

Alternative Resiliency Design for Robert F. Wagner Jr. Park

The "Heart and Soul" of our Community...

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“Wagner Park is one of the finest public spaces seen in at least a generation.”

Paul Goldberger, Architecture Critic
New York Times

Agenda



1 Alternative Design Preview

2 Introductions of Independent Committee of Experts

3 History of Robert F. Wagner Jr. Park and it's historical significance

4 Alternate Design Criteria and Flood Alignment/Options

5 Community Feedback, Thoughts and Next Steps



Today here is what you will see...

A presentation on a Resiliency Project for Lower Manhattan that will...

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- 1 Protects from sea level rise and storm surge
- 2 Helps protect from cloud-burst flooding by adding green space
- 3 With minimal disruption
- 4 In a way that will provide protection quicker
- 5 ...and be flexible to increase height as science evolves
- 6 While preserving mature trees & prioritizing green over concrete

Let's talk about the BPCA plan first...

From street, there is no view of the water and from the sidewalk, people will be **looking at ~10 foot wall**



Maximum Impact and Significant Disruption to Character of Neighborhood



~10% Reduction in Lawn
Current: 33,750 vs. New: 30,050



Demolition of 114 Mature Trees



Does not address flooding from sky or climate risks from heat



Does not meet design criteria of maintaining sight lines to Statue of Liberty and easy access to water

Next, let's talk about our simpler, smarter and greener resiliency plan...

BPCA

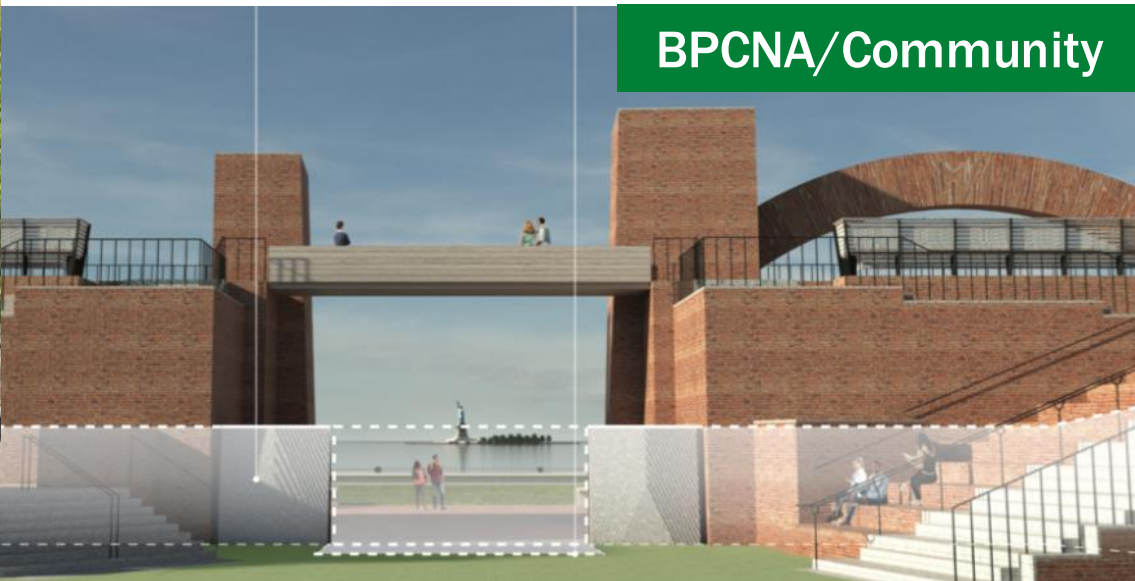
The **Battery Park City Association (BPCA)** has a resiliency plan that they say is the only way to achieve resiliency and that they must demolish Wagner Park, **reduce green space** and cut down **114** mature trees

BPCNA

The **Battery Park City Neighborhood Association (BPCNA)** has assembled a team of independent experts that have an alternative plan that will provide **equal protection** with additional flexibility with minimal disruption while increasing green space, preserving mature trees & in a way that can be executed more efficiently



Same protection, minimal disruption to the park, use of existing structures and adds green space



From the street, there will be a ~10 ft wall

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Our Committee of Experts

October 2022

Introductions

MACHADO SILVETTI



OLIN



Jeffrey Burchard, AIA



Tucker Douglas, AIA



Taylor Halamka

EVAN MCNAUGHT, RLA

Landscape Architect



DEMETRIOS STAURINOS, RLA, ASLA

Associate



LUCINDA R. SANDERS, FASLA

CEO and Partner



JONATHAN FRANKLIN

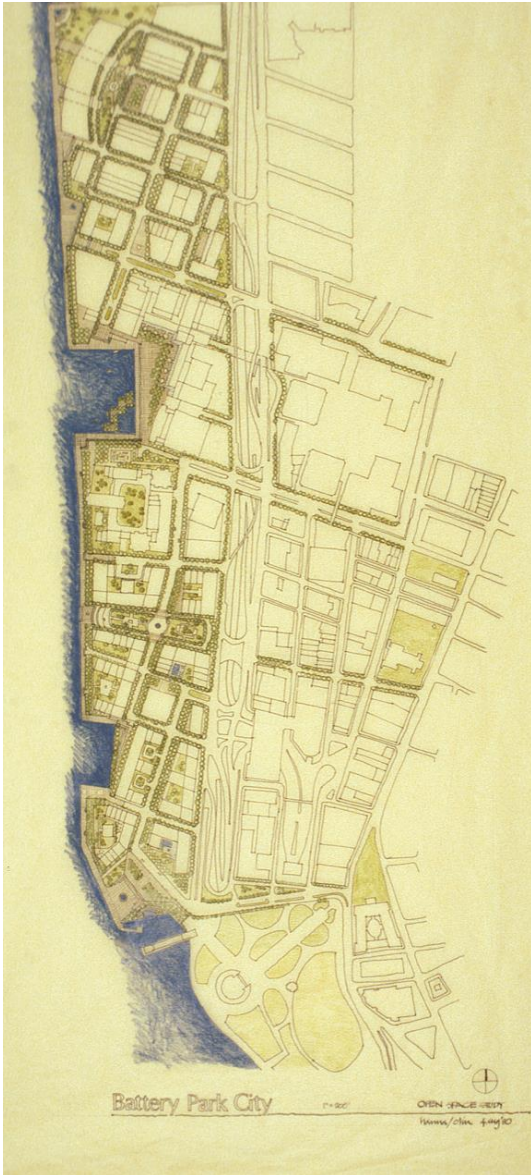
Landscape Designer



History of Battery Park City & the Masterplan

MACHADO SILVETTI

OLIN



Battery Park City Masterplan, 1979

IMAGE COURTESY OLIN

OLIN was hired in 1970s to develop the Battery Park City “Masterplan”



