



PWC hosts first panel on building New York City parks; Deputy commissioner Braddick kicked off the event

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Pictured above is: Therese Braddick, deputy commissioner, NYC Parks & Recreation, addressing attendees.

Manhattan, NY The PWC Parks Panel focused on both the funders and designers behind parks in New York City. The event was located in the Penthouse at the Park Restaurant, overlooking the Highline in Chelsea. Networking and breakfast was followed by a keynote and two panel discussions. With garden views and a dynamic group of panelists and attendees, PWC showcased how their organization's leadership is taking the organization to vibrant new heights.

Therese Braddick, deputy commissioner, NYC Parks & Recreation started off the program with a presentation and keynote. With a \$5.2 billion budget, 400 staff throughout the five boroughs, and 502 active capital projects, Braddick conveyed the growth and vitality of the NYC parks.

The first panel provided a perspective from the public sector. Moderating the panel was Jason Roberts, project executive, Plaza Project at Hudson Yards, AECOM Tishman. On the panel was Noreen Doyle, executive vice president, Hudson River Park Trust; Lynn Kelly, executive director, New Yorkers for Parks; Pat Kirshner, vice president of capital operations, Brooklyn Bridge Park; and Michael Samuelian, president, Trust for Governors Island.

The panel discussion ranged from financing parks to creating economic activity. Each park has an overarching goal to create a space for a range of people, from tourists to locals, and from elderly to children. Creating activities in the parks is a priority to create economic activity. "Parks are economic development engines" said Samuelian.

The second panel offered a perspective from the designers. Moderating the panel was Susan Chin, executive director, Design Trust for Public Space. On the panel was Molly Bourne, MNLA; Lisa Tziona Switkin, senior principal James Corner Field Operations; Donna Walcavage, principal, landscape architect, Stantec; and Annette Wilkus, founding principal, SiteWorks.

The major points of discussion for this panel were evolution of a park, from how it was first conceptualized to community involvement. A good example of this is the Highline, which originally was looked at as a liability. The park started as a community initiative and now has evolved into a destination for 7.6 million visitors per year.

Parks are a benefit to residents and the environment, and a key source of economic development. With parks, comes the enhancement and expansion of communities, real estate, and tourism.

Event chairs were Nancy Czesak, first vice president, AECOM Tishman and Amy Beckman, principal, HOK.

Event sponsors were Stantec, SiteWorks and AECOM Tishman.

Shown (from left) are: Lynn Kelly, New Yorkers for Parks; Michael Samuelian, Trust for Governors Island; Pat Kirshner, Brooklyn Bridge Park; Noreen Doyle, Hudson River Park Trust; and Jason Roberts, AECOM Tishman.

Shown (from left) are: Annette Wilkus, SiteWorks; Donna Walcavage, Stantec; Lisa Switkin, James Corner Field Operations; Molly Bourne, Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects; and Susan Chin, Design Trust for Public Space.