

# Soundview Park

## Harbor Estuary Program Restoration Site:

**Site:** Soundview Park

**Watershed:** Long Island Sound, NY

**Protection Status:** Restoration is being planned

**Acreage:** 5

**Project Summary:** Salt Marsh Restoration & Scrub Buffer

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Email Corrections or Updates to [info@harborestuary.org](mailto:info@harborestuary.org)

Source: [NY/NJ Harbor Estuary Program](#), 2003

## Organizations that Care for this Park/Playground:

**Name:** **SOUNDVIEW PARK**

*(Organization Name, Type of Organization)*

- Harding Park Homeowners Association, Civic
- Soundview Park Restoration Committee, Parks(only)
- Taylor-Soundview Block Association, Civic
- Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice, Religious

For more information, call Partnerships for Parks at (212) 360-1310.

Source: [Partnerships for Parks](#), 2004

## NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation resources:

More information on [SOUNDVIEW PARK](#) from the city's Parks Department



## PlaNYC Project Overview

Soundview Park was built on a landfill in the South Bronx. Today the 205-acre park offers six grass baseball fields, a cricket pitch, a running track, a soccer field, six basketball courts, six handball courts, and walking/biking paths. Even with those facilities, we can do more.

After receiving extensive community input, the design team developed a master plan that creates centers of activity close to local neighborhoods. The plan calls for the restoration of natural areas, playgrounds, a running track with synthetic turf field, a new comfort station, and a new performance lawn.



## Schedule:

**Spring 2012-Fall 2013:** Playground, sports courts, and comfort station at the end of Metcalf Avenue. Amphitheatre with access path from Rosedale Avenue and a running track with a synthetic turf field.

## Project Updates

### Summer 2012:

The design has been completed. Construction began in May 2012, and the groundbreaking was held in June 2012.





# Soundview Park

Bronx River, Bronx River Ave. bet. Lafayette Ave., Surf Dr.

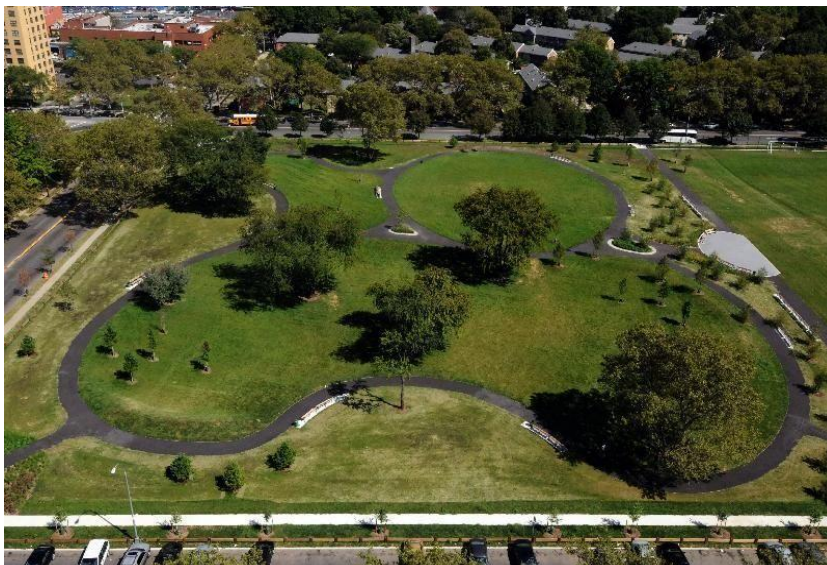
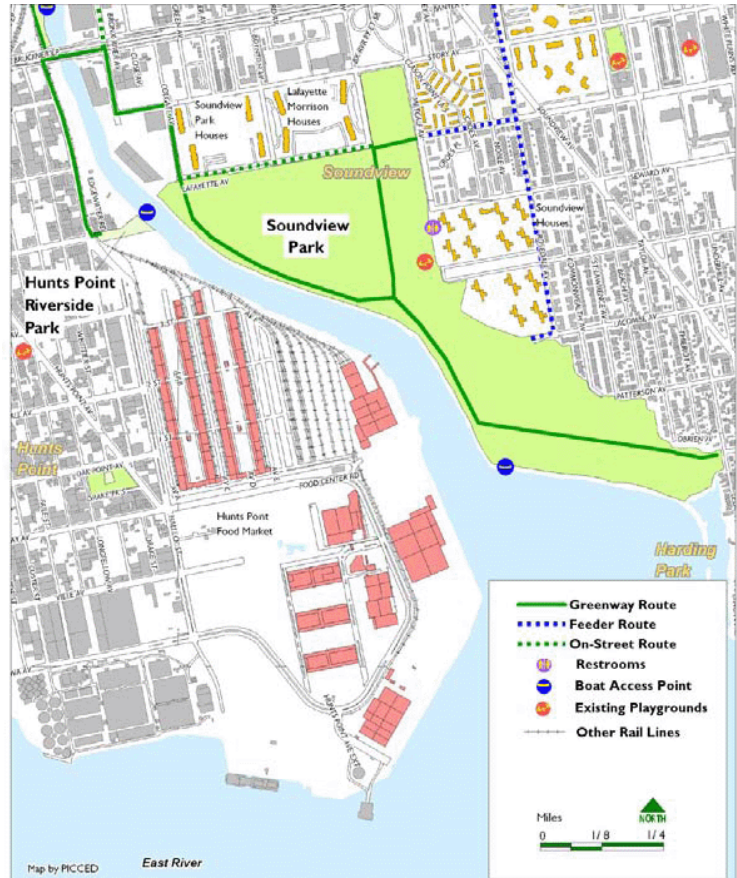
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## BRIEF OVERVIEW