History and Importance of Wagner Park

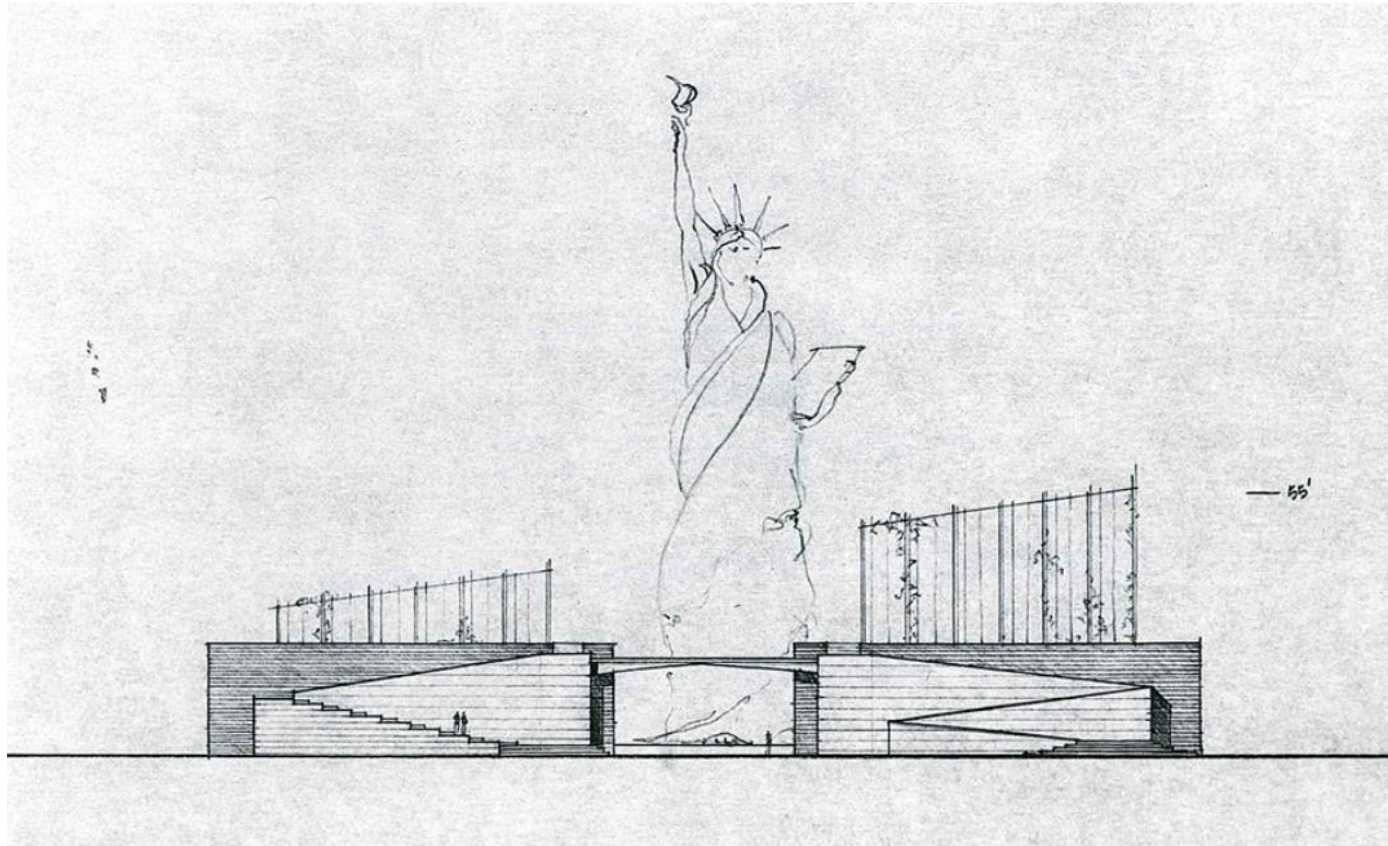
MACHADO SILVETTI

OLIN



History and Importance of Wagner Park

MACHADO SILVETTI OLIN



Elevation view of early pavilion design

“The ideas of Unprecedented Realism deeply permeate Wagner Park and it, perhaps, is the building in which we got closest to the materialization of these ideas.”

Rodolfo Machado

“What is most important is that every aspect of this design emerges from the realities of the park’s surroundings—the waterfront, the Statue of Liberty, the rest of Battery Park City and lower Manhattan—and connects to the imperatives of human use.”

Paul Goldberger, Architecture Critic
New York Times

Leading up to the Wagner Park project, Rodolfo Machado and Jorge Silvetti had made a clear statement about their own approach to the production of architecture, titled Unprecedented Realism. The ideas involved in Unprecedented Realism were developed, tested and refined through Machado and Silvetti’s shared professional practice and respective academic careers. Recently, while reflecting on Wagner Park, Rodolfo noted that, “it, perhaps, is the building in which we got closest to the materialization of these ideas.”



