

# *East Boston PierPAC*

**September 19, 2017**

**Attendance:**

Mary Berninger	Connie Carbone	Fran Carbone
Peter Cardinale	Florence D'Avella	Edie DeAngelis
Jerry Deneumoustier	Marie Deneumoustier	David Halbert
Mary Hanlon	Rose Petraglia	Frances Piantedosi
Melissa Tyler		

**Excused:**

Karen Buttiglieri	Bernardine Joslin	Sal LaMattina
Adrian Madaro	Karen Maddalena	Bob Strelitz

**Associate Members Present:**

Lucille Monuteaux

Attendance taken. (Edie DeAngelis and Florence D'Avella joined via telecommunications. Bob Strelitz called me after the meeting. He had sent me a text asking to be excused.)

Mary Berninger - Minutes from Aug. 15, meeting. Any deletion, corrections, etc.

Anthony Guerriero - On Page 6, should read Piers Park opened in 1995.

Rose Petraglia - Motion to accept minutes.

Mary Hanlon - Second.

Voted and passed.

Mary Berninger - The representatives from Excel Academy would like to give an update on their planned expansion that is next to the library at Bremen St. Park. Pat Forbes, expansion manager.

Owen Stearns - CEO, Excel Academy. Have been in the building for a year, 55,000 sq. ft., next to the library, the Y, and alongside the Greenway. The 3 of us are hosting the Bremen St. Fall Festival, on Oct 22. After a year of being in the building we realize we need a little more space and the primary reason is classroom space. Once we have 12th graders in for one more year, we will not have enough space for smaller elective classes. Need more choices for 11th and 12th graders. Need more classrooms. This extends the building closer to 1A, 2500 sq. ft. footprint, 2 stories. This was in the initial design if we needed to grow. Goal will be 1 year from now, no new kids added to the school, just more space for existing kids. Same parking spaces and number of staff.

Pat Forbes - Representing Krohn Preservation Development. They developed the original building (showed pictures of proposed expansion). Identical materials will be used for the addition. Location is the in back of the building, 2600 sq. ft, 2 stories, 8 new class rooms, and 4 smaller break out spaces for students to have more project rooms. All happens within the property line, within the fence that separates the school from the Greenway. Will be putting up temporary fence to shield park and school while they are working on the building. We are taking some green space, adding back some trees and plantings. Will be same height as existing

building, same look. Have been coordinating our plans with Anthony and the team at Massport to make sure we have no impact. Strict rules, public process Chapter 149. Our bid package going out in terms of the behavior of the contracts relating to parking, equipment, storage of materials, etc. Will have an on site project manager, City Point Partners. They have done Charter school projects. They will oversee the contract on a weekly basis.

Mary Berninger - This is just going along side of building and does not increase the parking. This did not trigger a reconvening of the IAG. Also, the neighbors had asked if they could use the parking lot in the off hours.

Owen Stearns - They have been doing that, evenings, etc. Had a meeting with the abutters, and they all signed off on this.

Mary Berninger - A while back you had said 'depending on space availability'; perhaps the gym area could be used. Questioning if anybody in the community has asked to use this space.

Owen Stearns - One person asked to use the gym, did not work out, timing was wrong. Had a few community events around benefits access, people signing up for Mass Health, etc.

Mary Hanlon - People in the neighborhood can park in the parking lot. Snowstorm?

Owen Stearns - Just over night. Have talked about snowstorms, and they have parked there occasionally. They have to get out by the time we come in to plow. Only 3 or 4 neighbors from across the street park there.

Mary Hanlon - Any problems with people staying there?

Owen Stearns - The parking lot now full from our staff and there are people parking there that are not on our staff. We are instituting a sticker system for our staff during school hours. We do not have an auditorium but we do have a gym. It will be set up for graduation, and we will try to upgrade our sound system for graduation.

Mary Berninger - Questioning if they did their Moving On ceremony at Savio.

Owen Stearns - For the 8th grade we actually did it at Spinelli's.

David Halbert - For the new expansion, will it have an impact on the overall number of students you are accepting to raise the cap?

