

CREDITS

The Greenpoint Community is served by many community organizations dedicated to improving their neighborhood. The following groups have joined together in the preparation of the Greenpoint 197-a Plan, (included alphabetically):

CONCERNED CITIZENS OF GREENPOINT (CCG), INC., a not-for-profit group dedicated to improving the environmental health of the community, was formed in 1989 by five determined residents of Greenpoint -- **Stella Harmatiuk, Irene Klementowicz, Elizabeth Ronchetti, Mary Sheridan, and Alice Wilkowski**. For almost a decade, these committed women held meetings with government officials regarding the many municipal facilities located in Greenpoint with hazardous impact on the community. In particular, CCG has monitored the efforts of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to upgrade the Newtown Creek Sewage Treatment Plant on soil and water contamination. Furthermore, aware that the 17 million gallon Mobil Oil spill beneath Greenpoint might be hazardous, CCG initiated meetings with Mobil Oil and the DEC. Currently under a court order, Mobil Oil has installed recovery wells to clean up the spilled oil, but the company may legally take as long as twenty years to do so. For about seven years, CCG has held meetings with Mobil Oil and the DEC and will continue to do so with other agencies involved.

Together with *Neighborhood Roots* and *Greenpoint Civic Council*, *Concerned Citizens of Greenpoint* also worked to develop plans for regreening Greenpoint after the devastation wrought by the Asian Longhorned beetle in 1995-96 on many mature trees in the community. Members of CCG have also been active participants in the 197-a Planning process, attending numerous workshops on waterfront planning in both Greenpoint and Williamsburg in the past decade. According to **Irene Klementowicz**, although the CCG has not received any funding for years, volunteer members of the organization say they continue to work for the benefit of "this beloved community." The decade-long diligence of CCG and its participation and persistent advocacy for improvements in the quality of life and the environment of Greenpoint, is a model example of citizen activism that other environmental groups in the city would do well to emulate.

THE FRIENDS OF INDIA STREET PIER is a group dedicated to the pier its members "adopted" for the benefit of the Greenpoint community. Although heavily deteriorated, the India Street pier was a popular summer refuge for many residents of North Brooklyn, who spent weekends there sunbathing, fishing, or simply enjoying the Manhattan skyline. But a near catastrophe in which seven Greenpoint residents atop the pier fell into the East River along with the pier when it collapsed in May, 1997 brought additional attention and a sense of urgency to the efforts of the Friends to speed repair of the popular pier.

According to "**Willie the Barber**," President of the Friends of India Street Pier, the group envisions a "*New India Street Pier*" with new pilings to strengthen it and make safer, a 4" fence on the rear half, tables, benches, and shrubbery that would provide a park-like atmosphere, a food stand that would pay rent to the city, and possibly a water fountain. The

pier would become a nice place for fishing, sunbathing and picnicking. The location offers a beautiful view of the Manhattan skyline and the ships on the East River. Recommendations for the New India street pier are an integral part of the Greenpoint 197-a Plan (see section on Waterfront Access).

GREENPOINT CIVIC COUNCIL provides a means whereby several constituent organizations may achieve and express a unanimity of opinion for the betterment of the community. The Greenpoint Civic Council sees the development of waterfront as key to the growth and prosperity of this community. Objectives of the organization are to:

- promote cooperation among the constituent organizations and persons interested in making the community a more wholesome place to live, work or transact business;
- foster coordination of efforts by constituent organizations and individuals in order to meet the needs of the community more effectively;
- anticipate and eliminate factors that tend to result in deterioration of the community;
- seek to preserve and to promote the residential character of the community; and
- maintain a continual awareness of the need for proper youth facilities.

The Greenpoint Civic Council has undertaken the resolution of community complaints and an anti-graffiti project repainting business storefronts. Since January 19, 1987, the Council has received 76 community complaints, out of which 71 were resolved.

