



**Testimony by Cliff Stanton, Greenway Director
Kingsbridge Riverdale Van Cortlandt Development Corp. (KRVC)
Parks & Recreation Committee Hearing 4/6/17**

Members of the committee, Chairman Levine:

I am here today as a representative of KRVC to voice our unequivocal support for Council Resolution 994, which was introduced last year by Councilmember Andrew Cohen.

KRVC is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization that aims to encourage and support local initiatives that will build and enrich our community through social, cultural, environmental, health, housing, educational and business enterprises. Our target area is the communities of the Northwest Bronx. Our Executive Director, Tracy Shelton, is here with me today.

Bolstered by widespread public support in 2014, KRVC launched a campaign under the banner "Build It Now!" with the goals of: 1) educating our community about the proposed Hudson River Greenway in the Bronx, 2) organizing a grassroots advocacy movement and 3) supporting the efforts of our local elected officials and community board. During that period, KRVC has collected over 2000 individual signatures and over 50 local businesses and institutions supporting the Greenway.

One of KRVC's most effective means of promoting the creation of the Hudson River Greenway is through events such as our Greenway Gala in the fall, Greenway Day in the early spring and our now iconic waterfront festival Riverdale RiverFest which will take place on June 10th and 11th at the College of Mount Saint Vincent. Riverfest, now in its 8th year, gives thousands of local residents and visitors each year from around the city and region a rare opportunity to recreate along the banks of the Hudson River - a waterfront that Riverdalians and Bronxites have effectively been denied access to for over a century.

Today, the only legal waterfront access Riverdale has is a sliver of a park that's better known by the Metro North Station it is wedged behind. One



must cross a pedestrian bridge and walk the length of the southbound platform to get to it.

This is a sad and ironic reality for a community that derives its name from the Hudson River. It is the same reality that we seek to rectify with the creation of the Hudson River Greenway in the Bronx.

The reclamation of public land along our waterways is a movement that transformed waterfront communities across our nation for decades and has accelerated in New York City and State over the last one. Greenways and waterfront Parks have changed the way city residents recreate (no longer forced to get in a car or train to find greener pastures elsewhere) and public demand for multi-use recreational paths has revolutionized city planning.

Hudson River State Park in Manhattan, the Bronx River Greenway, The Queensway, the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway and the Staten Island Greenbelt are multi-million dollar projects that are in varied states of planning and completion, but all stand to bring about a cultural, economic and recreational renaissance to their adjacent communities.

A recent New York State report concluded that the existing 130 miles of the 50% complete Hudson River Valley Greenway generates \$21 million annually in economic impact to the communities along its trails. The 80% complete Erie Canalway draws 1.5 million visitors and generates an estimated \$253 million in annual economic activity.

In January, our community was momentarily buoyed by the Governor's announcement of the Empire State Trail which calls for the completion of the Hudson River Greenway, only to find out that the plan calls for connecting existing Greenways in Manhattan and Westchester by using the heavily trafficked Broadway Bridge and already congested city streets.

While we applaud the Governor's vision, Riverdale and the communities of the Northwest Bronx remain without a plan for expanded riverfront access. Thanks to funding from State Senator Jeff Klein, the MTA is currently engaged in an engineering study that we sincerely hope will result in an achievable



plan. Later this evening the Community Board 8 Special Committee on the Greenway will have representatives of the MTA report on their progress.

This makes the timing of this hearing and the content of the resolution you are deliberating today auspicious. Passage of this resolution would send a clear message to the MTA that New York City is serious about the Hudson River Greenway and hears, loud and clear, the desires of the residents of the Northwest Bronx.

KRVC urges this committee to support this resolution and pass it to the full council for a "yes" vote. We stand committed to do all we can to support you and Councilmember Andrew Cohen as he moves our community closer to the creation of the Hudson River Greenway.



BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

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Bronx Borough President

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Lamont Parker

Via E-mail

March 27, 2017

The Honorable Andrew Cohen
Councilman
277 West 231st Street
Bronx, NY 10463

Dear Councilman Cohen,

I write in support of Resolution No. 994, which resolves that the City Council calls upon the M.T.A. and other appropriate entities to support a Hudson River Greenway in the Bronx on property concurrent with the Metro-North Hudson line.

I note that the entire Bronx segment of the Hudson River Greenway between Spuyten Duyvil and Yonkers lies within Bronx Community Board 8. At our June 2014 monthly board meeting, CB8 approved a resolution in support of a riverfront Greenway similar to what is proposed in Resolution No. 994. I attach a copy of that resolution, which I note was approved by the board by a vote of 37 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions.