Owen Stearns - The cap is in place and we do not have that option. The building is too small, we basically built the building we could afford. Charter schools get public funding for operating costs only, no funding of facilities; have to raise money privately. The original building came in \$1 million under budget. We are using that excess for this first round. Will not increase the number of students in the building.

Pat Forbes - In terms of access to the gym for the community, nothing about the addition will change that opportunity. It was constructed so there would be separate entrances if people wanted to use the gym for other purposes on the weekend.

Mary Berninger - Good to hear that the options are still there for outreach. Thanked them for their presentation. Under recent correspondence. Anthony sent us a note thanking us for remembering he and his wife about the mother's passing. Have been getting messages on Face Book, people stopping me on the street, etc. asking about Phase II. We want people to do this, creates other ideas. Matt Barison sent an article that there was a plan (in NY) to build a floating pool in the harbor and I assume it would have been off the Hudson River Park. People are

starting to think creatively. And he had another idea for swim lessons. He was trying to match the need in the community with an amenity in the park. Those kinds of comments are starting to come in and I think it is great. To begin with the design selection, last week, on the 13th, Massport held a public meeting at the Logan Office Center. At which time their panel talked about every single one of the 10 proposals for the final design and buildout of the park. The company that was chosen was Kleinfelder. They were the awarded design team. The next steps are that contracts need to be drawn up and presented to the members of the Massport Board of Directors. The vote will be taken in October, but typically they go with the selection panel's recommendation. Marion Pressley is part of that team. She is not the only component but she is on that team. On Saturday 11 of us went to New York, went to two parks, rode around the city, etc. Had a few thoughts about this launching point. We have a design team, done our first field trip, there will be more field trips to come. Great opportunity to create something new, engaging and exciting. PierPAC will act as a facilitator by bringing all parts of the neighborhood together. We will advertise, invite people, put things out on social media to invite people to come and give us ideas. New York and all kinds of communities have many different constituencies. They should have a voice, sit at the table and talk about what the community would like to see. Instead of the PAC and Massport operating in a vacuum, we become inclusive. Feels this is the right way to go forward. Marion Pressley will be one member of the design team. Listening to the selection panel last week, it was the common theme running through the discussion that there were many parts of the process. The landscaping is an equal partner with engineering and community engagement. It is a team concept and hopefully all parties of that team will be open to listening to us and the community and work together to come up with a final design. What I noticed on Saturday, I thought it was a great example of thought and collaboration. The people who went, the people who asked questions, showed that this community can collaborate with outside resources, with Massport, with each other. I hope the joint venture of planning will continue and will result in that new amenity for East Boston. I also hope that all stake holders will be open to new asides and a thorough vetting of each one of those idea. Anthony has provided us a slide show of the trip.

(Anthony Guerriero explained the areas of both parks; The Brooklyn Bridge Park and the Hudson River Park. Where they were located and the many amenities located in each park. Signage, children's areas, landscaping, fencing, lighting, vendors, plants, etc. The presentation was about 25 minutes.)

Richard Lynds - Some quick observations. When we go see other things it is important to get out of our comfort zones, surroundings. When you see what other people do, you learn a lot and appreciate what you have. First thing that came to mind, walking through, was that this community (EB) was very lucky because of the amount of maintenance and security and what we have from the Port Authority is absolutely second to none. While walking through the park we questioned the funding, how it was managed, the security, etc. Comparing right now, Massport won. Kudos to the Port Authority on doing a great job on our parks. It shows when you go to a place like that. A lot of things we saw on Saturday, we have here in East Boston. Salt marsh, boardwalks, waterfronts, etc. We have those elements. One thing we are lacking is connection. If we do a better job of focusing on some of the connection of these parks, we have as good, if not better, system in this community, especially the Brooklyn Bridge Park. Thought it was more like what we had or better for some of these parks. I saw a lot of elements in both. Brooklyn Bridge Park has everything. They have a lot more room than us, but I think they have things we should be looking at for ideas that we could include in our system. My last

observation was there were a lot of parallels in how they got to where they are. Not the least of which has been the politics of funding, and getting the parks. No neighborhood or no city is immune to the politics of the give and take of government as to how this works. Once again, I think we are fortunate enough to know that we have a funding mechanism in place and commitment. But most importantly, the mechanism we have in place, with the legislation and the commitment from the Port Authority through the operations, security and maintenance agreement, really sets our system apart. I think so far from what we have seen, I would be surprised if somebody does it better. Hopefully someday we will be giving these tours to other people and we have that opportunity to say that if it wasn't for the Port Authority this park would not be what it is. Feels that it is a positive thing for the Port Authority.

Mary Berninger - We'll collaborate as long as we are going towards that same end. When you talked about the design features we have a much smaller footprint to deal with. Acreage wise there was 72 acres and then 4 1/2 linear miles. The first park used the berms so effectively, and then the tier system. Sporadic elevations gave a total different feel to it. Didn't feel like you were walking along the waters edge. I saw different places that reminded me of walking around Disney World. Went in and out of sea grass and trees. The tour guide said that they reserved the view. The view of Manhattan wasn't the only thing, and they did nooks and crannies for all levels. The official closing time is 1:00am. For them it is difficult to enforce that. They have the NYPD and an environmental security, but they were not the armed one.

Anthony Guerriero - There were staff and maintenance staff that they include as security.

Mary Berninger - As Mr. Lawless calls them; the force multipliers. Because there is so much housing around there you will find people at all hours.

Richard Lynds - It stays lit 24 hours. At 1:00am they dim the lights to give the impression that the park is closed.

Mary Berninger - I did not see any call boxes. I think that keeping it open like that and not having the call boxes seems to me to be counterintuitive for safety.

Fran Carbone - I did see cameras on the poles.

David Halbert - The other piece of it is, the video cameras that are around are extensive, centralized, video camera feeds. I would be hard pressed to think that those cameras are hard wired in and are all into the NYPD, with their security etc. One other thing relative to the park, particularly to the Brooklyn Bridge Park. There was a very forward thinking idea behind it in the sense that it would make a park that people would be in for some time. You come to the park and you can stay for an entire day. There were different options for people, whole sections of concrete with grills that people could grill there. Open to the public to use. There was some pushback initially about it but, it has become the one of the most popular sections of the park. People from the community come, people come from an hour away to spend a day in the park. It gives you a different interaction within the local community perspective.

Rose Petraglia - Questioning if there were security guards there.

Richard Lynds - There is the NYPD at Brooklyn Bridge Park and Park Rangers. For the Hudson River Park, it is pretty much in the city, similar to the Greenway. The amount of areas that would need patrolling, as you get out on the piers, feels it could be more. My experience in NY is you can't turn without seeing NYPD.

Mary Berninger - Police had tiny Smart Cars to get around and they could get out onto the pier.

Richard Lynds - In the good weather, the NYPD have a lot of bike police and they are up and down that walkway.

Mary Berninger - Both parks were so active that if someone was going to cause a problem there were not a lot of isolated areas because you would run into a lot of people. But there were no call boxes.

Richard Lynds - When the park is active and I do not want to say it cures itself, but it is not a place where someone would go in to commit a crime. It is a hard place to get away from, one way out.

Mary Berninger - On medical alerts, like David said, feels there is a quick response time for first responders. Feels they are more monitored on their CC system than when we went to the Greenway and best we could hope for in some of our instances is for after the fact, go and check the loop. Think it is monitored there.

David Halbert - The other piece, too, is that the Hudson River Park, the Brooklyn Bridge Park: all these pictures focus outward, mostly over the water. But when you turned around it really is the entire neighborhood. Taking the tour we saw Starbucks, turned the corner and then another. It gives the sense of people being assisted. On the back side of the park you didn't have a large fence, very open. If you needed to get in for first responders you could get in.

Mary Berninger - That is our report for our field trip. Lunch was wonderful. Any other questions or comments?