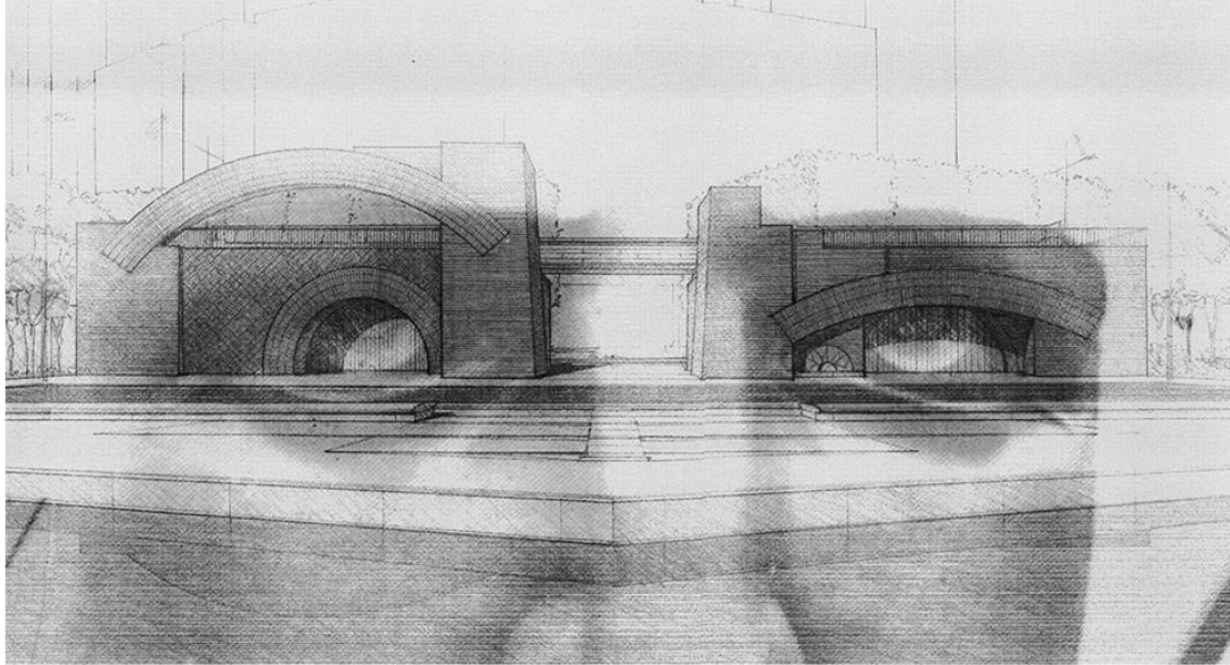
History and Importance of Wagner Park

MACHADO SILVETTI

OLIN

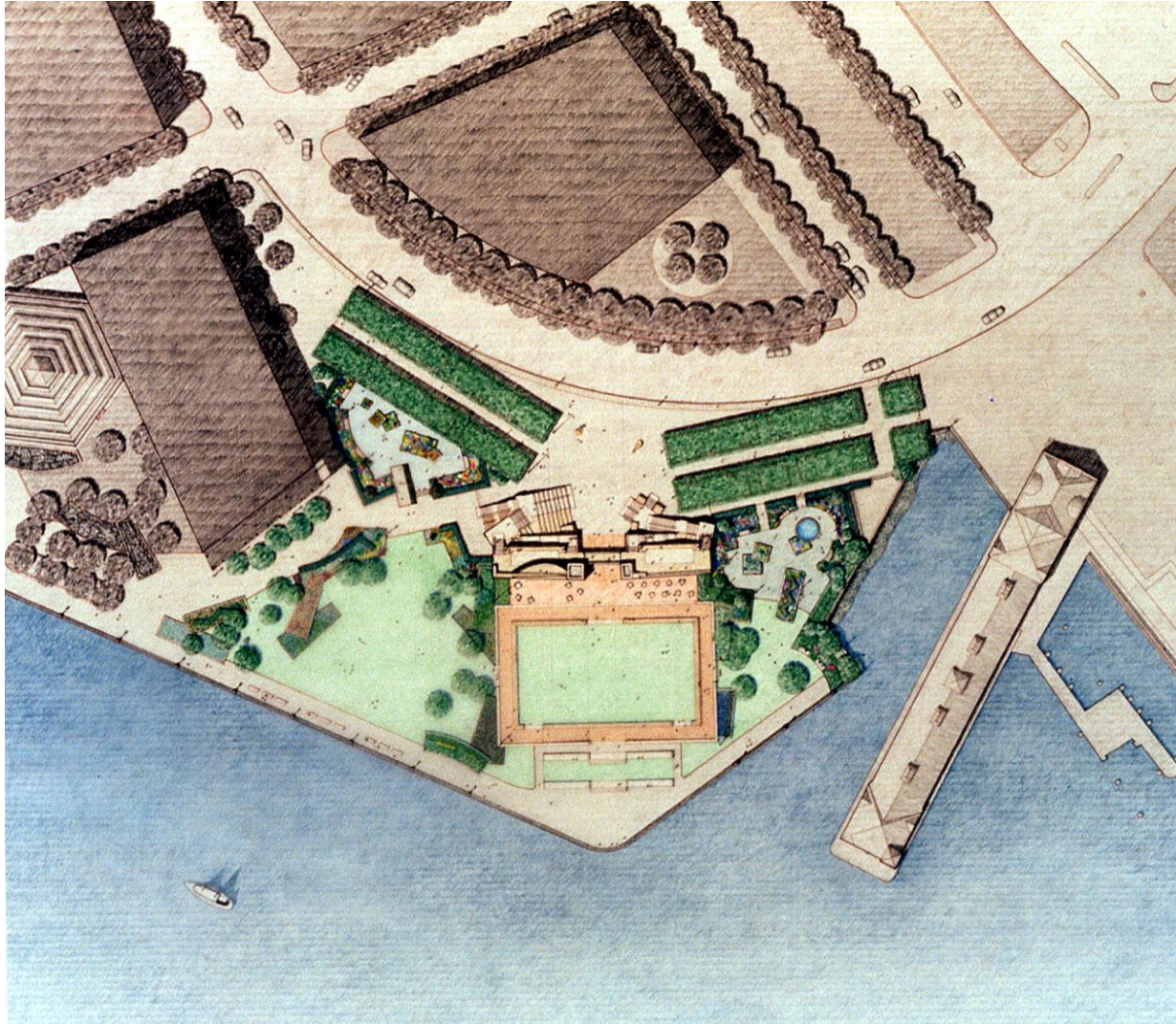


The conceptual evolution of Wagner Park can be understood in part as a process of architectural and conceptual abstraction. The process begins with a prototypical Roman temple expressed in plan, dedicated to the Statue of Liberty; through a series of architectural redactions, the temple is abstracted to become the expression of its core iconographic qualities and principles.



History and Importance of Wagner Park

MACHADO SILVETTI OLIN



This project was a **quintessential collaboration between landscape architect, architect and horticulturist**

Garden designs influential in informing the swing of the pavilion steps so that everything “locks” together

The gardens flare out to the water and the stairs flare out to greet the public. The formal gestures are an embrace of people and the magnificence of life



SOUTH PARK
BATTERY PARK CITY AUTHORITY

*Lessening The Bonds
Conservatory Garden to South Park*

Harold W. Olin, Ltd., Landscape Architects
Harold W. Olin, Inc., Architects
Lavinia B. Miller, Garden Designer
© January 1993



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Why Something Must be Done

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We All Want Resiliency... Just a Better Design...



