

Next issue
in two weeks:
Sat., Apr. 30

The Main Street WIRE™

25th Year as Roosevelt Island's Independent Community Newspaper

A Two-Decade Cultural Era on the Island in Transition As Nancy and Worth Howe Leave Main Street Theatre Retrospective of Benefit Shows Runs Tonight, Sunday, Monday

by Anri Wheeler

When you descend the stairs to the Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance, pass through its nondescript door, and make your way down the sparse, winding hallway that is your introduction to the space, you can't help but feel a special history wash over you. For anyone who has shared that history, there are memories of backstage jitters. There are the echoes of past performances, the crinkle of flowers stored under the seats of proud parents, the scuffing of tap shoes, Bob McDowell's long, thin fingers dancing across the piano keys, the distant sound of applause, and countless pre-show speeches (listened to most intently by those backstage, crouching in the wings) made by Nancy Howe.

For many, Nancy is the face of the MST, not because she is its Director, but because she is its soul.

Seated on a faded corduroy couch in one of the back sections of the Theatre, wearing a blue T-shirt, Nancy exudes energy even though it is well past the bedtime of some of her students. Her eyes, always alert on the other side of her circular wire frames, look into you as she talks and listens, creating an intimacy that somehow blocks out the noise from the tap class down the hall. Behind the couch stands a small coat of armor, perhaps a prop from a recent performance, with a feather boa wrapped around its head. This expresses the essence of the Theatre, which is as much about the history behind it as it is about creating fun, light-hearted experiences for all who pass through its doors. Few who have come under Nancy's tutelage have left unchanged for the better. In Nancy's own words when asked how she came to head the MST, "Sometimes – what is that expression – things happen because you need them to."

The Main Street Theatre was started in 1982 as an

with the help of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation. The big question that remained was how they were going to get the Theatre out of the red.

The answer was the Children's Theatre. "It was really to pay the bills, that's how the Children's Theatre started, with most of our own children. It was a very, very small first enrollment, but it made enough money that we were able to pay off our bills and put on a second show," Diana remembers. By the time the Theatre put on its third show – *Starting Here, Starting Now*, directed by Worth and starring Nancy – it was out of debt and the Children's Theatre was beginning to expand.

At its inception, the Children's Theatre was headed by Worth. Nancy says, "It would not have happened without Worth. He was the director for many years, and then he started needing to do his thing more, so I took over. None of this could have been done without Worth, because nobody is foolish enough to work as hard as he did. It's really a seven-day-a-week job being here; there are no days off."

In 1984, four Equity shows were staged at the MST and the Children's Theatre put on *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, which was to become the most-revived show (most recently in 2004) in the history of Nancy's tenure with the Children's Theatre.

But financial concerns still loomed large. Diana Brill recalls, "We were just killing ourselves working, and nobody was making a salary, so that's when a lot of our friends suggested, 'Why don't you do a benefit every year?' That way you guys can have scholarships," and that's how the benefits got started – to get Island people to come see Island people – and we raised a lot of money. It was a wonderful thing for the community."

Thus, in the fall of 1984, the adults staged *Guys and Dolls*, the MST's first benefit performance. As the benefits and children's performances grew in success, the Equity shows became increasingly challenging. Nancy remembers: "We never totally succeeded in getting the public to come in. We did really good professional shows. Some people [on the Island] were supportive and came in and some people didn't, and to the people in the profession, we might as well have been in Alaska. We did professional shows for quite a few years – three a year – all union. And then we started getting tired of working so hard. The kids' thing started getting bigger and bigger, and the professional thing was getting harder and harder. A few core people were doing all the work, and some of our people started getting professional jobs that actually paid them money and they left, and then poor Worth became the *everyman* – he did it all."

Nancy took over the Children's Theatre from Worth, staging yearly musicals including *Peter Pan* (1985), *The Wizard of Oz* (1986), *Oliver!* (1987), *The Sound of Music* (1988), *Once Upon a Mattress* (1989), and *Bye Bye Birdie* (1990). As the first generation of students began to enter their teen years, a new niche was needed for them. "We added the teen classes because the kids wanted to continue, and then we renovated. We got the Public Purpose Funds that built the Theatre space that we have now," Nancy said. This marked the end of sharing a space with the Youth Center and the beginning of the MST&DA in the space it currently inhabits. The first Main Street Teen Theatre show was *Pippin*, performed in 1991. Over the course of the decade that followed, the children's shows and benefits continued and the teen show split into two separate productions – a play and a musical – to accommodate the varied talents of the performers.

After more than 20 years of pouring themselves into the Theatre and, by extension, the lives of performers and theatregoers alike, Nancy and Worth are leaving the MST and Roosevelt Island. Nancy will be moving

See **MST&DA**, page 8; **photo layout**, 6-7



Worth and Nancy Howe appeared together in the Main Street Theatre production of *The Lion in Winter* in 2003. Both will appear this weekend and Monday in a retrospective of MST benefit shows over 20-plus years.

Briefly...

- A resident of 510 Main Street is reportedly paralyzed after a beating during a **home invasion and robbery** last week, when the alleged perps discovered her hiding in a closet. In custody are Jahi Young, a resident of 510 Main Street, captured in Florida, and Naisha Davis, another resident, arrested in the City. Each is charged with robbery and attempted murder.

- **Dark Water**, the film starring Jennifer Connelly (*House of Sand and Fog*, *A Beautiful Mind*), shot last year on the Island, is set to open July 8. A trailer being shown in movie houses includes Island shots. It's also on line at touchstone.movies.go.com.

- At Thursday's RIOC Board meeting, Ambassador William van den Heuvel (left) of the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute (FERI) asked RIOC for 18 months of effective control of the southern tip of Southpoint Park, promising to raise \$30 million for an **FDR Memorial** during that period. The Board asked that FERI make presentations to the community about the plan, which conflicts with the eventual form of the *Wild Gardens* plan for Southpoint Park as developed by the Trust for Public Land.

- Islander **Marika Bordes** (right) won the Toastmasters Area 57 Speech Contest last month, then came in second early this month in the Upper East Side division of the international club.

- The **Roosevelt Island Tidal Energy** (RITE) project is making inch-by-inch progress. On Wednesday, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) approved an initial stage involving a "six-pack" of the underwater electricity-generating turbines, just north of the Roosevelt Island Bridge. Even so, many other approvals from State and Federal regulatory bodies are still required. With a little luck, by sometime in 2007 Verdant Power, which created the project, could begin putting up to 300 turbines in the river; that number would generate enough electricity to power 10,000 homes. Stay tuned.