Called the “Gateway to the Bronx River,” Soundview Park is situated where the Bronx River opens into the East River. When the City of New York acquired the original 93 acres of land for this park in 1937, the entire area was composed of marshland.

For a good chunk of its history, Soundview Park was a partially developed park built on a landfill. The southern third was once open water, while the remaining 2/3 of the park was tidal marsh, complete with three streams.

Landfill operations began in the 1920s and lasted forty years. The landfill increased the height of the shoreline up to 30 feet above the marsh elevation, decreasing public access to the water. Happily, the park is now revered for its sports fields, fishing, and gorgeous views across Hunts Point to Manhattan.



## HISTORY

In the 1830s the Ludlow family owned considerable property on Clason Point, including much of the site that would become Soundview Park. Ludlow's Black Rock Farm included Barrett's Creek, named for Samuel Barrett, an original settler of Clason Point. The farm was named for a large boulder found in a salt marsh near the junction of Ludlow's Creek

and the Bronx River. The black rock is formed of gneissBa coarse-grained, imperfectly layered metamorphic rock, characterized by alternating dark and light bands. It is from the Hartland formation and dates back hundreds of millions of years, when an unknown land mass collided with North America and buried sedimentary rocks and volcanics on the edge of the continent. Several miles below the earth's surface, at temperatures over 1000 degrees Fahrenheit, the sedimentary rock and volcanics were forged into gneiss.



The massive boulder may have been a glacial erratic transported to the South Bronx by a glacier about 10,000 years ago. Mistaken for a meteorite by early settlers, the boulder was moved to Soundview Park, where it can be seen today. When the City of New York acquired the original 93 acres of land for a new park in 1937, the entire area was composed of marshland. The creeks and terrain along the left bank of the Bronx River, made the parkland unusable. Local lore asserts that New York City Parks Commissioner Robert Moses named the site Lafayette Park.



Marquis de Lafayette (1757-1834) was a major general in the Continental army during the American Revolution. In 1789 he returned to France where he served as a commander of the militia in the French Revolution and was a liberal member within the National Assembly. Lafayette made various trips to New York City, from 1784 through 1825. Each time he was honored with banquets, parades performances, and an artillery salute. After some contention, Commissioner Moses yielded to local residents who wanted the park name to

express a reference to the neighborhood. "Soundview" was inspired by historical maps of the East River, which was once known as Long Island Sound. On the northwest side of the park, Soundview Avenue was part of the colonial road leading to Clason Point.

