

**PALISADES INTERSTATE PARKWAY SCENIC BYWAY
CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN PROJECT
Bergen County, NJ**

Corridor Management Committee Meeting No. 3 Report

DATE: Wednesday, October 28
TIME: 3:30 p.m. –5:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Edgewater Community Center, Edgewater, NJ

ATTENDANCE:

(See attached sign-in sheets)

PURPOSE OF MEETING

To provide a progress update on development of the Corridor Management Plan, and to discuss the vision and goals, actions and recommendations for the proposed federal bi-state Palisades Interstate Parkway.

MEETING SUMMARY

1. Chris Szeglin, Assistant Superintendent of the Palisades Interstate Park (PIP) Commission, opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. He introduced the Project Team and attendees were asked to introduce themselves.
2. Annette Schultz, RBA Project Manager, presented an overview of the Project and described progress in developing components of the Corridor Management Plan for the New Jersey segment of the Palisades Interstate Parkway and Henry Hudson Drive. Completed or in-process components of the Plan include the Vision, Goals and Objectives, an Intrinsic Quality inventory and evaluation of the historic design characteristics, Physical, Visual and Institutional Surveys, development of the primary Byway story and an Interpretive Plan, Traffic and Transportation assessment and a Tourism and Marketing Plan.
3. Ms. Schultz read the Vision Statement for the CMP (The revised Vision & Goals are appended.)

Discussion Points:

Name

- It was suggested that the byway name could be amended to include reference to Henry Hudson Drive or the Hudson River (Hudson Palisades Byway). Cindy Bloom Cronin, NJDOT, explained the importance of maintaining the same name as the New York segment, Palisades Interstate Parkway, to support the future application for Federal scenic byway designation for both the New York and New Jersey segments. The name may be reconsidered with New York at the time of the Federal designation application.

Vision

- The Vision should include reference to the historic conservation of Revolutionary War sites, as this was a significant motive for establishing the Palisades Park.
- The Hudson River is a key feature to recognize in relation to the scenic byway.

Byway Corridor Boundaries

- Byway corridor boundaries are defined by what can be seen from the designated roadway. It was noted that the viewshed of Henry Hudson Drive and the lookouts along the PIP includes the Hudson River and adjacent New York. For the purpose of the Corridor Management Plan, the byway corridor boundary is defined as including the entire Park. Recommendations can apply to the entire Park, including the Long Path, the Shore Trail and the Hudson River shoreline.

4. Jill Kovalsky, RBA Group, began discussion on the actions and recommendations for the plan which have been organized by the goals for the CMP. A handout was distributed to attendees that listed the CMP goals and the actions and recommendations to support each goal.

Discussion Points:

Gateway Features

- The gateway feature should include natural wildflowers, native plant material and seasonal plantings, displaying the natural environment that the Palisades Interstate Park was founded to protect.
- The old northbound toll booth could be an opportunity for a gateway feature.
- Consider using GPS electronic audio devices for telling the story of the Palisades Interstate Parkway to travelers.
- Make use of the fallen rocks and indigenous stone on the gateway features and interpretive signs.
- State Line Lookout, Fort Lee Museum and the Headquarters Buildings could all serve as gateways for the PIP.
- Local landscapers or garden clubs could restore and maintain an area in the park in exchange for letting them identify their businesses or clubs with signs.
- Selectively clear and thin where possible to open views at the pull offs. Plant ground cover, if possible, that would discourage invasive plant material from re-vegetating these areas.

Directional Signs

- Provide better directional signs on the parkway to the picnic and boat areas along Henry Hudson Drive, as well as to the towns.

Parkway Landscaping & Maintenance

- Look at the original planting plans for clear zones adjacent to the parkway. The need for recovery zones may be a current safety requirement that was not reflected in the original planting plans. Evaluate the intent of the original planting plans and then establish a set of guidelines to achieve an appropriate and consistent approach that incorporates green strategies.

- NYDOT has established guidance regarding clear zones adjacent to the roadway on the PIP based on vehicular accident statistics, which indicated that a 20' clear zone (less than standard highway guidance) would not create a safety hazard. The allowed clear zone of 20' helps to maintain consistent spatial characteristics throughout the Parkway corridor. New Jersey might follow similar guidelines to maintain a consistent and uniform approach.
- NJDOT occasionally places mow lines on design sheets, which could be considered as a means of establishing a more consistent appearance along the PIP.
- Where possible and in keeping with current best practices, plant varieties that were indicated on the original plans.
- Maintain the scenic, wooded, natural appearance as much as possible.
- Eliminate non natives that are adjacent to the parkway. Keep mature specimen trees that were part of the original plant palette.

