

Member Organizations:

Big Apple Solar  
Brooklyn Legal Services Corp. A  
Brooklyn Lighthouse Comm. Church  
Buckminster Fuller Institute  
Choir Angelus  
Church of the Ascension  
Congregation Ahavas Israel/Hebrew  
Education Alliance of Greenpoint  
Dupont Street Senior HDFC  
Friends of Newtown Creek Barge  
Terminal Playground  
GCU Lodge #1  
Green Oaks  
Greenpoint Ave/West St Block Assoc.  
Greenpoint Civic Council  
GreenpointGreen  
Greenpoint Property Owners Assoc.  
Greenpoint Reformed Church  
Greenpoint Renaissance Society  
Greenpoint Video Project  
Greenpoint/Williamsburg Youth  
Soccer League  
Huron Street Block Association  
Ind. Friends of McCarren Park, Inc.  
India Street Block Assoc.  
John Smolenski Memorial Dem Club  
Neighbors Against Garbage  
North Brooklyn Development Corp.  
North Brooklyn Greens  
North Greenpoint Neighbors for  
Environmental Justice  
Oak Street Block Association  
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church  
Park Moms  
People's Firehouse  
Polish American Folk Dance Co.  
Polish National Home  
Polish Veterans Ladies Auxiliary  
Polonia Technica  
P.S.C. Community Services, Inc.  
River Charter School  
St. Anthony/St. Alphonsas Church  
St. John's Lutheran Church  
Stop the Barge  
Sybiracy  
Vincent DePaul Society/St. Anthony's  
of Padua  
Watchperson Project  
WaterWays and Green Views

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## PROPOSAL FOR A GREENPOINT BOATHOUSE & ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

### Introduction

Newtown Creek – an historic and once-vital urban waterway coursing through several different neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Queens - needs a boathouse. Moreover, it needs a center where visitors and school groups can learn about the fascinating history and diverse ecology of this important estuary.

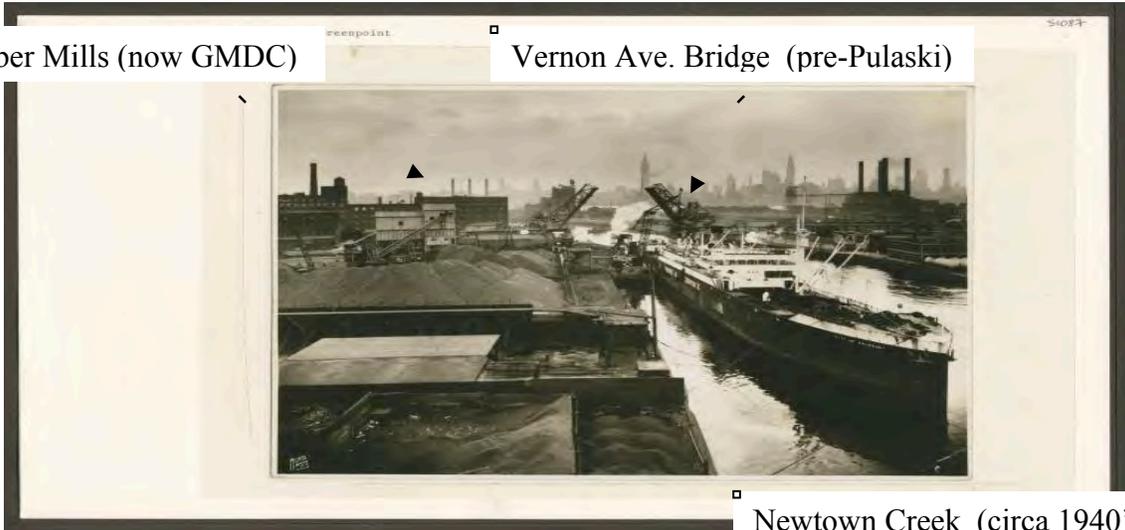
While there are plans for increasing the amount of waterfront access in Greenpoint and Hunter's Point through the mandated esplanades detailed in the 2005 Waterfront Rezoning, there has been no waterfront access developed in Greenpoint on privately owned property. Additionally, there are no plans for any facility substantial enough to actually provide education, training and storage for the community's growing population and the increasing interest in the environmental, historic

and recreational opportunities that the Newtown Creek provides.

This proposal is to rebuild the existing bulkhead along the Newtown Creek side of the Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center (GMDC) at 1155-1205 Manhattan Avenue and use space in the (now empty) ground floor that opens on to the bulkhead for a combination environmental education center/training facility/boat storage facility.

Chelsea Fiber Mills (now GMDC)

