

Minutes of the Special Committee on the Hudson River Greenway Meeting of January 30, 2024  
(Pending Committee Approval)

**Attendees**

Committee: Present -- Bob Bender, Chair, Laura Spalter, Debra Travis  
Absent – David Gellman

Guest: Gerry Bogacz, New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC)

A list of the names of 16 Zoom participants is available at the Community Board office.

**Agenda**

The meeting came to order at 7:02 pm. Attendance was taken. A quorum being present, minutes of the June 2023 committee meeting were unanimously approved.

Chair Bob Bender introduced Gerry Bogacz, who is director of planning and program management for the New York Metropolitan Council (NYMTC). Mr. Bogacz is also a Community Board 8 resident. Mr. Bogacz began by explaining what NYMTC does and how it is structured. He reminded committee members that ten years ago NYMTC did a study of a Hudson River Greenway link in the Bronx between Manhattan and Westchester. He explained that the topography in Riverdale is particularly challenging for a greenway.

Bob had contacted Mr. Bogacz when he learned that the MTA has recently determined that the Metro-North (MNR) Hudson Line tracks are at risk of repeated flooding due to the rise in the Hudson River caused by the climate crisis. Because this situation will worsen in coming years, the MTA has begun planning to prevent such flooding problems on the Hudson Line.

Mr. Bogacz agreed and explained how the MTA will proceed. It begins with a 20-year capital needs assessment and from that creates a 5-year capital program. Last fall MTA released its 20-year assessment. It identified a need for a detailed design study for the MNR Hudson Line.

The discussion of resiliency methods along the Hudson River addressed whether they might benefit the future greenway – or, conversely, perhaps inhibit the construction of the greenway. This situation is unknown at present. Answering it will require meeting with MNR.

Potential resources do exist for the necessary next step of studying how to construct the greenway, Mr. Bogacz pointed out. He recommended that municipal officials in New York City and Yonkers be engaged as part of this process. Discussion of difficulties regarding access points along the greenway took place.

Cliff Stanton, president of the Friends of the Hudson River Greenway, asked about this matter of funding a proper detailed study of how to build the greenway. Mr. Bogacz said that before a study can be funded, ordinarily there has to be a commitment to build the greenway. Federal

money is available but not until there is a commitment to build. This commitment would have to include a designated operating authority that would sponsor and maintain the greenway.

Mr. Bogacz said that funding for construction would likely come from multiple sources. Federal money, to be sure, but also state funds, such as those that might be available through the 2022 NY State environmental bond act.

Jodie Colon returned to the question of operation and maintenance of the greenway, which all agree must be resolved. Thomas Maguire inquired about what form the necessary resiliency of the riverfront will take. All agreed that close communication with Metro-North will be necessary to answer that question. Dr. Robert Morrow, who lives in Yonkers, spoke in support of the riverfront greenway and reported that Yonkers city government is supportive.

Bob Bender thanked Dr. Morrow for setting up a meeting last November with the Yonkers director of sustainability William Serratorre, who strongly supports the greenway in Yonkers.

Steve Froot asked about operating authorities for other greenways in Manhattan and the Bronx. There are some that are public-private entities, others are city agencies. Mr. Bogacz pointed out that most of these other greenways are located in existing parks, and there is no park in the area of the Bronx/Yonkers greenway that is available for a greenway.

There was some discussion of whether there is, or could be, an organization that could solicit the resources to make possible a staff to assist in fundraising and grant-writing to advance the planning for the Hudson River Greenway. Mr. Bogacz suggested communicating with the Hudson River Greenway Valley Authority to see whether they can assist with organizing and planning.

The meeting ended with a brief discussion of recent committee activities such as the summer 2023 DEC listening tour meeting in the Bronx, attended by Bob Bender and Cliff Stanton, and the November meeting with Yonkers advocates and officials, attended by Bob and Laura.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm.

Minutes submitted by Bob Bender, who wishes to note the presence of CB8 staff members Farrah Kule Rubin and Ardhmir Malziu throughout the meeting.