- It's likely to be a **cherry-blossom weekend** along the Island's southwestern shore near Goldwater Hospital. On Wednesday, some trees were already showing their colors, and others appeared ready to bloom.



Pausing during rehearsals this week, Nancy Howe shared memories with Marty Brill and Joel Packer, who will appear in a number from *Guys and Dolls*, the Main Street Theatre's first benefit production in 1984.

Equity theatre for professional actors. Diana Brill, a long-time friend of Nancy and her husband Worth, chaired the Board of Directors when the Theatre was started. She was instrumental in ushering it from its rocky beginning years to its current position at the center of Island culture. When the original Board – having sold over 400 season tickets for the Theatre's first three performances – realized that the Theatre's first director had spent all of its budget for the first three shows on just the first, accruing additional debt, they had no choice but to fire him. Soon after, Diana was on the phone with Worth. "I said to him, 'Worth, there's just this wonderful opportunity for you on Roosevelt Island. You always wanted to have your own theater, and here's your chance.' Honestly – and we still laugh about it today – I cannot imagine how or why he said yes, but he did."

Nancy expressed similar sentiments, "Diana called Worth and, fool that he was, he said, 'Yes.'"

Nancy and Worth promptly moved to the Island from New Jersey, where they had been managing a theater. Diana and the Board were able to secure the use of the Youth Center for future performances and even had the space electrically wired free of charge



The Editorial Page

Divided. And Falling?

Roosevelt Islanders in the original WIRE buildings – Westview, Island House, Rivercross, and Eastwood – face critical housing issues. We’re moved to wonder if they’re doing enough of the right things to protect themselves and their homes.

The Sheldrake Organization is in negotiations with the tenant organizations of Island House and Westview. The leaders of those organizations have accepted gag agreements under which the amount of information they can make available to The WIRE or, for that matter, to their tenant members, is so severely limited that it’s hard to judge whether those tenant leaders are doing all they should – let alone judge whether Sheldrake is being reasonable and flexible. Such “confidentiality” arrangements give those in the power position – meaning the owners – the freedom to put forward a take it or leave it stance without adequate examination and review by those outside the tight negotiating circle.

At Eastwood, there are assurances about “sticky” Section 8 vouchers, but President George Bush has tried repeatedly to cripple or kill the Section 8 program. With a sympathetic Congress on Capitol Hill, it’s hard to see the merit of staking one’s future on that program. And the vouchers, however sticky, are not free passes to housing off-Island if and when it comes to that.

Next week, at a closed meeting at DHCR, lawyers will attempt to untangle riddles surrounding the question of whether Roosevelt Island’s Mitchell-Lama housing comes under the 50-year extension of a tax abatement voted recently by the City Council on the authority of Legislative permission. Prodded into action by Tim John’s commentary in the April 2 WIRE (it’s on line at nyc10044.com/wire/2515/wire2515.pdf), they will respond to a call for definitive answers on which tenants can base negotiating postures and proposals that are alternatives to take-it-or-leave-it positions.

But the most critical power in this orbit of concern and confusion lies with the RIOC Board of Directors. We have to wonder why the tenant organizations representing Island House, Westview, Rivercross, and Eastwood have not joined in a demand that the six current resident members of the RIOC Board use their power over the leases for the land on which those buildings sit to ensure a transition of reasonable pace and minimum dislocation from today’s housing situation to whatever future can be shaped with the help of the power they hold.

The fact is that the RIOC Board holds the power to say No to extended ground leases if arrangements fail to protect tenants and give them a reasonable crack at ownership in the case of Island House and Westview, resident-friendly privatization in the case of Rivercross, or continuity of residence in the case of Eastwood. While each situation has its particulars, there is more in common than there is at odds among the occupants of these buildings, and a go-it-alone approach at each building gives up the power of unified action. That’s especially true in making a demand that the resident members of the RIOC Board commit to using their power for the benefit of residents – not just to enrich building owners or RIOC’s coffers.

There is power in unity. From what we can see, the leaders of tenant groups seem to have relinquished that power by operating separately and in silence.

And the clock is ticking.



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Nancy and Worth Howe’s passion and love of theater infected an entire generation of Roosevelt Islanders, including me. The Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance reached out to the entire community and gave us all the gift of song, dance, theater, and friendship *Through the Years*, which happens to be the name of our farewell show to thank Nancy and Worth for all they’ve given to us. Their kindness and generosity of spirit touched all of us in the community.

I’ve witnessed painfully shy children taking center stage and becoming “Roosevelt Island Idols,”

island observer

thanks to the warm and nurturing environment Nancy and Worth’s tutelage provided.

I’ve seen children, who might never have met, forge lasting friendships while having fun, while learning solid professional technique, and some of the best American musical repertory has to offer. Many of these same children become respectful and appreciative audiences, while some have gone on to follow their artistic dreams as a career. We probably send more kids to LaGuardia than any community in the City each year.

I still ask myself, “How did Nancy do it all these years?” Somehow, she managed to put up three different shows for each age group, some with three alternative casts.

Worth, an inspired costumer and set designer, magically created castles out of pipe dreams – or was it pipe cleaners – sometimes literally! I always loved dress rehearsals, when the sets were finished, and everyone was in costume and makeup for the first time. You had to admire the man’s genius. It was glorious!

What I especially loved was the opportunity to work with both children and adults on our benefit shows. We’d bridge generations, sometimes three or four. I loved seeing people stay late to watch someone else’s rehearsal and to applaud a job well done. That was special! I remember standing backstage and watching my fellow players make us all laugh and cry, even after seeing their scene through two months of rehearsal time. And all through, hearing Worth’s booming baritone urging us to be “faster and funnier” than we ever thought we could be. And Nancy’s matchless eye and ear as director. And personally being given the chance to play some great character roles I could only dream of performing elsewhere.

In Japan, people who are genius at their art are referred to as National Treasures. Certainly Nancy and Worth Howe will always be thought of as Roosevelt Island Treasures by all those who worked with and alongside them.

Thanks, Nancy and Worth, for everything you gave to us and what you did for love.