Thank you for your support for the Hudson River Greenway in the Bronx, which will provide the link between the popular Greenway in Manhattan and Westchester and will be a wonderful amenity for our community and neighboring communities.

Very truly yours,

Dan Padernacht
Chairman



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Honorable Ruben Diaz, Jr.
Bronx Borough President

Daniel Padernacht, Chairperson

Vacant, District Manager

Bronx Community Board No. 8 at its meeting held on June 10, 2014 passed the following resolution by a vote of 37 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions:

WHEREAS, residents of Bronx Community Board 8 support a Hudson River Greenway extending from Spuyten Duyvil to Yonkers, providing runners, walkers, people with disabilities, cyclists and others an enjoyable riverfront experience with a superb view of the Palisades, as well as access to the Greenway to the north and the Greenway to the south, so that a continuous Greenway runs from Manhattan to Westchester;

WHEREAS, residents of Bronx Community Board 8 have advocated locating the Greenway route along the Hudson River in the 1998 report of the Bronx Advisory Committee to the Hudson River Valley Greenway;

WHEREAS, the 2003 197-a Plan of Bronx Community Board 8 supports a Greenway along the Hudson River and enhanced riverfront access for the community;

WHEREAS, local elected officials support a Hudson River Greenway and riverfront access for the community;

WHEREAS, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), with funding provided in part by Senator Charles Schumer, presented to the Parks & Recreation Committee of Bronx Community Board 8 and most recently to a joint meeting of that committee and the Traffic & Transportation Committee, a conceptual study of a proposed Hudson River Greenway route connecting the Manhattan and Westchester portions of the Greenway, which includes a short-term inland route from the Henry Hudson Bridge to the city line at Riverdale Avenue and a long-term waterfront route from the Henry Hudson Bridge to Yonkers along the Hudson River;

WHEREAS, Metro-North has identified stabilization and bolstering of the embankment that protects the shoreline from flooding on its tracks as priorities on the Hudson Line through Riverdale;

WHEREAS, Metro-North has represented that Track 6 of the Hudson Line through Riverdale is necessary for its operations, the stabilization and bolstering of the embankment on the shoreline and to accommodate anticipated growth in ridership in present routes and possible Penn Station access on the Hudson Line in the future;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. This resolution supersedes the May 2012 resolution of Bronx Community Board 8 regarding the Hudson River Greenway.
2. Bronx Community Board 8 supports an all-river Hudson River Greenway.
3. Bronx Community Board 8 rejects the NYMTC proposal to widen streets to their un-built width, remove trees, reduce traffic and/or parking lanes on local streets, construct a cantilever mixed-use attachment to the Henry Hudson Bridge and build mixed-use bicycle paths, ramps or bridges through Riverdale Park.
4. That engineering and other feasibility studies be performed by the appropriate agencies along the length of the proposed Greenway in Riverdale to determine the best location for an all-river Greenway located west of the Metro-North tracks with the goals of minimizing costs of construction and operation without inhibiting and, if possible, enhancing Metro-North's stabilization and bolstering of the riverfront embankment.
5. That NYMTC engage Metro-North to discuss modifications to the NYMTC proposal based on Metro-North's plans for stabilizing and bolstering the riverfront.
6. That engineering and other feasibility studies be performed by the appropriate agencies to evaluate the connection of the Hudson River Greenway from Manhattan to the Bronx across the Harlem River at Spuyten Duyvil, via the Amtrak swing bridge or on a new purpose-built swing bridge.
7. That initial access to the Greenway be implemented by using either the existing bridge to cross the Metro-North tracks at West 254th Street or the Riverdale train station overpass and that the first segment of the Greenway be constructed on the west side of the Metro-North tracks from West 254th Street to Yonkers while other access points to the Greenway are investigated.
8. That until a Spuyten Duyvil Greenway connection can be implemented, a traffic study be performed in cooperation with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to assess whether traffic lanes on the lower level of the Henry Hudson Bridge can be reconfigured to create a larger pedestrian and bicycle pathway across the bridge.
9. That our elected officials assist in obtaining funding for the feasibility studies and in addressing any concerns about the Greenway raised by Amtrak and the MTA.
10. That further consideration of an all-river Greenway route should continue under the auspices of Bronx Community Board 8 in cooperation with local residents, community groups, elected officials, government agencies, the affected rail companies and any other stakeholders.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 994

in favor in opposition

Date: 4-6-17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ROSEMARY GINTY

Address: _____

I represent: COMMUNITY BD. #8 BX

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 994

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CLIFF STANTON

Address: _____

I represent: KRVC

Address: 505 W. 236TH ST. BX 10463

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms