

Subject: RIRA Planning Committee Report
Date: 2011-04-03
From: Frank Farance

The RIRA Planning Committee did not meeting face-to-face in March, but we continued discussions via E-mail. Our next meeting is Wednesday, April 20, 2011 at 8:30 PM in the Island House Community Room. RIRA members are welcome to attend.

We have had some ongoing discussions on the seven topics in our work programme (below). Note that topic #7 has an item for action on the formation of a new subcommittee within the RIRA Planning Committee.

Matt Katz, Aaron Hamburger, and I have been following the progress of the Red Bus service. We will provide updates at the April RIRA Common Council meeting.

Frank Farance
RIRA Planning Committee Chair

Status Report on Topic #1: Blackwell Park Planning

In the 2008-2010 RIRA session, we had collaborated with RIOC on a Master Plan. We need to provide continuity for RIOC so that community involvement is not lost. The Blackwell Park Subcommittee (of the RIRA Planning Committee) was handling this task. We have new/different members this RIRA session, so we need to make sure there is follow-up. Also, Rosina Abramson was our RIOC point of contact, but she left at the end of 2010, so we need to re-establish a connection.

Upcoming Actions: Re-affirm existing RIRA members of the committee. Re-establish connection with RIOC on this planning topic.

Status Report on Topic #2: Long-Term Financial Planning/Budgeting for Roosevelt Island

In the 1990's there was a state subsidy of \$1.6 million. As presented at the November meeting, the RIOC CFO has presented a bleak financial picture. We should be investigating the amount of revenue lost by the lack of State and City taxes returning to Roosevelt Island. By saying "lack", it doesn't mean zero, it means that we aren't getting our fair share. The purpose of this activity would be to research and calculate what our fair share might be, and then to make suggestions on how to acquire that kind of funding and/or services.

Upcoming Actions: Need to get financial data. Need to determine a set of comparable communities and criteria for comparison.

Status Report on Topic #3: Amendments to Roosevelt Island's General Development Plan (GDP)

There is an existing GDP, but more will need to be said about the present and near-future configuration of the Island. One might ask: Why worry about the GDP if most of the development (except Southtown 7-9) is complete? Answer: The GDP also identifies open

spaces, parks, etc. and if the GDP becomes a weak document (because both sides, City and State, are ignoring it in residential development areas), then it becomes equally invalid on designation of park spaces and such. This activity would look towards providing revised wording (even though we aren't a party to the contract) and advocacy through the Mayor's office.

Note: The GDP explicitly does not cover the use of the Goldwater Hospital space.

Status Report on Topic #4: Island-Wide Evacuation Plan

At present there is no Island-wide evacuation plan, but RIOC has plans for several kinds of emergencies (snow, cold, heat, power failure). Normally, the City's OEM (Office of Emergency Management) coordinates all of this, including ordering evacuations, i.e., the Mayor orders this, not RIOC. The lack of planning for Island-wide evacuations has been a concern of residents for many for years. We plan on working with RIOC, the Roosevelt Island CERT, and the City's OEM.

Upcoming Actions: I have spoken with Howard Polivy, Chief of the Roosevelt Island Community Emergency Response Team (RI CERT). Howard, Matt Katz, and I will meet soon with RIOC staff to review the existing plans. (Note: The three of us have been involved in this for the past several years.)

Status Report on Topic #5: Main Street and Retail Planning

We recognize that the master-lease process is ongoing within RIOC, but there is a need for resident input on planning topics that are long-range, not merely short-term questions of providing specific services. We plan on coordinating and collaborating with the RIRA Island Services Committee to formulate RIRA planning positions.

Denise Shull is our liaison to the RIRA Island Services Committee, who is leading this effort in RIRA.

Status Report on Topic #6: Roosevelt Island Waterfront Planning

This work involves coordination with the NYC Department of Planning and their "Vision 2020" effort (a comprehensive waterfront plan).

Upcoming Actions: Matt Katz has distributed a new version of the plan and it will be discussed at the upcoming RIRA Planning Committee meeting.

Status Report on Topic #7: Goldwater Hospital Replacement

The City has plans to close the Goldwater Hospital (the structure south of the bridge) and possibly replace it with a science park. Recently, we've heard that Stanford University, among others, are interested in this site, see "<http://nyc10044.com/wire/3113/StanfordProposal.pdf>". We have yet to determine RIRA's involvement in this effort.

Based upon encouragement from RIOC Director Jonathan Kalkin, RIRA President Matt Katz, and RIRA Common Councilmember Denise Shull, RIRA should become involved and establish

a community position on the support for this project. Just like the Blackwell Park Committee, we should have a similar framework of participation (not necessarily same people as Blackwell), and a similar approach towards interaction and making recommendations to RIOC and NYC. The Blackwell Park Committee was a good and successful framework for RIRA/RIOC/etc. collaboration.

First, we need to establish a subcommittee. Although the RIRA Planning Committee can create its own subcommittee, it would be better to do it at the RIRA Common Council meeting so it has more visibility. The RIRA Planning Committee requests the following motion for approval at the April RIRA Common Council meeting:

"RIRA establishes a Southern Development Review Committee (SDRC), a subcommittee within the RIRA Planning Committee, with the following terms of reference (1) the SDRC is focused upon the southern part of Roosevelt Island at the present Goldwater Hospital and adjacent areas, and its future development; (2) the SDRC is a forum for the Roosevelt Island residents to provide input, comments, and review; (3) the SDRC may make recommendations for RIRA's review and approval; (4) the SDRC will liaise with RIOC, NYC, and any potential developers."

Once the subcommittee is established a chair should be appointed, which would be done via a separate motion. We ask for volunteers to join the new RIRA subcommittee.