

WATERWASH ABC - Project Description

Through innovative design, the project will construct a wetland park to filter storm runoff, improve habitat, and increase Bronx River public access. Outreach will educate community about watershed issues through an aesthetic nature experience.

Project Abstract

WATERWASH™ ABC addresses unfiltered storm water discharge from drainage pipes emptying directly to the Bronx River. These conduits contain runoff from the 30,000.sq ft parking lot and 120,000sq ft roof of the ABC Carpet and Home retail facility at 1055 Bronx River Ave. The most efficient portion of this runoff will be selected for treatment.

WATERWASH ABC is part of a series of works conceptualized by environmental artist Lillian Ball to actually solve storm water problems through innovative wetland creation and community educational outreach. Rocking the Boat is the fiscal agent for this Bronx River Watershed Initiative grant funded by the NYS Attorney General Cuomo's office through fines collected from environmental pollution violations. RTB is also part of the collaborative team on this project to construct a wetland habitat that stabilizes the shoreline to detain and filter the outfalls before they enter the river. Waterfront areas will be accessed via the Bruckner Expressway by a fluid sparkling blue recycled glass pathway. The treatment wetland will capture the first flush, allowing water to percolate through native plants using gravitational flow and explained by Ball's unique interpretive signage. Eric Rothstein (EDesignDynamics), a hydrological engineer formerly with NYC Parks Natural Resources Dept has been retained to develop a scientifically feasible design with Ms Ball and RTB. Ms. Ball will also act as the project manager based on her experience developing the WATERWASH™ Mattituck, NY prototype. Bob Governale of Excav Services, the sole-source contractor and geologist who constructed the Mattituck project, will grade, excavate, and install the Filterpave™ post-consumer recycled glass pervious pathway and weirs at ABC. Rocking the Boat students will remove invasives and plant a variety of salt-tolerant native species. They will assist ABC personnel in planting the community vegetable garden and share the scientific principals that are needed to do ongoing routine maintenance of the site. A hydrologic monitoring program developed by Franco Montalto with Drexel University students will be carried out by Rocking the Boat environmental apprentices.

This is a rare opportunity to create multi-faceted wetlands while opening up waterfront to new public access. The project creates a permanent, publicly visible remediation, habitat restoration, and educational site for both community and commercial audiences. While acting as a green infrastructure model for local business, the WATERWASH goal is to inspire visitors to better understanding of environmental issues.

Organization and Primary Contact Information

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