

**Draft Urban Waterfront Action Group (UWAG) Meeting Notes**  
**Tuesday, June 23, 2020**

**Participants:**

Robert Armstrong, City of Philadelphia, Office of Transportation and Infrastructure Services; Peter Brennan, Urban Engineers; Randy Brown, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection / Coastal Zone Management Program (PA DEP / CZM); Jim Boyer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE); Katelyn Csatari, Philadelphia Water Department (PWD); Jamie Davis, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Rick Howley, PWD; David Kovach, Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC); Joshua Lippert, City of Philadelphia Licenses and Inspections; Matt Waldron, PA DEP / CZM; Jennifer Waters, Urban Engineers

**Meeting Summary:**

The meeting presentation and project scoping form are included with these notes. Project descriptions and location maps of the project areas were provided to the committee in advance of the meeting. This meeting was held via ZOOM and conference call.

**1. Bartram's Mile Fishing Pier Rehabilitation**

Jennifer Waters and Peter Brennan, Urban Engineers, presented the proposed project.

**Highlights included:**

- The proposed new dock is replacing an existing industrial pier that is in an advanced state of disrepair with a new dock to provide recreational access to Schuylkill River on Bartram's Mile in southwest Philadelphia.
- The new structure will be elevated above the existing structure, though still slightly below the 100 year flood elevation, to be closer to the water line for ease of fishing and boating, with a metal grate decking. The structure will stand on six steel pilings, replacing the 18 timber pilings from the previous pier.
- The new structure will be within the existing footprint of the old pier but will be reoriented to be perpendicular to the river.
- The entire structure will be within the floodway and some grading may be required in the upland portion of the project area to manage the grade required to elevate the structure.

Jennifer described the data collection efforts that have been completed, which include:

- Wetland delineation in 2013 – no wetlands in the project area and no planned wetland mitigation
- PNDI – Potential red-belly turtle habitat
- Cultural Resources – no contributing resources
- Hydrologic and Hydraulic (H&H) Study – no rise in flood elevation due to structure.

Jennifer explained that a nearby project that received a waiver for wetland mitigation due to the soil contamination in the project area.

Randy Brown, PA DEP, explained that this project appears eligible for a General Permit 11 (GP11) from Pennsylvania as long as there are no adverse effects to cultural resources. Peter Brennan asked about shading in the river and how that would impact the permit. Randy explained that a the GP11 allows for a minor expansion of shaded area in the river as part of maintenance. Randy also noted that he will review the waiver for compensatory wetland mitigation that PA DEP has on file for the project area.

Jim Boyer, USACOE, noted that prior email coordination on this project with Urban and explained that the project should be eligible for a National Permit -3 (NP-3) for repair and replacement of an existing structure. Jim reviewed the potential restrictions on the construction of the new structure which would include a spring construction restriction (March 1 - June 30) to avoid disturbing foraging Atlantic and Shortnose Sturgeon. Jim mentioned that construction would also require turbidity barriers and may require a noise calculation for the driving of the steel piles. Jim offered to send Jennifer the link to the NFMS website noise calculator tool.

Jim indicated that ACOE will perform a historic evaluation once the permit package is submitted. Jim also recommended that Urban confirm that the structure is outside of the navigation channel of the river as well as a narrative of the pile removal process for the demolition of the existing structure. Jim requested details of any construction on land below the high tide line (HTL). Peter confirmed that there would be no construction on land below the HTL.

Randy also requested that the HTL, mean-high and mean-low tide, and floodway lines be included in the plans. Randy confirmed that a submerged land license would be required.

Matt Waldron, PA DEP / CZM program explained that CZM consistency is included with the NP-3 and if that permit is applicable, Urban does not have to submit anything to PA DEP.

David Kovach, DRBC, indicated that DRBC regulations do not apply in the tidal reach of the estuary.

Josh Lippert, City of Philadelphia L&I, explained that the city zoning code allows docks but not piers in the floodway and that the permit application should make sure that it aligns with the definition of a dock. Josh also mentioned that a submerged land license would be required to obtain a building permit. Peter noted the discrepancy between two zoning code clauses over whether piers would be allowed, and stated that the new dock will include a mooring cleat and ladder to boating access and meet the zoning code's definition of a dock.

Peter asked if a zoning application could be submitted in parallel with the state and federal environmental permits. Josh explained that the requests for information (RFI) from L&I have a 30-60 day response requirement so the environmental permits should be in hand before starting the zoning and building permit process.

Josh explained that FEMA is redrawing the floodplain maps in the tidal Schuylkill River and these new maps are expected in late 2021 or early 2022 and this could impact the projects H&H

study. Peter asked when in the process a change in floodplain calculations would require a new H&H study if the floodplain maps were changed. Josh explained if the permits were approved when the maps changed then the permits would be valid and not require a new study.

Randy requested that a narrative of the H&H study be included in the GP-11 permit application.

Jennifer confirmed that Urban would submit the permit applications electronically to PA DEP and ACOE.

The project review portion of the meeting ended at 10:35 AM.

The committee proceeded to provide updates on on-going projects in Philadelphia and the meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.