Richard Lynds - Just wanted to add to get some ideas and perspectives. There are plenty of parks within our neighborhoods that we could tour. Do a couple of afternoons before the weather gets too bad. Anthony suggested a Friday afternoon which I think we can accomplish. We should start thinking about some other quick local trips for some people who couldn't make the New York trip, to get some other perspectives. Think it is important if we do this, that we try to find somebody as a tour guide to give some background. 50% of it was being there (in New York), but 50% was hearing the process as to how they got there and some of the concepts of their development

David Halbert - At the Hudson River Park we had the benefit of having the Executive Director of the entire Hudson Park Assoc. She gave us a sense of the history of the park and the operation. One of the things she mentioned was that there was a section of the park near Greenwich Village and at the time they had a fight about putting in more active play structures. The people at the time said they did not want that. They wanted a more passive park, a place to sit. And now, 5 years later, they have this play structure because there are so many new families. May be to our benefit to look at some of those lessons that they learned. Think about the park now and the future and any changes for it and how those changes will impact usage of the park.

Mary Berninger - When Anthony and I talked, we envisioned doing that on a Friday. Get a Coach bus with facilities, so it would be comfortable. Get someone local to provide box lunches, waters, etc. We will pick a date for the new tour.

Fran Carbone - Going into the cold weather.

Mary Berninger - You (Anthony) are going to vote on this next month, the Board. But before that do you envision a meeting of the subcommittee?

Anthony Guerriero - Let me get back to you. Ned Dawes, the Project Manager is working with me and needs to be at the next meeting. He will also be on this tour. The time frame is up to you. The most important thing is; you all have a clean slate to work on, to have whatever design you want. What we saw over the weekend, we all loved Brooklyn. That park was out of the box. Working on a backwards calendar Oct. 27, the last Friday of the month is the opening of Butler Buffer Park in South Boston, which you are all invited to. Marion Pressley was the design architect who worked on that park. Maybe Oct. 20, the Friday before, we could do that. We talked briefly about the first week of November.

Mary Berninger - It may be nice for the 20th, we could still see some foliage and some of the pocket parks in and around the city.

Anthony Guerriero - I could ask Ned. He might know some of the people who designed these parks and reach out to the Boston Parks Commissioner. I ran the community process for the buffer parks. Looking at either Oct. 20th or the first week of Nov.

Mary Berninger - Feels we should stick with October. (No one had a preference for Oct. or Nov.) Questioning if Oct. 19 is the date the Board is actually voting.

Anthony Guerriero - Thinks so, but will have to confirm.

Mary Berninger - Questioning the people who will be the project manager for the design team; if someone from there could come.

Anthony Guerriero - Sam Slyme had said that, we met with him a week ago. Advocate to meet from here.

Mary Berninger - Questioning if everyone okay with box lunches.

(Discussion on date and time. Richie unable to attend. Date changed to Nov. 3rd.

Mary Berninger - Suggests 10:00am, going from point A to point B

Anthony Guerriero - Date changed to Nov. 3, meet here at 10:00am. Will provide coffee setup.

Anthony Guerriero - Will have to come up with a list of the parks we will be visiting.

Mary Berninger - We were talking about ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) things. Did not see too much of it down there (NY). The Menino Park at Spaulding has it, so we may not have to do the one at Bourne, which has a phenomenal set up. Do Menino Park and keep local. To recap; it is now Nov. 3, meet here at the Noddle Island Room, 10:00am. Will call around to inquire about box lunches. Anything under Old Business. The slide show did a great job of letting you know what is out there and what we can do. This is brand new, we can start from scratch.

Peter Cardinale - Motion to adjourn.

Jerry Deneumoustier - Second.

Peter Cardinale - I raised my hand, not to adjourn but wanted to mention something. I was asked about the Flag Pole at Piers Park. The lights around it are broken. And another one around the pier that is broken.

Anthony Guerriero - Mary, I and Bob did a walk around and had broken lights fixed. But will checkout out.

Peter Cardinale - Also, I was told that every night around 7:00pm there are skateboarders there, in the park.

Anthony Guerriero - Will look into that also.

Peter Cardinale - Also, on a personal note, Joanne's bench is all faded.

Anthony Guerriero - That was done during the summer, but will look into it again.

DRAFT