

January 19th, 2021

Commissioner Basil Seggos
Chair, Hudson River Park Trust
625 Broadway
Albany, New York 1011518

Deputy Mayor Vicki Been
Vice Chair, Hudson River Park Trust
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Basil and Vicki,

After nine and a half rewarding years, I am writing to inform you of my decision to resign as President & CEO of the Hudson River Park Trust effective February 5, 2021.

Together with your leadership, we have been able to accomplish so much over the last decade, and we are well on our way towards accomplishing our shared goals of completing the Park's construction while ensuring it is also on solid financial footing. Prior to the pandemic, we were able to more than double our revenues while improving the range and levels of services of all types for the public.

Working with the City and State, we were able to create The Hudson River Park Special district – an innovative way to generate funds for the Park by selling air rights from some of the designated commercial piers. Thus far, we have secured \$152 million through that mechanism, including \$100 million for Pier 40 alone. The private funds received from these sales have allowed us to keep working on Pier 40 even during the pandemic.

Also remarkable is that we have been able to keep construction going strong throughout the pandemic. In September, we opened our magnificent ecological Pier 26 on time, to a very grateful public. The \$10 million secured from Citi helped secure the balance of funding from The City of New York and the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation.

Four more major projects are also funded and in progress, bringing the Park tantalizingly close to completion. All told, we are spearheading nearly \$1 billion of private/public partnerships in ongoing construction towards completion of the Park.

I am also proud of our other achievements:

-Pier55/Little Island, the planned public park pier and performance space made possible through funding from the Diller-Von Furstenberg Family Foundation and the City of New York, represent the largest single donation to a park in the history of the state. Through the Trust's vision and tenacity, we created this park alongside Barry Diller and it is still on track to open this spring.

-Pier 57, where we worked with RXR Realty/Young woo to bring in Google as anchor tenant amid a challenging retail market. We are now working with the developers to finalize a food market operator and finish the public indoor spaces, which will include exhibits and classrooms for Hudson River Park Trust's River Project thanks to the deal we negotiated.

-Gansevoort Peninsula, the single largest open space in the park at 5.5 acres, will feature the first public beach in Manhattan, a ballfield, salt marsh for habitat and other amenities, is starting construction this spring, with a design strongly supported by the community.

-Pier 97, which will include a lawn, playground, sunset plaza, and youth fields, along with an esplanade connection to Riverside Park South. And thanks to the State Department of Transportation's partnership, the project will also include renovation of the 59th Street underpass, which will serve as a new entrance to the park. This design is also embraced by the community and breaking ground this spring.

-The Whitney Museum of American Art's "Day's End" by David Hammonds will be completed this spring on the southern edge of Gansevoort Peninsula. It's one of the country's largest public art projects and is being donated to the Park.

-Phase 1 of the reconstruction of Chelsea Waterside Park was completed with a captivating playground inspired by animals in the river and designs for Phase 2 are nearing completion. Soon, there will be a newly renovated ball field, expanded dog run and picnic grounds to join the hugely popular playground.

- Pier 26, our beautiful ecologically themed pier, with the first tidal deck built out into the river, opened to great accolades from both the design community and the public last September. My mantra has always been to push the envelope of design, while creating spaces that people can use and love well, and Pier 26 is a stellar example of how this philosophy came together.

- Although we are still searching for the long-term solution for Pier 40, we did and are re-building the pier, including the ball fields, with \$175 million of investments that are making the pier safe for the next several years. Reopening the newly renovated courtyard ballfields during the pandemic brought pure joy to countless children and adults this fall.

- Stewardship of the Hudson River Sanctuary became an ever bigger part of the Trust's mission, as demonstrated by the significant expansion of our science and educational programming. Hudson River Park is now also conducting its own research work through partnerships with leading marine scientists and other institutional science partners. In both our River Project and public recreational programs, we have worked and are succeeding in being more inclusive and diverse in our offerings.

-We created a park wide program to reduce single use plastics – the first of its kind among parks in the nation. We also initiated and have continually expanded our composting program such that it is now one of the largest in the city.

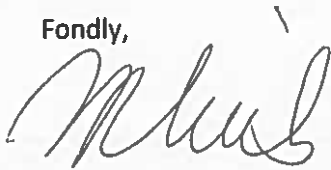
-We created new logos and park wide branding and launched a brand new website. By concentrating on beautiful photography and authentic storytelling, we grew our social media network impressively and now have devoted followers from all over the world.

We have also shared some tough times -Tropical Storm Irene, Superstorm Sandy, the terrorist attack on Halloween 2017 and now the pandemic. Our staff has repeatedly risen to the occasion, and we have rebuilt the Park when needed and emerged stronger from these crises together.

I am immeasurably proud of the work we have done together to make Hudson River Park one of the most beloved assets in New York. I believe with all my heart that together, we have made Hudson River Park into one of the highest quality Park landscapes and Park experiences not only in New York State, but in the world.

I appreciate the faith you put in me to lead this organization and it has been my profound privilege to work with you and the public on this beloved Park in my own backyard.

Fondly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Madelyn Wils', written in black ink.

Madelyn Wils

cc: Governor Andrew Cuomo
Mayor Bill De Blasio
Borough President Gale Brewer
Erik Kulleseid
Tom L. Pegues
Michael J. Kuh
Rose Harvey
Mitchell Silver
Aloysee Heredia Jarmouszuk
Jeffery Kaplan
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