Anita Michael

Letters Policy

The WIRE welcomes letters to the editor, to the community, and to/from officials. Publication on a Name Withheld basis will be considered, but the writer’s name, address, and phone number must be provided for verification and for our records; letters submitted anonymously will not be published. Preferred method of submission: E-mail to Letters@MainStreetWIRE.com (plaintext e-mail format preferred, or attach a file), or on a PC-standard 3.5" disk left at the desk at 531 Main Street, addressed to The WIRE. Alternatives: Typed copy left at 531 Main Street. Clearly handwritten letters will be considered if brief, but we are not able to take telephone dictation of letters. All letters subject to acceptance and to editing for length and clarity. Recommended maximum length, 300 words; longer letters will be considered if their content merits the required space.

Letters

To the Editor:

On Friday, April 1, Roscoe Lee suffered a small stroke while surrounded by “The Usual Suspects,” who gather most Friday evenings at The Trelis Restaurant.

Upon summoning two officers who happened to be on Main Street (you know who you are), the response was so rapid that my head is still spinning. I would like to mention every individual officer involved by name. However, I was in too much of a panic to pay attention. All I know is that, within seconds, our Public Safety Officers responded to the emergency with an abounding speed. Paramedics arrived in record time, assessed the situation, and we were off to the Queens hospital.

I must add here that they handled me pretty well, too. I, of course, felt that I was succumbing to cardiac arrest, but the wonderful, supportive, Friday-night family of our small Island would have none of it. God bless all of you, especially Sue Cina, without whose support I possibly would have been carted off in another vehicle and would not be in a position to send this, or any other, thank-you note.

I am glad to say that Roscoe is doing fine, thanks to the attention and speed with which the emergency was handled.

Thanks, also, to all who were concerned.

Phyllis Thomas

To the Editor:

We were greatly saddened to hear of the passing of Phil Consolo.

We first met Phil as an active volunteer of the Roosevelt Island Homeless Men’s Shelter, which provided food and lodging several evenings a week for a small group of New York’s homeless population. For years, Phil was a regular provider of a home-cooked, hearty, and always delicious meal for these men.

Despite his physical disability, he happily carted these wholesome meals from his kitchen to the church basement without ever missing a beat. In fact, as we write this, we are reminded of his contagious ear-to-ear smile, which he always displayed.

In all the years we knew Phil, we looked forward to his nights at the church with anticipation for his wit, charm, and unassuming manner.

We extend our deepest condolences to his family and all of the Roosevelt Island residents who knew and loved him. We will miss him.

Carolyn Yohannes
Monique Trebot
Julie Riley

To the Editor:

I am responding to the letter by Marion Falk in the March 19 issue of The WIRE.

Since Eastwood’s owner announced the buy-out of contracts and an end to the Mitchell-Lama program, residents in our building have come to understand that once the deal is done, it will be too late for complaints. We simply cannot trust that our landlord will take care of us, even if the landlord has good intentions. Those in our building who understand what’s at stake have worked tirelessly to inform the rest of Eastwood’s tenants. They emphasize the need for every Eastwood tenant to be represented by a skilled attorney at the negotiations with our landlord and government agencies as the buyout process unfolds. I am a 29-year resident of Eastwood and fundraising chair of the legal fund in our building.

Our neighbor states that it is her decision and her business whether she makes a donation or not. That is true. But why would anyone, living through these times, elect not to contribute to protecting and preserving the ability to affordably stay in one’s home now and in the future? Not having the required financial resources is the likely answer, and is indeed a problem for our residents. Eastwood has a unique community, comprised of middle income, blue- and white-collar workers, families, retired and physically challenged people, the employed and unemployed. We’ve explained that an attorney’s fee for one hour of representation is \$300. We’re asking that tenants make incremental payments over several months (\$75 for a quarter-hour, \$150 for a half hour, \$300 for a full hour – or anything between), with the aim of contributing to one full hour of legal time as part of our collective group.

Another assumption is that if people haven’t donated by now, either they can’t afford to donate or they don’t wish to donate. Consider these additional scenarios: The residents are of many nationalities with Korean, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, Chinese, and other tongues as their first language. At first, tenants didn’t know why we need a lawyer. People focused on year-end holidays and those bills. And, some were ill during this winter and are paying unanticipated medical bills. Others need to pay tuition or tax bills first – or get tax refunds before contributing.

As to our slipping notices under doors, taping them on doors, or knocking on doors, please know that our building has 1003 apartments. With a fundraising committee of only six (one who is over age 80), with no computer hook-up, and a starting bank account of under \$67, it’s taken a monumental effort to achieve even our current success level. We’ve secured donations not only one by one from our residents, but also from RIRA, the Island’s Korean organization, and even Rivercross residents. Even with last week’s successful auction, we are only now at the three-quarter mark.

The good news is that things that might divide us like age, language, culture, physical health, economics, or address are bridged by neighbor helping neighbor to understand and to participate. Our goal is that every Eastwood tenant participate at the financial level he or she can afford.

Our small committee thanks everyone who’s contributed a single dollar to the fund, those who came to the auction, and, especially, those who contribute monthly. We ask people who read this to contribute, if you haven’t already, and share our flyers with neighbors. We also welcome contributions from neighbors across, and up or down the street, and we continue to seek dedicated volunteers.

Please make contributions to Eastwood Building Committee, memo Legal Fund, and mail to Treasurer Harry Devine, 546 Main Street #722, NYC10044.

Ginny Pulos
Fundraising Chair

Letters deadline for April 30 issue: Tuesday, April 26

After deadline, letters are considered on a space-available basis.

With Spring in the air, it is wonderful to be able to leave our homes and once again stroll this beautiful Island. The daffodils are preparing to bloom and the air is warming and invites us outside. You may have also noticed the presence of late of dogs also enjoying a stroll or romp in the grass. Southtown residents are allowed, under the terms of their lease, to have dogs. As this is a small Island, the presence of dogs necessitates the need for some controls to ensure the personal safety of residents and cleanliness of the Island.

RIOC has proposed a dog policy that is modeled on the policy of the City of New York. This draft has been shared for comment with building management. The policy would read as follows:

New York State and New York City animal control laws are intended to safeguard the health and safety of the public. A dog-control policy for Roosevelt Island intends to safeguard the health and safety of Island residents and visitors.

It is the intent of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) to have a policy that is consistent with the regulations of the City and State of New York. As such, it is the policy of RIOC that responsible dog owners on Roosevelt Island will:

- have their dogs actively vaccinated against the

disease of rabies and be able to provide proof of such vaccination;

- obtain a license for their dog from the City of New York (New York City Dog License Law, Chapter 115 of the Laws of 1894 as amended);
- attach a dog license tag to the dog's collar when



Herbert E. Berman, President
Roosevelt Island Operating Corp.
e-mail: HBerman@rioc.com

leash roaming of their dog.

