

**(Pending Committee Approval)**

**Minutes of the Special Committee on the Hudson River Greenway Meeting  
Bronx Community Board 8  
February 27, 2025 at 7:00 PM**

Recording: <https://youtu.be/kzfSHQEDcKs?si=yeApfCqPzwESzx79>

**Attendees.**

Committee Members Present: Bob Bender, Laura Spalter, Debra Travis

Absent but on Zoom: David Gellman

Other CB Members on Zoom: Steven Froot, Julie Reyes; DM Farrah Rubin

Community Participants: Cliff Stanton, Robert Fass, Jessica Haller, Robert Morrow, M.D., Joseph Bohm, Jodie Colon, Allegra LeGrande, Bernard Stein.

Guest Speaker: Gerry Bogacz, NYMTC

**Agenda.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM. Following introductions of committee members and the guest speaker, the roll was called and there was a quorum present. Minutes of the January 2024 meeting were approved unanimously by the three committee members present.

Chair Bob Bender introduced guest speaker Gerry Bogacz, Assistant Director of Planning and Program Management at the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC). Mr. Bogacz reviewed the history of the Hudson River Greenway (HRG) proposal, including the 2018 Feasibility Study that was done under the auspices of the MTA. He then described a January 19, 2025 meeting held under NYMTC's auspices which brought together elected officials from Yonkers, Westchester, the Bronx, and New York City. Some of the Yonkers and Westchester officials learned about the greenway plan for the first time. All of them seemed quite enthusiastic about it.

Much of the conversation after this focused on the MTA's plan to fortify the Hudson riverfront in Riverdale and elsewhere to protect the Hudson Line tracks against expected flooding caused by rising river levels. The proposed fortification is part of MTA's system-wide resiliency plan outlined in its current five-year capital plan. All agreed that we must meet with the MTA as soon as possible to urge it to incorporate the greenway into its resiliency planning. Gerry Bogacz is in communication with MTA to set up this meeting.

There was some concern that the MTA might proceed with its fortification planning without public input. Both Gerry Bogacz and Bob Bender said that they share this concern, which is why meeting with MTA as soon as possible is essential. Should there

be resistance from the MTA, we have full support for the HRG from our local elected officials, and we will ask them to intervene on our behalf if necessary. All indications, however, suggest that the MTA has not yet determined exactly what form its waterfront protection will take. Even when it does so, multiple permits will be required before it can proceed.

Mention was made of the change to the lower level of the Henry Hudson Bridge that now permits a full lane for pedestrian and bicycle crossings. Crossing the bridge was a major concern in the 2018 feasibility study, but now that obstacle has been addressed.

There were questions about the relationship between the HRG and the recently completed Putnam Greenway/Empire State Trail. These are two different trails. Bob Bender noted that the community board voted for an all-river greenway to the maximum extent possible, and the community has strongly supported a greenway that will permit access to the river.

It was noted that there is no sponsoring agency for the HRG yet. Gerry Bogacz reminded everyone that funding for the HRG would take the form of reimbursement, which suggests that only an entity such as the City of New York would be able to fund the work and should, therefore, be the sponsoring agency in some form. It was also noted that it is unlikely that the federal government, whose participation is essential, would be unlikely to provide funding for the project at the present time. The portion of the HRG that lies in Yonkers would have to be sponsored and financed by the City of Yonkers and/or Westchester County.

Bob Bender discussed a fall 2024 citywide greenways meeting that he attended on behalf of the Friends of the Hudson River Greenway. He mentioned that there are many local greenway groups and that their experiences were shared at the meeting. Bob cited two findings from research done by some of the local greenway groups: that most greenway users live in or near the greenways that they use; and that greenways are most often used for transportation in densely populated areas, while they are primarily used for recreation in less populated areas.

The meeting ended with a discussion of how successful RiverFest had been and how sorely it is missed by the community. Participants discussed creating a scaled-down event that would draw attention to the river and lack of river access at present. There was agreement that whatever this event might be, the focus must be on the river itself as the main attraction. It was agreed to continue this conversation.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Minutes by Bob Bender, who thanks Deb Travis for technical support at the meeting.