GREENPOINT MONITOR MUSEUM [GMM], named to commemorate the fact that Greenpoint was the homeport and birthplace of the famous Civil War ship the *Monitor*. The GMM has recently received a provisional charter from the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. According to **Janice Lauletta**, President of the GMM, like the South Street Seaport Museum, was founded by community residents dedicated to saving the old structures of South Street. The GMM, currently without a home, is dedicated to restoring to Greenpoint its historical ambiance and saving its historic waterfront structures. The Museum is currently engaged in educational, environmental, and quality of life issues in Greenpoint.

The Plan's Appendix includes copies of a number of petitions circulated by the GMM, requesting support for specific improvements that would enhance the environment and to comprehensive initiatives that would significantly enhance the quality of life in Greenpoint. These petitions not only reflect the level of community concern and participation but also the range of actions necessary to preserve, enhance and revitalize one of New York City's great communities. Included are requests to:

- Include Bishop's Crook Lamposts and a footbridge to Queens as part of Manhattan Avenue's Reconstruction Project,
- Extend the boundaries of the Manhattan Avenue rebuilding project to the Newtown Creek area repairing bulkhead and incorporating a new waterfront promenade along a clean and attractive waterway,
- Save the U.S.S. *Monitor's* launch site and the Noble St. Pier from use as garbage transfer stations; and
- Extend the Landmark District to the waterfront.

The GMM held its first event on the day of a brutal Northeaster Storm, which brought attention to the sewer problems of the neighborhood and the roof problems of community churches. As a result, members of the GMM canvassed the community to ascertain the location of sewer problems. They identified and mapped the areas with severe problems in the hope of assisting community residents. Abatement strategies for the combined sewer overflows into the East River and Newtown Creek are prerequisite for future waterfront development. The work of the GMM has provided the framework for much of the 197-a Plan.

GREENPOINT PROPERTY OWNERS, INC., a non-profit organization, was founded in 1942. This organization educates homeowners about regulations set by agencies such as DHCR and HPD that affect residential buildings. Members hold monthly membership meetings and occasionally participate in seminars with the North Brooklyn Development Corporation. According to **Christine Holowacz**, President of the Greenpoint Property Owners, the goal of the organization is to inform members of new laws that affect residential buildings and work with local groups and political leaders to upgrade and maintain the quality of life in Greenpoint and surrounding areas. Greenpoint Property Owners, Inc. has been involved in informing homeowners of city-sponsored lead and recycling laws and regulations that affect all New York City neighborhoods. This organization also works with local elected officials to help formulate and assure fairness for all in creating and enforcing of these laws.

Greenpoint Property Owners, Inc. also participated in developing of Greenpoint 197-a Plan, upgrading in the local library and tackling environmental issues such as sewer problems and transfer stations.

HISPANOS UNIDOS DE GREENPOINT was founded in 1984 by a group of Greenpoint residents with the purpose of strengthening the Hispanic community's contribution to Greenpoint and providing it with a space for civic, cultural and sport activities. In the last ten years, *Hispanos Unidos* has organized many successful activities in pursuit of these objectives such as: anti-crime conferences, HIV and drug abuse prevention workshops, health fairs, and many recreational and competitive sport activities for children and youth. **Edwin Perez**, President of Hispanos Unidos (HU) points out that in preparing these events HU has joined forces with local organizations, city agencies and with the 94th precinct. Every year the group celebrates the Hispanic Festival of Greenpoint -- the most important activity for the entire Hispanic community of Greenpoint, the festival reinforces social and cultural networks for a better developed community. All members of the organization are volunteers.

One of the group's most recent activities was to recover and improve Greenpoint Park, located at the corner of Dupont, Franklin, and Commercial Streets. Improvements to the park will include a basketball field, lighting, and public bathroom and shower. This initiative has received the support of private and public agencies. *Hispanos Unidos* has received a "Certificate of Recognition in appreciation for dedicated volunteer service" from the NYC Department of Parks.

