

# WESTCHESTER COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS

## COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY

**MINUTES: April 14, 2008**

MEMBERS (E&E): Chair: Abinanti; Legislators: Harckham, Maisano, Myers, Nonna, Rogowsky

IN ATTENDANCE: STAFF: C. Crane, L. Goldstein; GUESTS: B. Randolph (CEO); G. D'Agrosa (WCDP); T. Palmer (Congresswoman Lowey); E. Likovich (Assemblywoman Paulin); C. Manfredi (FCWC); E. Pepper (CCE) [list of other attendees on file]

Meeting called to order at 3:40 pm.

Item(s) Discussed: **Dauids Island Update**

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Chair Abinanti opened the meeting with discussion on the status of investigations and remediation at Davids Island, off the coast of New Rochelle. Ms. D'Agrosa, county Watermaster, described the remediation presently occurring at the Island, consisting of building demolition and debris removal conducted by the Army Corps of Engineers (and its contractor, Tetra Tech). In addition, Tetra Tech, acting as a consultant to New Rochelle, is investigating soil, sediment, water and other impacts, in accordance with the agreement under the NYS Environmental Restoration Program (ERP) between New Rochelle, Westchester County, and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC).

Ms. D'Agrosa noted that all of the buildings would be demolished on Davids Island, including the water tower. The cost to remediate and restore any of the buildings had been considered cost-prohibitive. In lieu of any building restoration, a comprehensive 'virtual' compilation and database is being prepared to provide public education. Some structures, such as mortars, batteries, seawalls, and the parade ground are being evaluated for restoration.

NYSDEC will be preparing a remedial work plan based on the results of Tetra Tech's investigation, which is expected to conclude this summer. The work plan will include an analysis of remedial alternatives and selection of the preferred alternative.

Leg. Maisano queried when Davids Island would be "clean". Ms. D'Agrosa

replied that a work plan was expected to be released earlier, but NYSDEC expanded the investigation based on preliminary findings by Tetra Tech. Some additional monies are being sought for the current enhanced investigation at a 90%/10% state-local ratio. New York State (NYSDEC) would provide \$260,000 dollars, and New Rochelle and Westchester County would each contribute \$5,500. The Administration has not yet agreed to such further commitment.

Ms. D'Agrosa also stated it is unclear whether sufficient funds will be available in the ERP for remediation, as this money is also sought by other communities for brownfields remediation. Because remedial requirements and funding availability are presently uncertain, she could not state when Davids Island would be able to achieve a "clean" designation.

Ms. Likovich inquired whether the county still intended to purchase Davids Island. Several committee members expressed their interest in seeing the county purchase the Island. Leg. Maisano stated that, previously, the county had only expressed interest in purchasing the Island as a park and did not make a full commitment.

The Committee discussed various aspects of such purchase, including feasibility and public interest within New Rochelle and county-wide. Mr. Manfredi expressed interest by environmental advocates in seeing Davids Island preserved rather than developed. Chair Abinanti noted the previous state legislation which authorized a transfer of Davids Island from New Rochelle to Westchester County for use as a public park. Discussion also included other aspects such as access and sewage disposal.

Upon the motion of Leg. Rogowsky, seconded by Leg. Harckham, the committee approved draft committee minutes of February 25 (all in favor).

Upon the motion of Leg. Rogowsky, seconded by Leg. Myers, the committee voted to adjourn (all in favor). The meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm.

[audio recording of meeting is on file]