Climate change is real and we must make Lower Manhattan more resilient

Hurricane Sandy was a wake-up call in 2012 to the risks of rising sea levels and storm surge

Hurricane Ida was a wake-up call in 2021 on risks of flooding from the sky

And as temperatures rise, the risks from heat are becoming more pronounced

We must be smart about our resiliency plans and deliberate in the solutions we choose to address evolving climate risks

Climate Change has and always will be part of the Park design...

Wagner Park built in 1996 & designed for a 100-year flood



Sand and soil composition was thoughtfully selected to withstand high foot traffic and allowing water to drain exceptionally well

A diverse slate of carefully selected plants and trees were strategically placed to tolerate salt, wind and water

The sturdiest of plants from the gardens found in plant beds closer to the water



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Robert F. Wagner Jr. Park Design Principles & Considerations

October 2022

Community First Design Principles

Community Engaged at Every Step with Feedback Incorporated in Two-Way Dialogue



Minimal impact to existing design & preserve character of park & neighborhood



Minimal disruption to existing park and utilize existing structures



Nature-based resiliency solutions and prioritization of green over concrete



Provide protection from all climate risk & **accretive to the neighborhood**



Use of resiliency to **increase active green spaces** and preserve mature trees

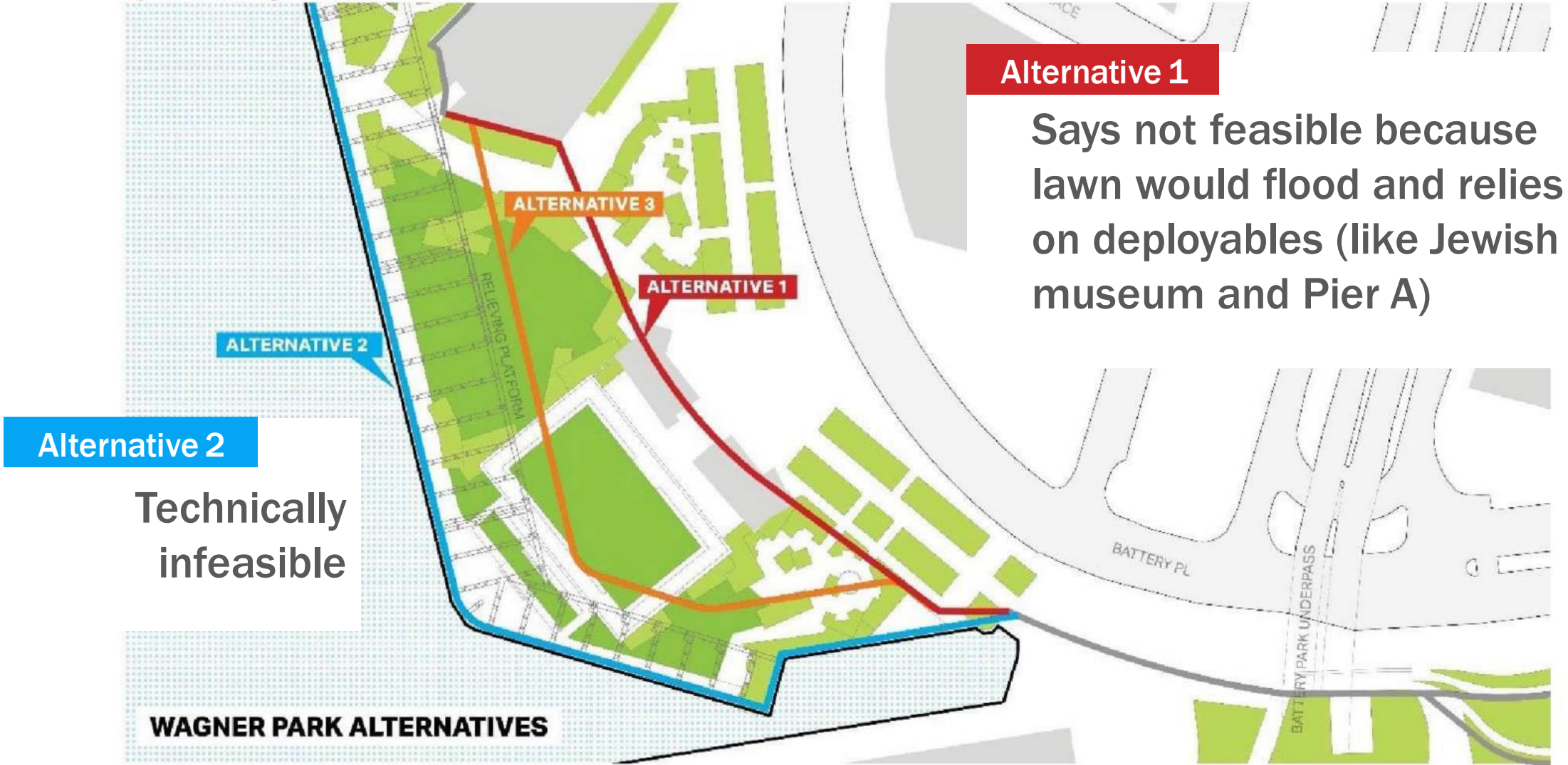


Prioritization of **community needs** and feedback in designs & design principles



In the FEIS, there were three flood alignment options*

South Battery Park City Resiliency Project
Figure 2.2-3: Wagner Park Alternatives



*Three flood alignment options provided but Alternative 1 was not meaningfully considered or seriously presented to the public

