



New York - New Jersey  
Harbor Estuary Program

# PUBLIC ACCESS WORK GROUP

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of the New York – New Jersey  
Harbor Estuary Program

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## **HEP Public Access Work Group Meeting Minutes**

**October 6, 2009**

**EPA, 290 Broadway**

**New York, NY**

**10:00 am**

### **Mini Grant Awards**

Kevin Reilly summarized the grants awarded to applicants during July 2009. All four applicants, Red Hook Boaters, Rocking the Boat, NY/NJ Baykeeper and Coney Island Brighton Beach Open Water Swimmers were given awards towards their event and/or program.

### **New Grants and HEP Funding**

Kevin Reilly and Bob Nyman went over existing and proposed funding for the Public Access Work Group grants program. Of the \$20,000 available in grant funding from 2009, only \$7,000 was awarded. Therefore, \$13,000 in funding is still available. Once NEIWPCC and EPA finalize their Section 320 grant, an additional \$25,000 will be available, bringing the total to \$38,000.

Kevin asked the group for suggestions and comments regarding how best to use the grant money as another RFP could be released in November. It was agreed that the mini grant program should be continued. Kevin, Nancy Brous and Dorina Frizzera will work on revising the RFP. They will have a draft version of the RFP completed by October 25. The draft RFP will then be sent out to the Public Access Work Group for comments.

Nancy asked if the distribution and reimbursement of the grants could be changed or looked into. Currently, applicants are reimbursed after their event and purchases. Nancy said this system may discourage smaller groups who do not have available credit or the ability to front to costs. Other options that were discussed included giving larger grants to larger NGOs and having them pass through the funds (to smaller or less structured entities) for specific activities relevant to specific projects or events or making a portion of the funds available to build grant writing capacity. Kevin will look into the issue with NEIWPCC.

### **Public Access Nominations**

#### **Sommerville Basin**

Devona Sharpe of the Rockaway Waterfront Alliance (RWA) and Leslie Wright of the Trust for Public Land (TPL) presented Sommerville Basin. The site consists of a marina owned by a private individual and adjacent vacant lots owned by a separate private owner. To the west of the site is Dubos Point (a city park) and to the east by two parcels recently acquired by New York City Parks and Recreation. The ultimate goal would be to provide for some form of connection

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Public Access Work Group Chair

Dorina Frizzera, NJDEP Coastal Management Office ♦ 609-777-3251

between the two NYCDPR parcels (whether through a conservation easement or the purchase of lots by willing sellers) and providing easier access to the waterfront for RWA's youth education programs (oyster gardening, water testing, kayaking). The site was nominated and the motion passed without any objections.

Dorina suggested that when the site is approved by the Management Committee that the Public Access Work Group notify RWA in writing of the approval.

### **Public Access Issues**

#### *Brooklyn Bridge Beach, Stuyvesant Cove, Dumbo Cove, Pier 1 Brooklyn Bridge Park*

Rob Buchanan presented the five sites to talk about the overall issue of access within the lower East River portion of the Harbor. The lack of access is further complicated by the various agencies that have jurisdiction over the sites. Rob was looking for guidance on how this issue could be raised collectively by the group or if a letter could be written on behalf of the PAWG. Dorina suggested that Rob nominate all five sites first to the Public Access Sites List. Once the sites were nominated and approved by the Management Committee a letter could be written on behalf of the Public Access Workgroup to the various agencies highlighting the issues. In order to speed the process up rather than wait till the next PAWG meeting, Dorina suggested Rob fill out the nomination forms and send to Kevin. Kevin will then distribute the nomination forms to the group and schedule a conference call to nominate the sites.

### **New Nomination Form/OASIS**

Kevin provided an update on OASIS. The OASIS website has undergone many updates and will be officially launching in the near future. Based on feedback from Matt Klinman of MWA, the OASIS staff has integrated a search page within the map. This update should be available soon. Kevin will send an update when the site has been launched so PAWG members can comment on the updates.

Kevin also explained that the nomination form used for sites is undergoing edits. Kevin will send out the new form and will request comments. Bob Nyman added that with the development of the Comprehensive Restoration Plan (CRP) the new form allows HEP to keep track of habitat restoration, acquisition and public access nominations more easily. Additionally, there is a public access component to the CRP. Bob suggested contacting Lisa Baron from the Army Corps of Engineers to provide a presentation of the CRP at the next PAWG meeting.

### **Action Plan / Implementation Initiatives**

Bob Nyman said that in 2010 HEP would be updating their Action Plan. As part of updating the Action Plan he asked the group if they wanted to outline or define action items for the next 1-2 years. Suggestions were made regarding creating more connectivity within the Harbor as well as studying and learning from models other cities have used for successful water access policies and programs. It was also suggested that the PAWG revisit previously nominated PA sites to determine their status. The PAWG was asked to develop ideas that might better focus the efforts of the PAWG for discussion at the next meeting.

## **New Business**

Dorina gave a description of International Submerged Lands Management Conference Webinar series. The next webinar session is specific to Working Waterfronts and will be on Thursday, October 8, 2009. The sessions can be viewed online at the conference website and interested parties can register for the remaining webinar sessions at [www.submergedlandsconference.com](http://www.submergedlandsconference.com); and the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program. A federally funded land acquisition program focused on the fee or easement acquisition of coastal and estuarine lands for conservation and recreation purposes. Dorina will send links for both.

The next meeting has been tentatively set for the week of January 12<sup>th</sup> 2010. Items for the agenda will include:

- CRP presentation
- OASIS update
- Public Access Workplan

## **Attendees**

Dorina Frizzera, NJDEP Coastal Management  
Kevin Reilly, HEP  
Nancy Brous, New York City Watertrail Association  
Rob Buchanan, New York City Watertrail Association  
Harvey Morginstin, Passaic River Boat Club  
Steve Japoli, NJDEP Greenacres  
David Cunningham, Architect  
Louis Kleinman, MWA  
Bob Nyman, EPA –HEP  
Rosalie Siegel, PA NYNJ  
Alyson Beha, New Yorkers for Parks  
Devona Sharpe, Rockaway Waterfront Alliance  
Leigh Wood, NJDEP Coastal Management  
Leslie Wright, TPL