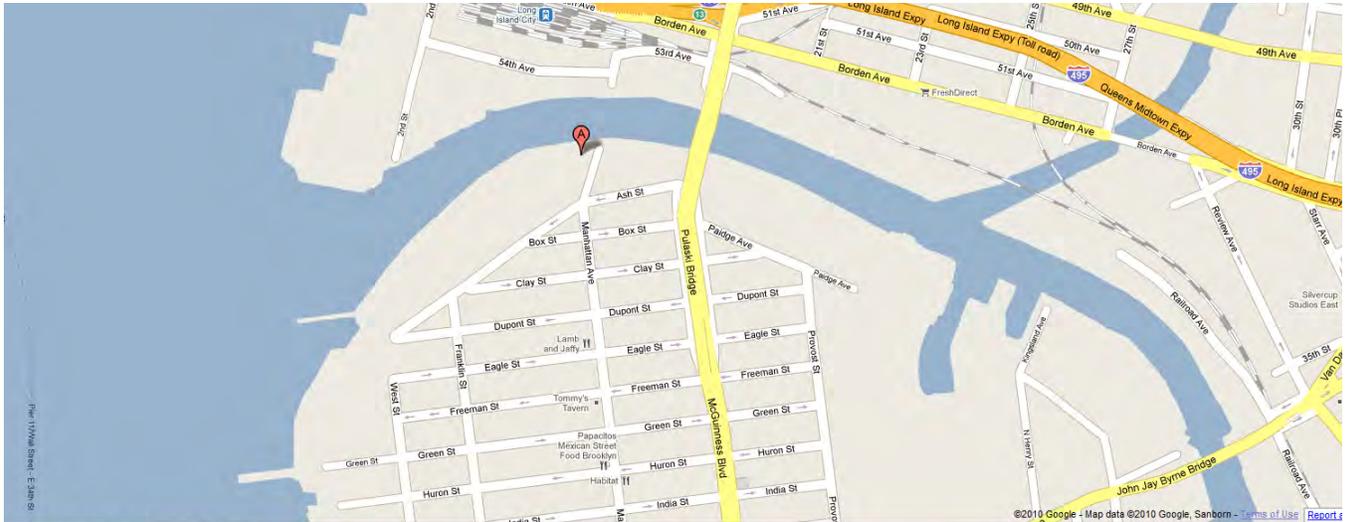
Vernon Ave. Bridge (pre-Pulaski)



Newtown Creek (circa 1940's?)

The Greenpoint Boathouse will accomplish the following towards remediating the impact of almost two decades of construction of the Newtown Creek Waste Water Treatment facility:

- Begin to reclaim, for residents, the Newtown Creek from its' dangerous and toxic history
- Create multi-faceted public access to the waterfront for all local residents
- Provide water access to the Creek itself
  
- Significantly expand public open space
- Develop the first parcel in the planned public esplanade, connecting the Manhattan Avenue Street End Park to the public access spanning all the way to South Williamsburg
- Create an educational facility for studying the environment of the Creek and surrounding area
- Create a public facility for safe, recreational boating
- Preserve local manufacturing
- Assist in GMDC's mission to retain and create new local jobs



## Location

At the top of Manhattan Avenue, sitting directly along the Newtown Creek, is an imposing and historic brick factory building. Constructed as the Chelsea Fiber Mills in 1868, it has been known, since 1992, as the GMDC, home to over 75 light manufacturing companies, artisans and artists.

The base of the Civil War-era building meets the Newtown Creek in a series of arched openings (all now sealed) into which coal for the enormous boilers within the building was delivered while rope products were shipped out. The bulkhead along which ships would dock has since fallen into disrepair and, for several years, for safety and insurance reasons, been inaccessible.

This location is easily accessible from points within North Brooklyn (G train, B62 and B43 buses) and, because it's right at the base of the Pulaski Bridge, also Hunters Point, Queens (7 train).

## Safety

The Greenpoint Boathouse will be committed, first and foremost, to safety and skills training for all boaters; whether they are members or participants in any Boathouse activity/event. The managing organization(s) will strictly enforce a set of safety protocols based on any City/State/Federal regulations and on the best practices of established boathouses. While equipment storage, environmental education and the on-land portion of safety/skills training will take place at the Greenpoint Boathouse, novice boaters will be trained in the water at other nearby locations (e.g. Bushwick Inlet Park, Anable Basin, Hallet's Cove). Only trained and certified boaters shall be

allowed to launch from the Greenpoint Boathouse on the Newtown Creek.

### **Open Space, Education, Recreation and Jobs**

As the attached renderings illustrate, we propose a rebuilt bulkhead with water access, allowing for both pedestrian strolling and for small, non-motorized craft to be easily launched and hauled out for storage.

The design work along the refurbished bulkhead will follow the requirements laid out in New York City's 2005 Greenpoint-Williamsburg Waterfront Access Plan. GMDC's bulkhead was designated "Parcel 1" in the plan and, when rebuilt, will represent the first site in Greenpoint to realize the goals of the plan, which envisions a continuous esplanade from northern Greenpoint to the South Side of Williamsburg. The rebuilt bulkhead will become a public pedestrian promenade, connected to the new Manhattan Avenue street end park. The new bulkhead will be designed to utilize environmentally sound and habitat-friendly construction methods, which can be an important feature in the Creek as cleanup efforts begin.

We estimate that approximately 10-12 of the arches along the base of GMDC's building would be opened and fitted with doors and/or windows for easy access and approximately 8000 square feet of interior space would be built-out for environmental and historical education displays; small boat safety and skills training facility; and storage for more than 60 kayaks, canoes and other small boats.

In addition to the jobs preserved by shoring up the GMDC building (of the 360 people who work at the Manhattan Ave facility, 30% live in the surrounding communities of Greenpoint, Williamsburg, Long Island City, and Maspeth) the construction envisioned in this proposal will create significant new job opportunities in the community.

### **Community Support**

Not only does this project meet all of the criteria laid out in the DEC's Memo Of Understanding regarding the disbursement of the EBP funds but it has the broad support of the community and elected officials including Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, State Assemblyman Joseph Lentol, City Councilperson Steven Levin, Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz and Neighbors Allied for Good Growth (NAG).

GMDC is an active partner in the proposal, offering to open the bulkhead to the public for use as publicly accessible open space and lease the ground floor space for community use.

This is an ambitious and visionary project that will dramatically enhance this community's open space, educational and recreational facilities and also enhance the perception of the Newtown Creek and Greenpoint's relationship to its waterfront. While the scope and budget are substantial, the Greenpoint Boathouse is realistically achievable within the next four years and within the budget parameters established by the EBP.

Newtown Creek, circa 2015?



