed management focus, but NYS DEC needs to catch up with this idea. **Bill Sheehan** (Hackensack Riverkeeper) suggested that NJ DEP's "flat earth" approach to watershed management is not ideal. **Flatow** mentioned that NYC DEP is conducting a study of rainwater infiltration.

Mort Orentlicher (CAC) suggested getting away from the model that everyone is comfortable with – that the only waters impacted by our actions are smaller waterbodies, like Jamaica Bay and the Gowanus Canal. He stressed the importance of looking at the Harbor as a whole.

Annette Barry Smith (PANYNJ) asked when the results of CARP field sampling will be available. **Suszkowski** answered that major loadings of a wide variety of contaminants are being measured. The data collected will be used for two stages of modeling, with a fairly simple model being produced before one that is more sophisticated. 90% of the data collection by New York State is awaiting QA/QC and will be released when this is completed. In New Jersey, 50% of the sampling has been completed. The goal is to have 99% of the field sampling completed by the end of 2001.

Barnes asked how the STAC would grade the HEP with regard to the three arenas of Research, Monitoring and Modeling. **Suszkowski** responded that it depends on the area being studied. He believes that CARP does well with toxics, but with nutrients, for example, there should be more of a focus on endpoints.

6. HEP TARGET SETTING & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE: **Bob Nyman** (HEP Director) gave an overview of the schedule for completing HEP targets.

Schedule for HEP Target Setting

August 9 – Management Committee Work Group conference call

August 16 – Rough Draft presented to Management Committee

October 30 – Semi-final Draft presented to Policy Committee

Nyman said that the HEP is soliciting input from anyone who is interested in sharing his or her ideas. He said that the program hopes to end up with something like the Chesapeake Bay 2000 Agreement. The general categories addressed in the current version of the targets are fishability, swimmability, accessibility, navigability, and habitability. Anyone wishing to see the draft targets or give input to HEP should attend the Management Committee meeting on August 16th.

Cindy Goulder (Ecological Landscapes) suggested that habitability, navigability and access could be potentially conflicting categories. **Nyman** responded that it will be a challenge to balance confliction goals, but sustainability will be an over-arching theme.

7 & 8. CAC PRIORITIES AND TARGETS: **Gene Flatow** discussed the need for the Citizens Advisory Committee to establish its own priorities and targets.

Flatow expressed concern that even some elected officials don't know what an estuary is. She said that the CAC should be trying to get elected officials to dedicate money for moving forward. She also recommended that CAC members begin attending HEP work group meetings. A calendar of meeting dates is e-mailed periodically.

Barry Smith suggested incorporation a definition of “estuary” into letterheads and HEP publications.

Barnes reminded the CAC that the CCMP is ecosystem-based and that there are goals, actions and commitments in each chapter of the Plan. He suggested that those chapters serve as six topics for target-setting, and that the new targets could include CCMP goals as well as new ones.

Discussion turned to the question of whether the HEP wanted realistic or idealistic targets. **Adeline Michaels** said they should be realistic targets, and that dischargers of contaminants into the Harbor should be made to comply with permit conditions. **Ethan Yankowitz** (MWA) suggested there should be both realistic and lofty goals in the document. **Flatow** said that there would be both short and long-term targets with end-dates from 2003-2009.

Yankowitz suggested that a lofty goal might be that “every county in the Harbor Estuary will have a beach.” A realistic goal that might go along with this could be the “addition of one new beach every year.”

Barnes asked if cost should be a factor in setting targets. **Barry Smith** replied that the economics of meeting the targets is very important. She mentioned that there are often regulatory guidelines for compliance. **Marjorie Shea** (Women's City Club-NY) pointed out that there were no representatives from industry at this meeting and they should be part of the CAC.

Anu Carroll (River Project) asked what a “world class estuary” meant. **Nyman** responded that it may be an ambitions goal, but that it was achievable. Others asked how world class would be defined and whether it was mentioned in the CCMP.

Flatow said that we should be setting targets we believe are important. She said we have improved quite a bit and that we now must take goals and bring them down to specifics. **Bill Fink** (BPCPC) suggested that setting goals might be similar to union negotiations. He said the CAC could “go in asking for the moon but come out with something more down to earth.”

Orentlicher suggested that the overall goals could be lofty, but the targets should be concrete, realistic and achievable. He asked why there weren't government subsidies to help industry if financial hardship prevents it from reaching compliance.

Sheehan thought government subsidies were a bad idea. He said that industry has been taking for a long time, and it is now time for them to pay. He stressed that the ecosystem has suffered 400 years of human impacts and that we won't be able to restore it in a decade or two. He said that we should look beyond our lifetimes and set goals that consider the environment that we would like to have 100 years from now.

Flatow mentioned that the CAC-sponsored public meetings in February and March generated many concerns about enforcement of existing laws and better management of contaminant sources. **Michaels** said that more citizens need to come out and push the agencies. **Barnes** asked if there should be a policy goal for the HEP.

Alpern expressed concern that the CAC would not be meeting before the October 30th Policy Committee meeting and that perhaps a meeting should be scheduled before then. He also suggested that the CAC and STAC hold a joint meeting. **Flatow** asked all CAC members to submit their ideas. She said that a CAC meeting could be scheduled, but that we need to have something to work from. **Bartovics** said that she would send an e-mail to solicit comments on HEP targets.

9. Special Presentation: Urban Greenways and Health: Dave Lutz (Neighborhood Open Space Coalition) gave a presentation on walking, health and the greenways in the Harbor Estuary (see attached overheads).