

Meeting Date: 10/30/2018
Resolution #: 10/110/2018

**RESOLUTION OF THE SLEEPY HOLLOW VILLAGE BOARD
REQUESTING MORE STUDIES TO BE DONE RELATED
TO STORM WATER BARRIERS IN THE HUDSON RIVER**

WHEREAS, The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) initiated the NY/NJ Harbor & Tributaries (NYNJHAT) Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study, affecting more than 2,150 square miles, 25 NY and NJ counties and 16 million people, with the goal of developing and implementing measures to reduce the risk of coastal storm damage to communities, critical infrastructure, and important societal resources; and

WHEREAS, Communities along the shorelines of NYC, Long Island, NY Harbor, northern NJ, western Connecticut, and the Hudson River up to Troy that encompasses the Village of Sleepy Hollow are affected; and

WHEREAS, USACE has proposed six alternatives:

- **Alternative 1:** “No Action,” meaning no new action by the Corps. Instead the region would move forward with numerous existing flood control projects already in the works.
- **Alternative 2:** Build two in-water barriers, from Sandy Hook to Breezy Point (5 miles) and across Long Island Sound near Throgs Neck Bridge.
- **Alternative 3A:** Build multiple in-water barriers in the Arthur Kill, Jamaica Bay, Verrazano Narrows, Pelham Bay, and Throgs Neck, and a levee or berm system along Brighton Beach and the Rockaways.
- **Alternative 3B:** Build multiple in-water barriers in the Arthur Kill, Kill Van Kull, the Gowanus Canal, Pelham Bay, Newtown Creek, and Jamaica Bay. Build a levee and berm system and shoreline measures in East Harlem, the NJ upper bay and Hudson River, and the West Side of Manhattan.
- **Alternative 4:** Build multiple in-water barriers in Pelham Bay, Jamaica Bay, Newtown Creek, the Gowanus Canal, and the Hackensack River. Build shoreline measures in East Harlem, the NJ Upper Bay and Hudson River, and the West Side of Manhattan.
- **Alternative 5:** Build only shoreline measures along the perimeter of coastal locations (dunes, berms and levees). Note that these shoreline protections would be in addition to the wide array of shoreline flood control projects already planned or under way as referenced in Alternative 1; and

WHEREAS, USACE intends to narrow the six options down to one or two by this fall (2018); and

WHEREAS, The one or two “tentatively selected plan(s)” will be the subject of a Draft Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement to be issued this fall; and

WHEREAS, USACE has opened a public comment period that was to end on September 20, 2018, but has now been extended and will end November 5, 2018 to consider the “scope” of issues it should study in its preliminary environmental review; and

WHEREAS, The limited number of public meetings scheduled to inform the public is inadequate to date given the enormous scale of the project; and

WHEREAS, Several of these plans – specifically, the ones including giant in-water barriers throughout NY Harbor (Alternatives 2, 3A, 3B & 4) – threaten the very existence of the Hudson as a living river; would disrupt the migrations of the river’s iconic species (striped bass, Atlantic sturgeon, herring, shad, eel); and restrict tidal exchange, essential in numerous ways: from moving sediment and flushing contaminants from the Harbor, to regulating nutrient distribution and adequate dissolved oxygen; and

WHEREAS, In-water barriers would not protect against flooding from sea-level rise – only from storms because gates must be left open for ships to pass; and

WHEREAS, By contrast, shoreline measures (Alternatives 5 and 1 *combined*) can protect against flooding from both storms and sea level rise, and can be more easily heightened as sea level projections evolve; and

WHEREAS, USACE estimates \$30 billion to \$50 billion to build the in-water barriers in Alternative 2, with annual maintenance likely costing billions, without even addressing sea level rise; and

WHEREAS, Alternative 5 — shoreline and nature-based measures (dunes, dikes, floodwalls, and levees) — is estimated at \$2 billion to \$4 billion, and is the only alternative that addresses both storm surge and sea level rise, while leaving the river to flow freely; and

WHEREAS, The economy and culture of the Hudson River Valley is intimately tied to the health of the Hudson River, including the migrations of its signature fish. And tourism generates more than \$5.3 billion annually; and

WHEREAS, Non-federal sponsors of the study include New York State, represented by the NYSDEC and New Jersey, represented by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, and **NY and NJ thereby have the authority to withdraw from the study or to reject any construction alternative.**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the elected representatives of The Village of Sleepy Hollow, in The County of Westchester, in the Hudson Valley, cannot comment effectively, as is our legal right, without additional detailed information and data on the social, economic and environmental impacts of each alternative - considered in conjunction with already existing and approved shoreline projects. The Army Corps needs to publish comprehensive information about all the alternatives

being considered, including the environmental impacts on the Hudson and the Harbor and to share with the public the complete list of existing studies it will consult in the preliminary assessments of the projects; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The meetings posted were too few, have been announced too late, and were not advertised so that the public would actually be aware. The Army Corps and the other involved agencies need to provide a greater number of comprehensive *and well advertised* public meetings throughout the affected area, and most particularly within the rivertowns that include Sleepy Hollow; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, In its cost-benefit analysis of the current array of alternatives, the USACE should include an evaluation for each alternative of the cost of shoreline measures that are essential to protect against flooding from sea level rise; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The full range of impacts, including but not limited to, impacts on tidal flow, fish migration, wildlife habitat, water quality, commercial shipping, recreational boating, induced coastal flooding or deflection of storm surge to areas adjacent to any barrier alternatives, as well as cost to state taxpayers for future operation and maintenance of ship and tide gates must be considered before any alternative is advanced; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Board of Trustees of the Village of Sleepy Hollow in the County of Westchester urge Basil Seggos, Commissioner, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), Bryce Wisemiller, NY District Project Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Nancy J. Brighton, Chief, Watershed Section, Environmental Analysis Branch, Planning Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to allow a further extension of the scoping comment period for the NY/NJ Harbor & Tributaries (NYNJHAT) Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study, with additional public information and scoping meetings, and to complete and make public additional specific studies before any alternative is advanced.

Moved: Scaglione

Seconded: Gebler

Vote: 6-0

Absent: Trustee Leavy