Historic Design Elements

- Currently, mountable curbs are present throughout the parkway in the NY section but only at the parkway exits within the NJ section. Although there are no plans to replace mountable curb where it may have originally existed within the NJ section, future maintenance and construction work should try to imitate the NY section or adhere to the original historic plans if possible. Although increased traffic and changing safety standards may prohibit the restoration of some historic features along the PIP, such as the curb and guide rails, restoration can be applied to areas such as pulloffs and lookouts.
- Future repaving and reconstruction should include consideration for historic elements, and specify appropriate treatments that respect the historic character.
- The recommendation to restore historic elements also applies to the historic buildings, stone trail steps, etc. within the Park. Another goal could be added to address the broader park need for historic preservation and restoration.
- Restore the timber facing of the pedestrian bridge leading to the Women's Federation Monument.
- While NYSDOT has repaired and replaced stone on bridge abutments and parapet walls with veneer, NJDOT has placed concrete over the stone on bridge abutments and parapet walls. Stone, stone veneer, or stone form liners (aesthetically done) should be used for all bridge repairs in keeping with the original design. Stone face must meet present safety standards.
- The NJ section of the Parkway has a variety of bridge guide wall details while NYS has used real stone for all of the bridge rails.
- A "Demonstration Mile" on the PIP had been built to generate interest and support for advancing the parkway concept. The strategy of restoring a "Demonstration Mile" that would display some of the historic features of the original Parkway was discussed. Although the use of the "Demonstration Mile" along the roadway may not be feasible because of cost, it may be possible to focus restoration at the overlooks and at gateway areas.

Gas Stations – Issues & Opportunities

- The canopies at the gas stations are a distraction because of the high light intensity. Research modifying lighting standards for the canopies.
- Conduct a traffic engineering assessment of the entrance and exit ramps to address queuing.
- Evaluate opportunities to improve the gas stations' appearance to reflect the historic character where possible.
- The gas stations could distribute the scenic driving map and act as an information center. Capture the audience that uses the convenience stores at the gas stations and revisit the gas stations as “Visitor Service Facilities”.

Adjacent Land Use

- Although there is generally a protected buffer adjacent to the park, there may be a need to regulate development adjacent to the PIP at Englewood Cliffs to prevent tower development impacting the view shed. Land ordinances; land protection, building heights; better way to screen Fort Lee and Englewood Cliffs?
 - Tenafly maintains open space protected by Green Acres adjacent to the Park.
 - Invite the Planning Board Chairperson from the adjacent municipalities to CMC meetings.
 - Current improvements have been made along the Shore Trail through Edgewater Colony, which connect Henry Hudson Drive to the Hudson River Walkway.
5. Annette Schultz announced the next CMC meeting may be scheduled for December or January.
 6. Project information, including meeting notices and memoranda, will be posted on the Palisades Interstate Park Commission Website: www.njpalisades.org

Prepared by:
Annette Schultz, The RBA Group
Jill Kovalsky, The RBA Group

PALISADES INTERSTATE PARKWAY AND HENRY HUDSON DRIVE

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Please Print Legibly

Name	Affiliation	Phone Number	Email Address
DON STITZENBERG	HUDSON RIVER WATERFRONT CONSERVANCY	201-519-7057	DESTITZ J@YAHOO.COM
Peggy Wong	" " " " + COALITION TO PRESERVE THE PALISADES CLIFFS	(201) 854-0774	pwong8550@GMAIL.COM
DANIEL D. CHAZIN	NY-NJ TC NJ CIT. ADV. COUNCIL	(201) 836-7019	DCHAZIN@ADV.COM
CAROL CONNOLLY	NJ NSIC - SWORD TRAIL / GROENBROEK SANITARY	201-816-9465	C.CONNOLLY@VERIZON.NET
Jakob Franke	NY NJ TC / Long Path	201-788-3612	jf31@columbia.edu
CHRIS SAGUN	PALISADES INTERSTATE PARK	201-260-1350	CSAGUN@NJPAKSPRINT.ORG
Susan Gordon	RP C/A E	201-871-1263	Sfgordon@captionline.net
Debbie Hirt	NS DOT Communication Community Relations	609-530-2110	Deborah.Hirt@DOT.State.NJ.US
Helen Manogue	Hudson River Waterfront Conservancy	963-351-1422	HELENMANOGUE@CAPTIONLINE.NET
ADAM Strobel	County of Bergen	201-336-6452	AStrobel@Co.Bergen.NJ.US
Kevin Tremble	Palisades Ints Pk Citizen's Adv Council Crossroads NHA	201-951-8540	Kevin@Techrepro.com