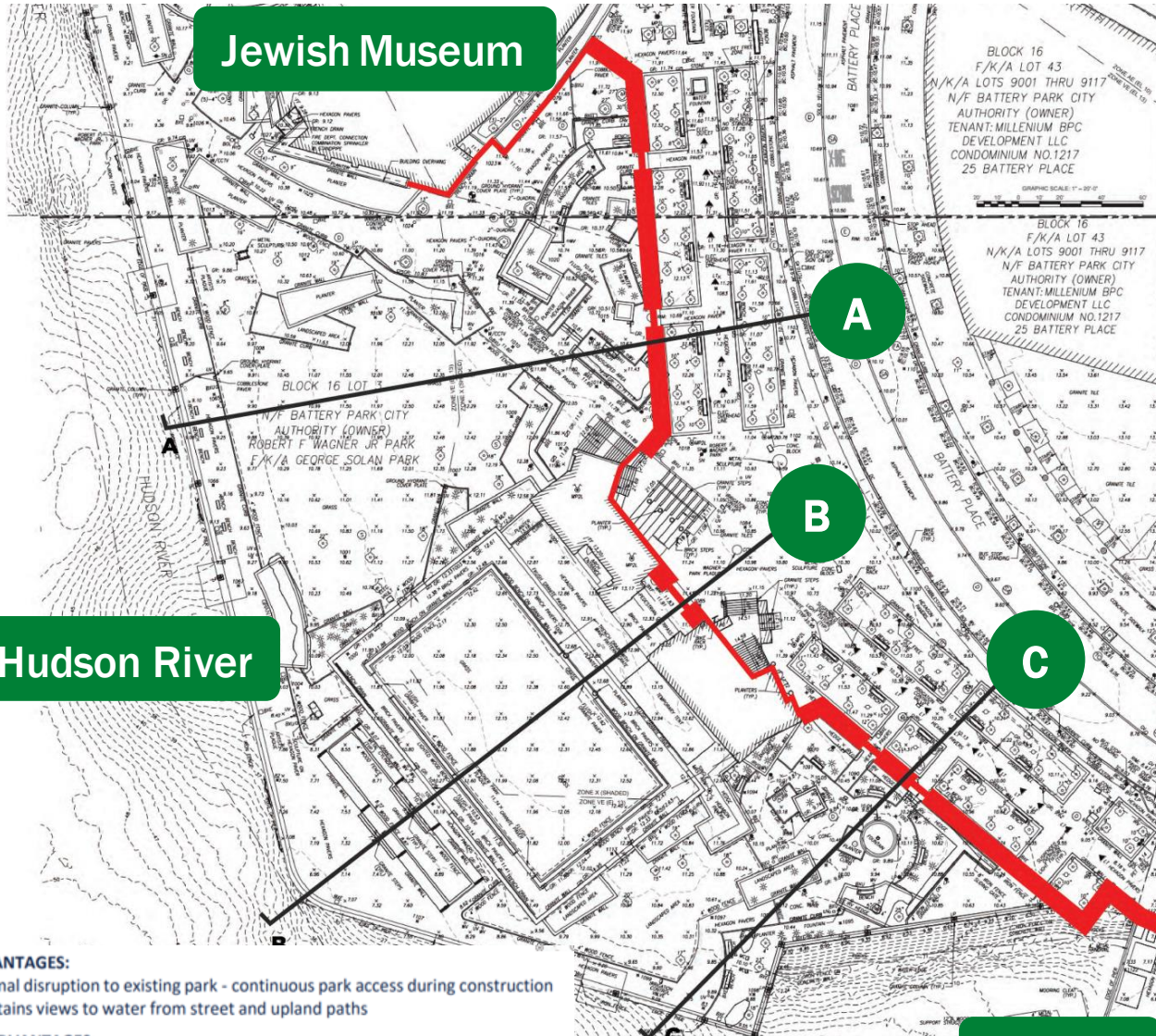
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Robert F. Wagner Jr. Park Alternate Design

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Now here's the Flood Alignment Option 1A



Jewish Museum

Hudson River

Pier A



The flood alignment goes along the outside of the park allowing park to serve as protection from flooding

Placing floodwall furthest from river provides maximum protection from flooding from river and sky with minimal disruption to the existing park

Park will largely remain open during construction

Maintains the special views to water and connection to the harbor

Preservation of mature trees and potential for increasing green spaces

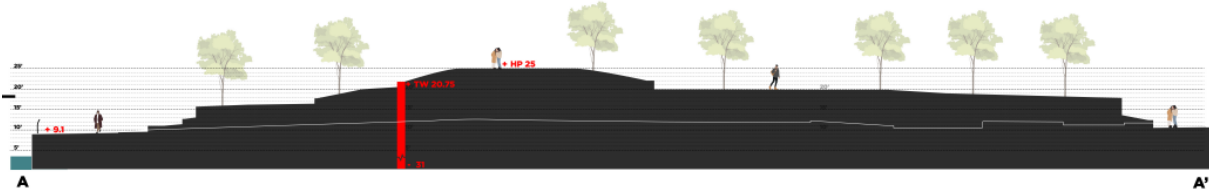
Prioritizes green over concrete

- ADVANTAGES:**
Minimal disruption to existing park - continuous park access during construction
Maintains views to water from street and upland paths
- DISADVANTAGES:**
Park will flood during major storms
Park may be out of service for extended periods for restoration after major storms

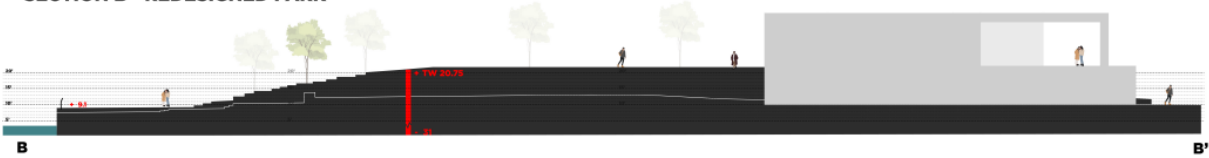
Alternative 1A has the same protection with minimal disruption