In 1940 the City acquired by condemnation an additional 63 acres adjacent to the park. Subsequent additions in 1953 and 1967 expanded the park's area. In 1994 the sewer

systems, and control vaults were renovated and dams were installed. The playground was improved in 1997, and the sidewalks and pavements were repaired in 1998. Called the "Gateway to the Bronx River," Soundview Park is situated where the Bronx River opens into the East River. The Bronx River changes from a saltwater river to the only freshwater river in New York City at Westfarms, just a few miles north of Soundview. With its extensive views of the water, Soundview Park celebrates the beauty of both the Bronx and East Rivers.



## Restoration Project Begun at Soundview Park



This winter, the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, (USACE-NYD) successfully executed a Project Partnership Agreement to begin the final design and construction phase of the Soundview Park Aquatic Ecosystem



Restoration Project located along the Bronx River. The Project will restore approximately three acres of degraded shoreline and upland fill landscape in the southern section of Soundview Park into valuable salt marsh wetland and coastal maritime grassland habitats. The agreement outlines the cost sharing requirements for the project, with 35 percent of the funds being provided by Parks and 65 percent coming from the USACE. This project milestone was announced by the USACE in a January 25, 2010 news release. The project start date is tentatively set for November 2010 and it will take approximately one year to complete. The project is expected to cost \$6.3 million.

Called the “Gateway to the Bronx River,” Soundview Park is a 205 acre park situated where the Bronx River opens into the East River. When the City of New York acquired the original 93 acres of land for this park in 1937, the entire area was composed of marshland and open water. Like most locations within the estuary portion of the Bronx River, Soundview Park was once a vast expanse of salt marsh habitat and tidal creeks. Today, due to fill and development throughout the early and mid 20th century, this important coastal wetland ecosystem in the south Bronx has been lost.



Under the leadership of the Parks Department's Natural Resources Group (NRG), this project will help to restore a small portion of the ecological, physical, and biogeochemical functions that have been lost in the Bronx River estuary. Fill will be excavated down to tidal elevations, covered with clean soil, and planted with the low marsh plant salt marsh cord grass (*Spartina alterniflora*). The new adjacent high marsh and upland plants will include salt meadow hay, groundsel bush, and marsh elder. The restored tidal marsh system will ultimately attract wildlife to the area, such as wading birds, (egrets, herons, and ibis), fish (Atlantic silversides, mummichugs, and striped bass), crustaceans (blue crab and fiddler crabs), and mollusks (oyster and ribbed mussel). In addition, local Bronx residents will be able to enjoy seeing more birdlife and a lush wetland from several viewing points surrounding the project area, and the community will gain more outreach and environmental education opportunities. In restoring the salt marsh habitat and coastal maritime upland communities within the southern portion of the park, this project will also achieve one of the many objectives proposed in Mayor Bloomberg's PlaNYC Regional Park Master Plan for Soundview Park.





# Proposed Soundview Park Salt Marsh Restoration

## Project Goals

- Restore three acres of salt marsh.
- Remove stands of invasive plants (*Phragmites australis*)
- Remove non-point source pollution.
- Enhance public waterfront access.

## Project Benefits

- Restored habitat value for fish, invertebrate, and bird species.
- Control of invasive plant species.
- Improved pollutant filtration.

*Funding applied for from the City of New York and the New York State Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act with potential USACE match.*



Concrete Plant Park, Hunts Point Riverside Park (situated at the east end of Lafayette Ave.) offers the southernmost public access to the river on the west bank. This narrow park is located between a scrap metal facility and the Hunts Point Market food distribution center. Soundview Park, a 130-acre park built on an inactive landfill, is the largest park in the Estuary Section, and occupies about one mile of the east bank at the mouth of the river. The 15- to 30-foot banks created by large boulder riprap and other debris limit access to the river along much of the Soundview Park shoreline. Narrow strips of littoral shelf still remain at the toe of the banks in some places, and are the focus of a NYC Parks NRG shellfish restoration project. Two CSOs (HP-008 and HP-009) discharge sewage and polluted storm water into the river within the estuary section.

For more information on planned and existing parks along the Bronx River, see the Bronx River Greenway Plan at <http://www.bronxriver.org/plans>.