Once the policy becomes effective, Public Safety Officers will enforce this policy and issue notices of violations to dog owners who are not in compliance.

- the animal is in a public place (New York City Health Code §161.04);
- hold the dog on a leash no longer than six feet when the dog is in a public place (New York City Health Code §161.05);
- remove their dog's feces from any public areas (New York City Health Code §161.03 and New York Public Health Law §1310); and
- utilize only designated dog walk area(s) for off-

Once again you're getting the second string writing the RIRA column. Every once in a while Steve lets me take a turn at it. I wanted to start this week by clarifying some information in Steve's last column. In an attempt at levity, since it was *The WIRE's* April Fool's Day edition, he gave a whole list of things that RIOC was supposedly going to approve at their next meeting. For those of you who didn't realize he was joking, here's a clarification: the Youth Center **did not** get the space they need to accept their \$1.6 million grant; the tennis courts **will not** be open at the end of this month; the barbecue and picnic areas **will not** be relocated to the open Southtown area; there **will be no** private security service to replace Public Safety; the RIOC Board **will continue** to be populated by appointees of Governor Pataki; operations **will not** be moved to professional

The RIRA Column

management; the Public Information Officer John Melia **has not** resigned and will continue to collect his \$90,000+ salary; details of the private investigation of Rob Ryan's shenanigans **will continue** to remain a secret; and the Board **will not** consider the implementation of Governor Pataki's alleged request to convert the RIOC Board from a wholly appointed board to one elected by the residents.

On another subject, the Octagon battle is still in the hands of the court, but I think it's important for anyone interested in the proceedings to know some of the history. If you've been following the articles in *The WIRE*, you know that the judge is questioning why we waited so long to go to court since we certainly saw this coming for a while. The answer is really simple. With any kind of development you have three options. First, you can try to negotiate with the developer. The residents did this but after every interaction the project got wider and higher. The original plan was for an "L" shaped building with 400 apartments that was six stories high. The current plan makes it look like a "J" which takes up more room. It's now 500 apartments instead of 400 and it's thirteen stories instead of six. Obviously, negotiating didn't work. Next, you can try legislation. We worked with our legislators for several years and finally got an Open Spaces Bill passed that says, in effect, that there can be no development for other than park purposes... on that site or on any of our other parks. RIOC and the developers tried to get Assemblymember Pete Grannis



Margie Smith, Vice President
Roosevelt Island Residents Assn.
e-mail: MSmith@quintennium.com

chose to take. How much of a risk it really is has been questioned by many people. I guess time will tell. We'll keep our fingers crossed and hope for the best.

On a lighter note, when you're passing the Trellis and the Deli you'll see two new light posts. These are being tested by RIOC for suitability. Drop RIOC (HBerman@rioc.com) and Steve Marcus (SteveAtRIRA@verizon.net) an e-mail and let them know how you like them, since RIOC is planning to install many more.

An Unusual Issue of The Main Street WIRE

It's seldom that a single topic dominates both our front page and center section as does this issue's coverage of the departure of Nancy Howe and Worth Howe from The Main Street Theatre, but there's good reason. Unlike any other Island institution, The Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance has brought a special cultural identity to Roosevelt Island for over two decades. For lack of space, *The WIRE* has not always been able to give MST&DA the coverage we'd prefer to, but the organization's distinct contribution to the young people of the Island and to the performing urges of its adults has never been far from our minds. We hate to see Worth and Nancy go, but as the time of their final departure approaches, we can send them off with our very best wishes and profound thanks.

COMING UP

— This Weekend —

◀**Poet Nina Cassian**, private preview of reading scheduled for the CUIRT International Poetry Festival (Galway, Ireland), **today** (Sat., Apr. 16), 5:00 p.m., Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main Street. Suggested donation, \$5.

Through the Years, a Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance Review, reprising nearly two decades of benefit productions by Nancy and Worth Howe▶,

tonight (Sat., Apr. 16), 8:00 p.m.; **Sun., Apr. 17**, 2:00 p.m.; **Mon., Apr. 18**, 7:30 p.m., at the Main Street Theatre, behind the video store. \$15 (seniors & disabled, \$10). For tickets: **212-371-4449**.

Social Security Town Hall Meetings hosted by Rep. Carolyn Maloney, **Sun., Apr. 17**, 1:00-2:30 p.m., Long Island City High School, 14-30 Broadway (off 21st Street), and 3:30-5:00 p.m., Simon Baruch Middle School #104, 330 East 21st St. (1st/2nd Avenues).

▶**Islander Tex Allen and His Sextet** perform **No Room for Pain** at Creole's **tonight** (Sat., Apr. 16) and **Sun., Apr. 17**, with vocalist Janice Dempsey, 9:00 p.m., 118th Street and Third Avenue. Special CD reception party, 5:00 p.m. Sunday. Information/reservations: **212-876-8838**.

Faculty/Student Choreography Show at the Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance, **Sun., Apr. 17**, 5:00 and 7:00 p.m., Main Street Theatre, 548 Main Street behind the Video Store. Original choreography by MST&DA students and faculty, with special guest Ron Ferrone. \$5 (mats for 10 years and under, \$3). Reservations: **212-371-4449**.

Continuing: Vernissage 4 at Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main Street. Show runs through May 8. Gallery hours: Wed. & Fri., 6-9; Sat.-Sun., 11-5. Information: **212-308-6630**.

— The Coming Week —

Book Discussion Group at the Library, **Thur., Apr. 21**, 6:30 p.m., *Passing*, by Nella Larsen. Copies of book available at the branch.

Eastwood Building Committee Tenants Meeting, **Thur., Apr. 21**, 7:00 p.m., Chapel of the Good Shepherd

— Future Events —

Toastmasters Public Speaking Group, **Mon., Apr. 25**, 8:00 p.m. Visitors welcome. Additional information: **212-751-9577**.