Alternative 3

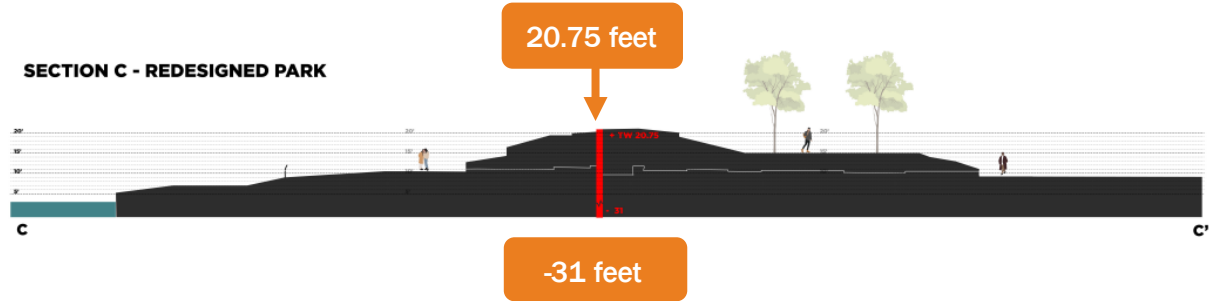
SECTION A - REDESIGNED PARK



SECTION B - REDESIGNED PARK



SECTION C - REDESIGNED PARK

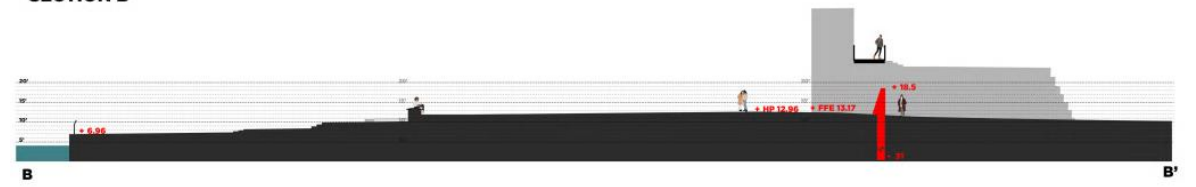


Alternative 1A

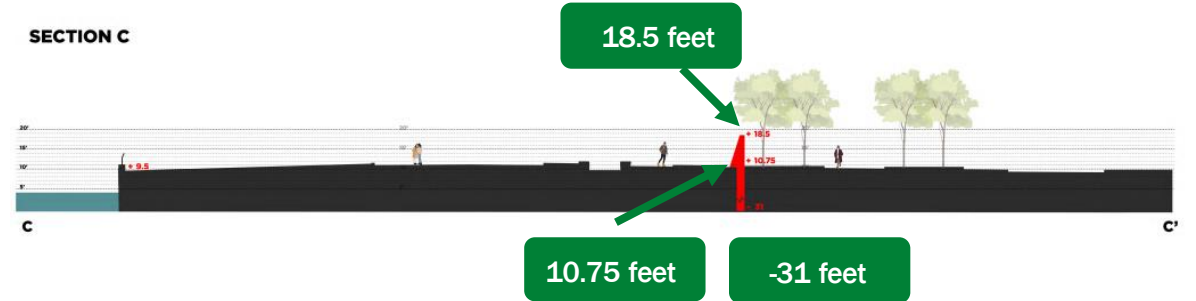
SECTION A
























SECTION B



SECTION C



...And how Alternative 1A compares to our community's design principles

	Alternative 1A	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Minimal Impact & Utilizing Existing Park/Structures			N/A	
Nature-Based Resiliency Solutions: Green over Concrete			N/A	
Accretive to Neighborhood & Preserve Character of the Park			N/A	
Increase Active Green Space & Green Infrastructure			N/A	
Prioritization of Community Needs & Integration of Community Feedback			N/A	
Preservation of Mature Trees			N/A	
Mitigates Climate Risks: Heat Index and Flooding from River and Sky			N/A	

Notice how the Views of the Statue of Liberty are preserved in 1A...

Existing



EXISTING VIEW
FRAMES STATUE OF LIBERTY

MACHADO SILVETTI

Wagner Park Alternative Design | October 2022

Proposed



PROPOSED VIEW
FRAMES STATUE OF LIBERTY

MACHADO SILVETTI

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Notice how the view of the Statue of Liberty is preserved, which is one of the critical design criteria of this park

The flood alignment will leverage existing structures...

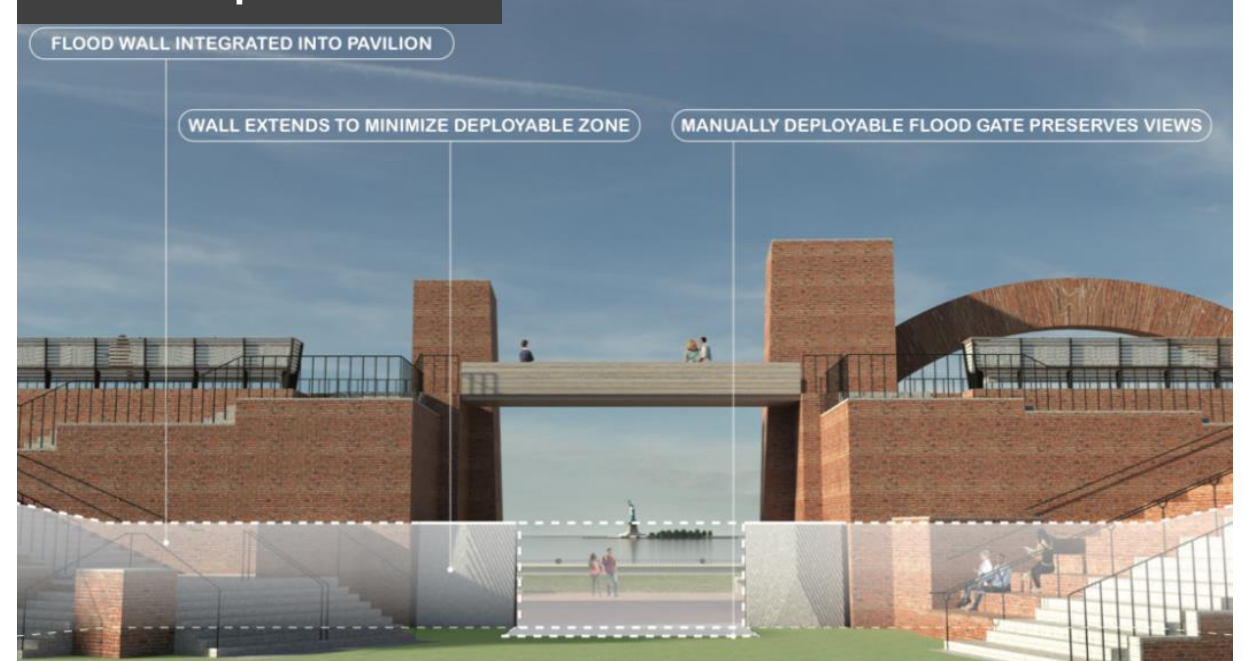
Proposed



PROPOSED VIEW
FRAMES STATUE OF LIBERTY
MACHADO SILVETTI

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Proposed



PROPOSED VIEW
FRAMES STATUE OF LIBERTY
MACHADO SILVETTI

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Flood alignment built into the backside of an existing structure with a manually deployable flood gate

...and for the most part will rely on permanent structures...