NEIGHBORHOOD ROOTS, organized in an attempt to regreen Greenpoint after the invasion of the Asian Longhorned Beetle in 1995-96, which devastated thousands of trees in Greenpoint. *Neighborhood Roots* has been instrumental in mitigating the impact of the tree removal and in addressing the problems resulting from the reduction of “green canopy” that served the community. As **John Kupiec** of Neighborhood Roots points out, the organization also helped to protect the area’s real estate values to limit the devastating environmental impact that the loss of so many large trees could have had.

Neighborhood Roots increased public awareness, documented the loss of trees and fostered an interest in the environment through community mobilization and outreach. Its efforts resulted in the development of a \$2.7 million fund for the restoration of trees in Greenpoint. *The* group developed plans for regreening the neighborhood and the corridors of trees that will connect Greenpoint’s shopping district to its historic waterfront. The greening of local truck routes will be accomplished with ISTEA grant funding. Additional planting areas can also be created with funds already committed for upgrade of the Newtown Creek Water Pollution Control Plant.

NORTH BROOKLYN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BILL AND MARIE CHAMBERS, EVELYN and ERICA MATECHAK and many, many other Greenpoint activists:

Other stakeholders who have participated in some of the discussion but are not formal members of the Greenpoint Waterfront Committee:

- Assemblyman Joseph Lentol
- Brooklyn Borough Presidents Office
- Community Board One
- City Council Member Ken Fisher
- Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez*
- Greenpoint Coalition
- Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center
- Greenpoint Youth Organization
- Green Oaks Citizens Club and Ladies’ Auxiliary
- J. Smolenski Democratic Club and Ladies’ Auxiliary
- Konheim & Ketcham*
- New York Industrial Retention Network
- New York Institute of Technology*
- Prof. Louis Pignataro*
- Polish-American Congress
- Polish National Alliance
- Polish-Slavic Center
- Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development (PICCED)
- State Senator Martin Connor

Toronto Waterfront Regeneration Trust
Greenpoint Veterans' groups
Carol Woodward and Anthony Snachkus of Water Views and Green Ways, and
Barbara Dante of the Greenpoint Kayak and Canoe Olympic Team

This Plan was prepared with technical and production assistance from the Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development and the Greenpoint Waterfront Committee (PICCED).

The PICCED Team:

Ron Shiffman
Rex Curry
Brian Sullivan
Mannix Gordon
Vojislava Filipcevic
Anuradha Valecha
Leena Shanbhag
Mercedes Narciso

The Pratt Graduate Students who worked on the Greenpoint Planning Studio:

Dario Vergara
Paula Maria Crespo
Nigel Anthony Hall
Roger David Keren
John B Mc Crory
James P Miraglia
John Charles Napolitano
Chantas Pientam
Ernesto Malave

Special thanks to Judy Norinsky for editing assistance with an earlier version of this draft.

GREENPOINT WATERFRONT COMMITTEE

Janice Lauletta, Coordinator

Al Burkiewicz, Greenpoint Civic Council

Bill Chambers, Community Activist

Marie Chambers, Community Activist

Pat Ferris, Representative, Senator Martin Connor's Office

Stella Hermatiuk, Concerned Citizens of Greenpoint, Inc.

Christine Holowacz, Greenpoint Property Owners, Inc.

Irene Klementowicz, Concerned Citizens of Greenpoint, Inc.

Jimmy Lomonte, Concerned Citizens of Greenpoint

Evelyn Matechak, Community Activist

Erica Matechak, Community Activist

Richard Mazur, North Brooklyn Development Corporation

Edwin Perez, Hispanos Unidos de Greenpoint

Stanley Radzieta, Concerned Citizens of Greenpoint, Inc.

Elizabeth Ronchetti, Greenpoint Civic Council

Mae Sheridan, Concerned Citizens of Greenpoint, Inc.