The Main Street WIRE – Next issue, **Sat., Apr. 30**. (To receive e-mail bulletins between issues, send an "Add Me" message to Bulletins@MainStreetWIRE.com.) **Advertising Deadline:** Ads in the paper, Thursday, Apr. 21; decision on fliers for *The Bag*, Mon., Apr. 25; inserts due Thur., Apr. 28. **Future issues:** May 14; June 4, 18; July 2, 30; Aug. 27; Sept. 10, 24; Oct. 8, 22; Nov. 5, 19; Dec. 3, 17. **News phone, 212-826-9055**; urgent matters **917-617-0449**. **Phone** for display and classified advertising placement and information, **212-751-8214**. **To list your organization's Island-related event here**, e-mail information to ComingUp@MainStreetWIRE.com, or leave it, addressed to *The WIRE*, at the lobby desk at 531 Main Street; provide a telephone number for follow-up questions. There is no charge for such listings.

Residents Association Common Council Meeting, **Wed., May 4**, 8:00 p.m., Chapel of the Good Shepherd (lower level). Open to all; an opportunity to address the Council is included near the start of each meeting.

Toastmasters Public Speaking Group, **Mon., May 9**, 8:00 p.m. Visitors welcome. Additional information: **212-751-9577**.

RIOC Board of Directors Meeting, **Thur., May 19**, 4:30 p.m., Chapel of the Good Shepherd. The Board's afternoon meetings usually conclude with an opportunity for public comment, specific time uncertain.

Senior Center

Monday

10:00, **Computers for Beginners**
10-11, **Latchhook Class**
10-11:30, **English as 2nd Language**
10:30, **Blood Pressure Screening**
12:30, **"Oldies" Movies**
1:00, **Tai Chi**
7:00, **Dance Class** (Beginners)

Tuesday

10:00, **Chinese Massage**
10:30, **Shoppers' Bus**
2:00, **Bingo**
6:00, **Yoga Class**
7:30, **Games** (RISA)

Wednesday

9:15, **Stay Well**
10:00, **Computers**
10:00, **Spanish Class**
10:30, **Shoppers' Bus**
12-2, **Painting & Sculpting**
7:00, **Pokeno** (RISA)

Thursday

9:30, **Chinese Massage**
10:30, **Creative Arts**
12:30, **Movie**
7:00, **Dance**

Friday

9:30, **Yoga**
10:30, **Computers**
1:00, **Bridge**
7:00, **Games** (RISA)

Saturday

7:30, **Bingo** (RISA)

Special Events

Sun., Apr. 17, 2:00, Champagne brunch
Wed., Apr. 20, Atlantic City trip
Sun., May 15, Senior Day Observation, time TBA
Mon., June 13, five-day motor coach tour to Niagara Falls.

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The **Public Safety Blotter** for April 1-15 will be posted at nyc10044.com/wire/2516/blot2516.html as soon as it is available.

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honoring caregivers

For its first annual donation to honor extraordinary family caregivers, Ellen Polivy, founder of A Family Assistance Network, a professional geriatric care management company, is pleased to honor the following people by giving a donation of \$600 to **Orphans International**. *The circle of life, the caregiving of parent for child, then child for aging parent, is broken for orphans. Orphans International is rebuilding that circle for children who have lost their parents.* This donation is going towards helping the youngest victims of the December tsunami, the orphans.

A Family Assistance Network was started 25 years ago in response to a need in the middle- and upper-class community for support and guidance for people caring for ill and handicapped family members. From thousands of clients over this period, Ellen has selected clients, friends, and family who exemplify the caring circle, and it is in their honor that she has made this contribution so that these orphans can experience it, too. These people have chosen great sacrifice of their time, their resources, their careers, even their own health, in a commitment to the well-being of one or more family members. Ellen feels fortunate to be able to help and be inspired by people like these.

- **Janet Shea.** She gave endless nights and exhausted days at work, planning and strategizing for her parents.
- **Jean Shea.** She gave up a promising career to care, first, for her mother, then for her father; both struggled with terminal and dementing illnesses.
- **Mira Berman and Mario LaRosa.** Sister and husband to Ariana, they made tremendous efforts to keep Ariana at home after she became bedridden from muscular dystrophy. Ariana is a talented artist who can no longer paint.
- **Nigel Gokdol and Joel Gokdol.** Two years ago, their brother Michael, 18, an aspiring college student, was shot by an unknown assailant and almost killed. After 7 months in and out of intensive care and many surgeries, he was stable enough to go to a nursing home. But his family wanted to take him home. At age 23, Nigel quit his job and stayed with his brother 24 hours a day to keep him out of a nursing home. His younger brother Joel, a full-time college student, helped at night and whenever else he could. For two years they worked with IV lines, feeding tubes, ostomy bags, and wound care, and nursed their brother back to health.
- **Marilyn Greenbaum.** She cared for her parents, Libby and Max Cooper. For ten years, she visited and supported her mother, who was mentally ill and later had dementia. She then advocated for the best end-of-life care for her father and then for her mother. She also cared for her disabled son, Kenny.
- **Amie Karpel.** Amie received a call one day that her Uncle Irv was not managing his life. Amie, who was already helping her father, extended herself again. When she consulted with me, she was already exhausted and facing the end of her uncle's money while he still needed 24-hour care. With my help, she worked hard to arrange her uncle's finances so that he could get the long-term help he needed.
- **Tina Kraskow.** She worked with me to fight for her mother Molly to get approval for the rare two shifts of home care. She continues to be a tireless advocate for her mother's well-being.
- **Tirzah Cohen.** She cared for her mother, Ethel Halperin. Half a country away, Tirzah learned that her mother had Alzheimer's when she burned herself seriously in a kitchen fire. Working with me and a care manager near her mother, Tirzah committed herself, despite a very busy career and a distant relationship with her mother, to do everything she could to help.
- **Miriam and Maury Lacher.** They cared, long distance, for three family members at the same time, while they both struggled with their own health issues and their own careers.
- **Roy Lennox.** Whatever it takes or costs, he will do it for his mother, Millie, in a quintessential circle-of-life story of a son's devotion.
- **Lottie Lurie.** My own loving mother made the wise decision to stay with my father, Evan, when he became a quadriplegic from polio at age 35. At a time when other people were divorcing their spouses with polio and leaving them in the hospital, she took him home. Together, with modifications, they created a normal family life. Only years later did Mom tell me of the toll it took on her, both mentally and physically.
- **Sarah Lavner.** She is doing the same for her young husband, Bill, who had a spinal injury.
- **Miriam Menzin,** my aunt. In 1975, with my mother, she began long-distance caregiving, helping their parents, Fannie and Kalman Jablon, through Alzheimer's and strokes.
- **Esther Mahboubian.** She spent endless exhausting nights with her husband, tragically brain-damaged in an accident.
- **Mike Teitelbaum.** He is doing battle against a Goliath in the managed-health-care system. He will win because of his tenaciousness, intelligence, and devoted commitment to his father, Joe.
- **Elly Weiss.** She accepted responsibility for her ailing, reclusive aunt. Despite her aunt's anger at losing her independence and verbal harangues, Elly did what was needed to ensure the proper long-term care. She also learned the language of Alzheimer's so she could communicate effectively with her aunt.
- **Lois Zeiger.** She fought an uphill battle for proper care for her mother in hospitals, in rehabilitation, and then at home. She supported her terrified, paralyzed mother, and her overwhelmed, exhausted father, Seymour, and struggled to balance her own personal life and job.
- **Thelma Polivy,** my mother-in law. She was devoted to a good life for her deceased husband's mother in her last years.
- **Robyn and Marc Lurie,** my cousins, and their families. They gave loving care to their parents, Jeanette and Leo Lurie.