Proposed Floodwall Engagement with Existing Pavilion



We have opportunities to increase green spaces that will absorb water

Options for Rebuilt Portion of Pavilions

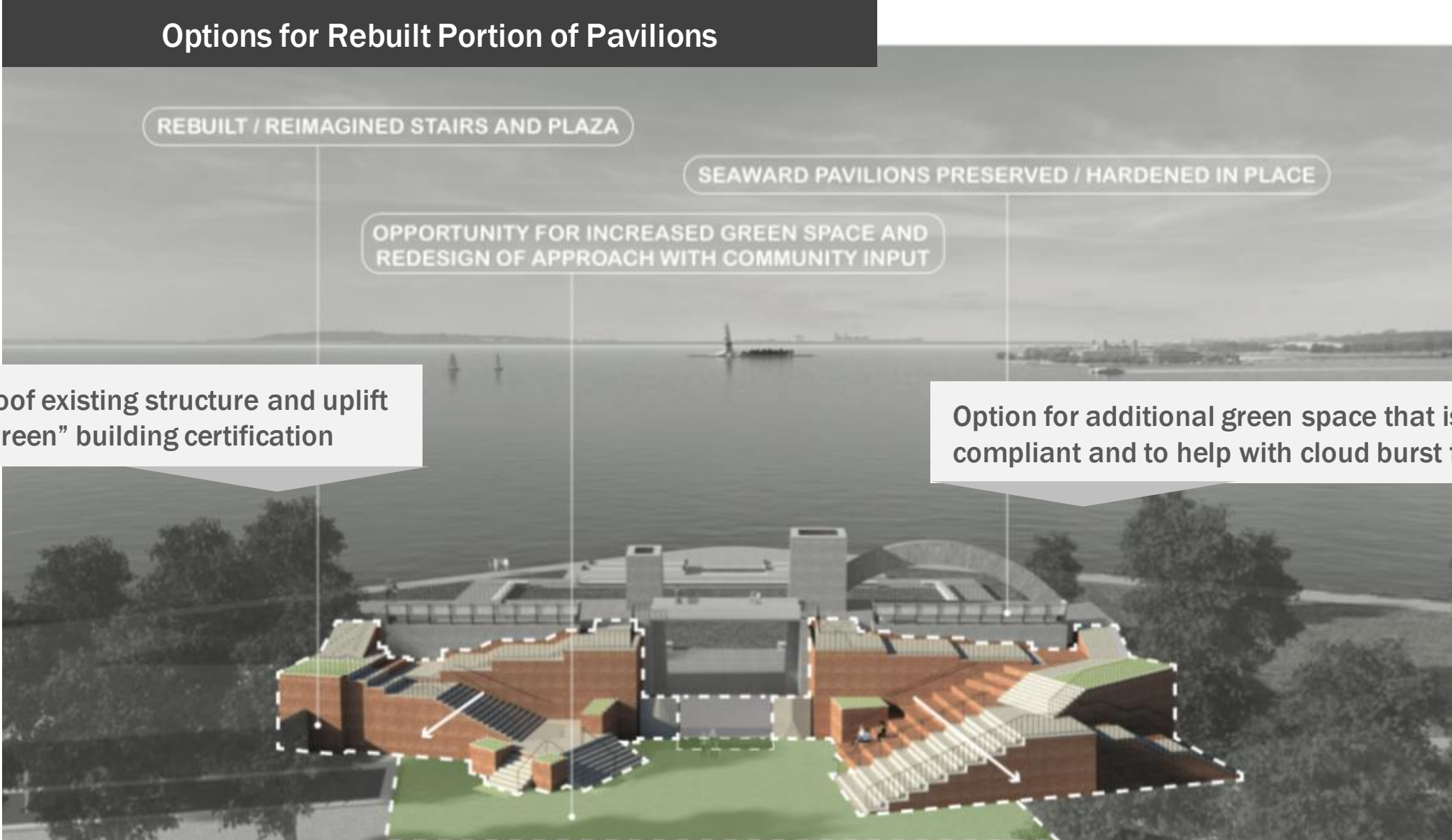
REBUILT / REIMAGINED STAIRS AND PLAZA

SEAWARD PAVILIONS PRESERVED / HARDENED IN PLACE

OPPORTUNITY FOR INCREASED GREEN SPACE AND REDESIGN OF APPROACH WITH COMMUNITY INPUT

Flood proof existing structure and uplift to get “Green” building certification

Option for additional green space that is ADA compliant and to help with cloud burst flooding



Here's an option of how the wall can look...

VIEW

Looking into South Garden facing the Water

OPTIONS

Many options on color, material, type of wall, etc.

FEEDBACK

- Living green wall
- Wall kids can climb
- Add more green
- Think about absorbing water from sky
- MORE?



...and another option where it could be a living “green” wall...

VIEW

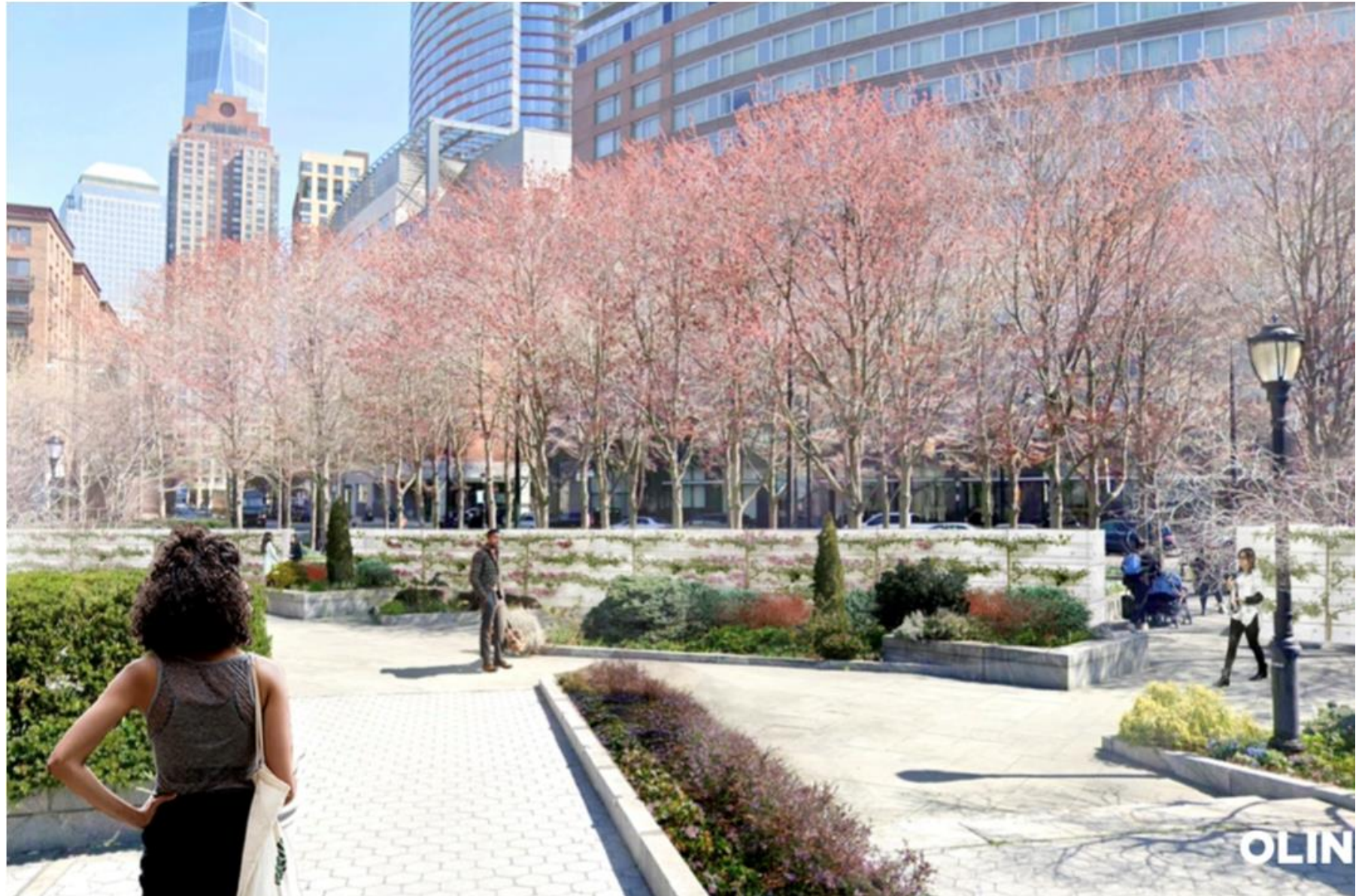
Looking towards
PS276 from North
Gardens

OPTIONS

Many options on
color, material, type
of wall, etc.

FEEDBACK

- Living green wall
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absorbing water
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Feedback so Far... “A Smarter and Faster Approach to Flood Protection”



Minimal impacts to the unique character of the park

Leverages same design principles being embraced in the Battery and Northwest Projects

Implementation may be faster than demolishing and rebuilding providing protection sooner

Preservation of the heart and soul of our community – our community’s gem



Prioritization of green over concrete

Preserves unique character of neighborhood

Preservation of mature trees and critical green infrastructure to protect from increasing heat

Integration of community feedback and opportunities to further iterate

Opportunity to increase active green spaces

Opportunity to add green to prevent flooding from increase microburst events and flooding





**WE WANT YOUR
FEEDBACK**

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Appendix

October 2022

Robert F. Wagner Jr. Park Resiliency Alternate Design



And generations to come deserve a better resiliency plan that will protect from climate risks while adding green spaces





“Wagner Park is one of the finest public spaces New York has seen in at least a generation.”

Paul Goldberger, Architecture Critic
New York Times

Wagner Park protected us during Sandy, but we need to do more...



First, let's talk about Trees...

We can always add new trees. The science is clear that new trees are not a replacement from mature trees. Mature trees are climate change superpowers as they are better at absorbing water from flooding and absorb 70% more carbon than a sapling

Second, Flooding from Rain

We need to be thinking about how to protect from rising seas and storm surge as well as more intense storms and rainfall. Cloudburst flooding will become everyday life and we need more green space, not less, to address flooding from the sky

Third, Rising Sea Levels

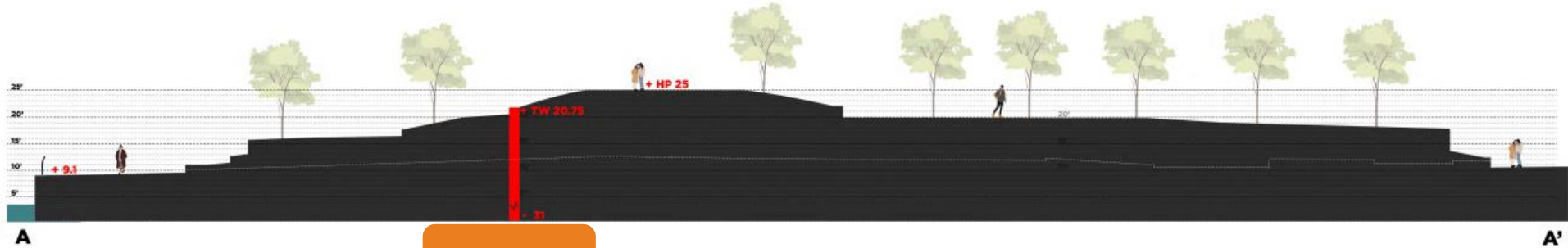
All of Lower Manhattan was built on a flood plain and we need to both elevate and leverage green infrastructure to make room for water to go...



Both Alternative 3 and 1A will drill down 31 feet

Alternative 3

SECTION A - AECOM PROPOSAL



-31 feet

Alternative 1A

SECTION A



-31 feet

SECTION B



-31 feet

The Approach we are Advocating has been Embraced in the North



Option 1: Minimal Park Impact



ADVANTAGES:

- Minimal disruption to existing park - continuous park access during construction
- Maintains views to water from street and upland paths
- Potential opportunity for a get-down to the water at North Esplanade

DISADVANTAGES:

- Park will flood during major storms
- Park may be out of service for extended periods for restoration after major storms
- Some trees along River Terrace would need to be replaced
- Requires some use of deployable elements
- Potential need for adaptable measures at an earlier point in time.

Option 2: Demolish Park



ADVANTAGES:

- Reduced risk to park during storms
- Opportunity for new spaces and programming
- More passive elements

DISADVANTAGES:

- All trees outside esplanade area to be replaced
- Limited views of water from street and upland paths
- Higher cost of construction
- Limited or no access to park during construction
- Less continuous lawn space