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The cast of *We're Not Doing a Show* with (left edge) Diana Brill, Worth Howe, and Nancy Howe; Musical Director Bob McDowell (right)



Mary McCatty
Ron Roth



Kathie Niederhoffer,
Musical Theater Workshop;
scene from *Oklahoma!*



s, and Make-Believe Mayhem in the Hands of Trusted Colleagues



David Kraut and admirers at Musical Theatre Workshop, 2005



Community theater, off-Broadway showcase, dance center, school: The Main Street Theatre has touched so many people in so many ways. Our annual musical productions were all benefits, supporting what I consider this Theatre's most important function – the theatrical education of our children. Over the years, hundreds of Island kids have received their basic theatrical grounding through The Main Street Children's Theatre and its "grown-up" offshoot, The Main Street Teen Theatre. And thanks to the benefit productions, no child was ever turned away due to lack of tuition. Some have gone right to Broadway, others into the City's performance and artistic high schools, and still others are doing theater in one capacity or another all across this country. But whether they continued in theater or not, all of them reaped deeper benefits over the years: exposure to theater itself (not just its techniques but its disciplines), self-confidence, community, acculturation, communication skills, love.

David Kraut



Annie Get Your Gun



The Lion in Winter

Gretchen Lustig, Nancy Howe, Worth Howe



Musical Theatre Workshop



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MST&DA from page 1

at the end of July and plans to divide her time between Portland, Oregon where her daughter and grandchildren live, and Los Angeles, where Worth has already moved and started working.

As she spoke last week about her departure, tears began to gather in Nancy's eyes more than once. "I'm very conflicted about leaving. It's very sad for me. I look at the young ones coming up and I feel really sad that I'm not going to be a part of their growth. And I have a lot of friends on the Island. After all these years, I still love it. Working with the kids is just so rewarding, and I have such a deep affection for them. You can't be together for all these years and not bond. It's not like you're teaching math or something where there's no interplay. In the theater it is all about expressing and sharing your emotions. It brings you closer together – you're like a little family accomplishing something together, so that part is really hard to end. We spent all these years building this, and to pass it on is really difficult."

The MST will always be the house that Nancy and Worth built, but it is time for a new guard to take over. Nancy believes that Mary McCatty, the MST&DA's Director of Dance for a few years now, is the logical choice as the new Director. "A lot of people really care for and support her. She has the right personal qualities to succeed and she understands how the whole operation works. Our other wonderful teachers will stay on, and of course the Board of Directors will be helping to make everything work without us." The transition with respect to the Children's and Teen Theatre has already begun, facilitated by Nancy, "Sofia Geier is directing one of the teen shows, and Carla Blumberg is directing the children's show, with my supervision. We're going to make sure that the children are in good hands when we leave."

Carla Blumberg is herself a long-time veteran of the MST who has returned to work on the Island after graduating from Tisch School of the Arts at NYU. "Nancy inspired me throughout my childhood and continues to do so in my adulthood. Working by her side this year is an experience that I will treasure and draw on for the rest of my life. This

Theatre, and the community that it nurtures, is as important to me now as it was when I was a child. Being raised in this Theatre by a teacher as amazing as Nancy helps me to understand what the kids in my show are experiencing right now. I pray only for the stamina that Nancy has always magically had. Nancy is at the center of this wonderful, theatrical, chaotic, loving community and, as she leaves, we will do as all great communities do and pull together to help this Theatre continue to thrive."

Nancy Howe may be leaving the MST, but she does not plan to stop working with children in drama. She is already in talks with a state-subsidized children's theater in Portland.

To honor Nancy and Worth and all they have done for the MST&DA and the Roosevelt Island community at large, the Theatre is staging a retrospective this weekend. It will be hosted by Diana Brill, who will speak about the history of the Theatre. It is a look back at 20 years of MST benefit concerts. Performances will be Saturday at 8:00, Sunday at 2:00, and Monday at 7:30. Tickets are \$15 (\$10 for seniors and disabled).

Nancy also hopes to do a retrospective of the children's and teens' shows sometime in June. "I think it would be great fun, because my heart is there. I want to do something that is really personal between me and all the kids who went through the program."

When asked how she would like to be remembered, Nancy took a long pause and, with fresh tears in her eyes, responded, "I really cared about doing the very best, getting the very best out of the children, doing the very best shows for the adults and the kids, making them rise to the occasion, making them work as hard as they could to do the best job they could, and respect me and know that I respect them and love them at the same time. And I did it because I love doing it."

Does Nancy have a favorite show? The answer is an emphatic "No!" She says, "I could never choose one. I can say, and I have told people this, that I think the show that we accomplished the most was *Noises Off*, in terms of a non-musical. I thought that was spectacular. We probably could have run that for a few weeks. But they all were good, I enjoyed all of it, and the kids enjoyed all of it, I hope."

The lead role in *Noises Off* was played by Sonya Kolba, an actress with the Theatre from 1995 to 1999, when she graduated from high school and moved off the Island. Sonya has since returned and will be featured in this weekend's retrospective. She had this to say about Nancy: "She gave so much of herself to the Theatre and everyone who was involved in it that there's no way to adequately express my gratitude. She made the impossible happen in that tiny Theatre. Her dedication was incredible, and she was a role model, not only as an actress, but as a person. What I can personally thank Nancy for is changing my life and probably helping me survive adolescence. I feel so lucky to know her."

One performer to come out of the Theatre who Nancy said she would not be surprised to see performing professionally someday is Jed Resnick. One of Jed's last shows on the MST stage was *The Fantasticks*, during which, he said, "Nancy encouraged me to be bolder and more emotive during a song. She explained that [my character] was so in love and had so much bubbling emotion that the only way he could express himself was through song. The

Continues next page



Mary Jo Schager (center) goes over staging for a number in this weekend's retrospective with Diana Brill (left) and Nancy Howe.

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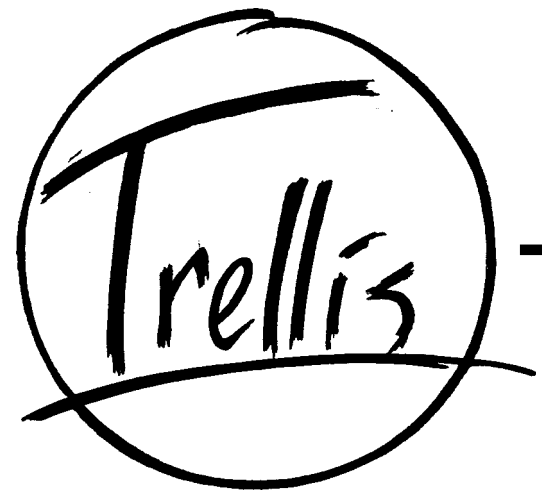


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MST&DA from previous page; starts on page 1

same goes for my love and appreciation for Nancy and Worth. It can only be fully expressed through song. The home they created for me and for the countless other people who entered that Theatre has been a rock in my life. The Theatre is a place, quite simply, where I grew up. And Nancy and Worth have been guides with endless faith and encouragement." Jed's mother, Terri Resnick, was a member of MST's original Board, and she will be performing in the retrospective, as will Jed's father, Dr. Jack Resnick.

There is no shortage of others willing to sing praises of Nancy and Worth and recount anecdotes of the various ways in which the two have touched their lives and the Roosevelt Island community as a whole. Jinny Ewald, one of the original Board members of the MST said, "I can't think of anyone who has touched more children's lives on Roosevelt Island – in ways both large and small – than Nancy and Worth. I've watched children blossom as they have progressed through the program, developing confidence and talent and self-esteem and even going on to make names for themselves in the larger theater world. All Roosevelt Island residents owe a collective debt of gratitude to Worth and Nancy. I hope we get a large turnout for our farewell to them." Both Jinny and her husband Mark Ewald will be performing in the retrospective, along with their friend and fellow Island resident, Joel Packer. "Nancy and Worth have been a tremendous part of the community, they have been very, very valuable. They have had a tremendous impact on all of us and our families. It wouldn't be quite the same without them," Joel said.

Leaving the Theatre, you see the black hands that line the main hallway, creating a trail. They are the handprints of Island residents who have somehow been affected by the Theatre: actors and actresses young and old, long-time audience members, dancers, singers. You cannot help but become overwhelmed by the tremendous sense of what this small underground space has come to mean to entire generations of Island residents. As Nancy modestly said, "The way I judge how MST has impacted [the Island] is the feedback I get – what people tell me. Parents and kids tell me how much the Theatre means to them. People will stop me on the street and say how important this place is to the community, and I think it is. I see so many children and adults come in here and find a place to be creative, to express themselves and to grow. There are children who have really found a home here, and I don't know what they would be doing if they didn't have this. It has an impact on the personalities of the kids, and on their personal growth. Because of the nature of being creative and having an opportunity to perform and join with the other kids in a group that accomplishes something, as a family, and they feel proud of

themselves for doing that, and for succeeding personally, as well. That's how I judge."

Thanks to Nancy and Worth, countless Island residents, not just children, have a place in which they feel comfortable to open up, challenge themselves, and be appreciated for their creativity. "To see [children] improve from being able to barely speak on stage to really standing on their own and being poised, that's very rewarding," Nancy said.

One such example is Isaiah Artest, who began at the MST in 1998 at age 12. "Nancy and Worth have impacted my life in a big way. I was a shy kid from across the river in Queens who would never really talk to anyone and always sat in the back of the class. I had never acted before and, within my first year, I did my first musical, *Into the Woods*. After that, I felt as though I had more confidence and self-esteem. They

showed me that as long as I am myself and have fun on that stage, I can do anything. Now I can't shut up. Nancy and Worth helped give me the confidence to go after what I want. I am no longer involved in theater, but the memories that I have at MST&DA will always hold a special place in my heart."

Through such memories, Nancy and Worth will continue to live on in the halls and rooms of the MST&DA as well as in the hearts of those who have been forever changed by their exposure to the Theatre.

Diana Brill puts it this way: "Nobody is ever going to be able to replace Nancy, it's going to take a lot of people. I think that Nancy and Worth were just meant to come here and bring a lot of joy to a lot of people and turn around a lot of lives."

An Appreciation: *Through the Years*

by Marty Brill

Back in the mid-eighties, Roosevelt Island was just concluding its first decade as a small experimental community in the middle of the East River. By this time, The Main Street Theatre, under the direction of Worth and Nancy Howe, was already going strong, producing a series of outstanding children's shows and professional productions.

Then, one fine spring day in 1984, fate took a hand: At a volley-ball party in Octagon Park, Barry Puritz came up with the original idea of putting on a musical benefit with Worth and Nancy directing and doing costumes, and Diana Brill handling the choreography and musical staging. The professionals would teach the aspiring performers how to get it done on the "boards." It was straight out of the old cliché – "Hey kids, we have a barn, let's put on a show!" We saw the concept of a recreated Broadway show as a chance to raise much-needed funds for the Main Street Theatre, have some fun, and bring the community closer together.

Someone at the party suggested we do *Guys and Dolls*, and just like that we went into rehearsals (as Miss Adelaide might say) "the following fall." I played Sky Masterson, a free-loving

gambler who was about to have his world turned upside down by Sergeant Sara Brown (played by Madeline Schiering), who operated a run-down Broadway Salvation Army Mission. Many famous Damon Runyon characters appeared, including Nathan Detroit (Jack Resnick), who runs "the oldest established permanent floating crap-game in New York," and his fiancée of fourteen years, Miss Adelaide (Karen Mann). Big Julie (Ron Schuppert) and Brother Arvide (Mark Ewald) had the Island audiences laughing and cheering all night. Performances by Jinny Ewald, Terri Dancik, Ronnye Halpern, Barry Puritz, Joel and Barbara Packer, and Michelle and Ken Glassberg were especially memorable. (For those performers not mentioned here, please forgive me, but it's been over 20 years and I claim my senior-citizen status.)

Fortunately, luck was a lady that night in 1984: The show opened to great reviews and received positive "word of mouth." The success of *Guys and Dolls* then spawned a series of other great productions in subsequent years: *Fiddler On The Roof*, *Bye-Bye Birdie*, *The Pajama Game*, *Sweet Charity*, *Follies*, *How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *Anything Goes*, *Li'l*

Abner, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *We're Not Doing a Show*, and *A Christmas Carol*.

Through The Years, with Worth, Nancy, and Diana still at the controls, will recreate some of the best numbers from these "blockbusters," with many of the original cast members giving their all one more time. There will be three performances: Tonight (Saturday) at 8:00, Sunday at 2:00, Monday at 7:30.

The show is a valentine to Worth and Nancy Howe who, in Runyon's words, are "headed for points west." The talented duo who, along with Diana Brill, started the Main Street Theatre, brought music, drama, dance, joy, and laughter to the residents of Roosevelt Island for many wonderful years.

Finally, if Sky Masterson really did exist, my guess is he would be meeting, at this very moment, with some very important people to "offer them this very logical proposition": How about preserving Roosevelt Island's history for future generations, by re-naming the generic Main Street Theatre to *The Howe Main Street Theatre*? Just how Sky would make his point, I can't say for sure, but "it's a probable twelve to seven" that he'd "roll them" for it. See you at the show!

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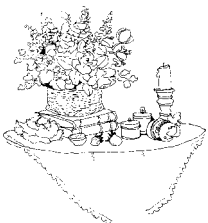
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New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Notice of Complete Application

Date: 04/08/2005

Applicant: **VERDANT POWER LLC**
4640 13TH STREET NORTH
ARLINGTON, VA 22207-2102

Facility: **ROOSEVELT ISLAND TIDAL ENERGY PROJECT**
EAST SHORE/CHANNEL OF ROOSEVELT ISLAND, NORTH OF ROOSEVELT ISLAND BRIDGE
NEW YORK, NY 10044

Application ID: 2-6204-01510/00001

Permits(s) Applied for: 1 – Article 15 Title 5 Excavation & Fill in Navigable Waters
1 – Section 401 - Clean Water Act Water Quality Certification

Project is located: in NEW YORK COUNTY

Project Description:

The applicant proposes to install and operate a test field of six temporary underwater turbines in the East Channel of the East River next to Roosevelt Island for an eighteen month period to perform the studies necessary to evaluate the potential for further development of this technology. This deployment will also gather baseline information for a potential Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license for a large scale underwater turbine field to deliver electricity to the grid. Environmental and operational studies will be performed to evaluate the environmental, technical and economic feasibility of this new renewable energy source.

The six turbines resemble underwater windmills and rotate at approximately 32 rotations per minute, depending on the flow of water. These six turbines are anticipated to generate a peak of 100-200 kilowatts of electricity from the free-flowing, kinetic energy of East River tidal flow. The horizontal axis rotor of each turbine is five-meters (16.4 feet) in diameter and the entire turbine will rotate (yaw) around a vertical axis in order to follow the reversing tidal current and generate power in both the up-river and down-river directions. The turbines will be located in approximately 30 feet of water referenced to mean lower low water (MLLW). There will be approximately 6 feet of water under the turbine rotor at all times and 5 feet above the turbine rotor at MLLW.

The six turbines will be mounted on 24” diameter monopiles set in holes drilled from a barge into the bedrock. The 24" hollow pile will be forced against the rock face to form a seal to contain the drilling operation and its products. Once the piles are in place, turbines will be brought to the site by barge and mounted by divers on the top of each of the six piles.

Each of the underwater turbines will be connected to a land-based control room. Turbines #2-#6 will also be connected to Consolidated Edison meters for electricity delivery to local establishments. Each turbine will have a separate cable running from the turbine to the shore. The cables will lie on the river bottom and be held in place by concrete weights.

The turbines and associated hydroacoustic arrays for monitoring fish and other aquatic species, will be deployed in two phases. The first deployment will include 2 turbine units, and twelve hydroacoustic transducers focused on these two turbines and on far field fish movements upstream and downstream of the turbines. A second deployment of the remaining four turbines, and six additional hydroacoustic transducers, will be conducted after an 8 to 12 week evaluation of the initial deployment.

The applicant plans to conduct studies on fish movement and protection, navigation and security, recreational resources, and historical resources during this deployment. The fish movement and protection study will include the deployment of the above-mentioned eighteen hydroacoustic transducers in six locations to monitor and record fish movement and behavior within and around the turbines and the array field as a whole throughout the eighteen month study. The fixed array hydroacoustic monitoring will be supplemented with mobile hydroacoustic surveys and netting. A two-month predeployment survey of aquatic species in the project area will be conducted prior to the installation of the turbines.

This project is located in the East Channel of the East River just north of the Roosevelt Island Bridge adjacent to Roosevelt Island. The turbine array itself will occupy an area approximately 77 feet wide (east to west) and 217 feet long (north to south) or approximately 0.38 acres. The turbines will be spaced approximately 40 feet apart (east to west) and deployed in three rows of two with each row 100 feet apart (north to south) in water depths of approximately 30 feet. A protected area around the array will be established using a pair of buoys and a floating security boom installed around the field’s periphery in accordance with United States Coast Guard requirements, to warn and restrict navigation in this area. The entire protected area will extend 165 feet into the channel from the Roosevelt Island eastern bulkhead, and enclose a total area of approximately 1.41 acres.

State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) Determination

Project is an Unlisted Action and will not have a significant impact on the environment. A Negative Declaration is on file. A coordinated review was performed.

SEQR Lead Agency NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

State Historic Preservation Act (SHPA) Determination

A Structural-Archaeological Assessment Form has been completed. The proposed activity will not impact on registered, eligible or inventoried archaeological sites or historic structures.

Coastal Management

This project is located in a Coastal Management area and is subject to the Waterfront Revitalization and Coastal Resources Act.

Availability For Public Comment

Comments on this project must be submitted in writing to the Contact
Person no later than 05/16/2005

Contact Person

KEVIN AKISPERT
NYSDEC
625 BROADWAY
ALBANY, NY 12233
(518)402-9167