Greenpoint Landing’s waterfront open space derived from the need for a resilient edge—one that is performative in face of potential flooding and that at the same time helps protect the upland neighborhood. The 20-acre mixed-use development will transform this formerly industrial waterfront to 5,500 residential units, a new public school, and approximately four acres of public open space. Phase 1, delineated below, has been assessed by the WEDG program and comprises 7.5 total acres.

The project sought to integrate resilient design with public amenities by forming a unique terraced esplanade lining the waterfront. Lower terraces can sustain periodic inundation—both in volume and durability of material and planting—and upper terraces are elevated above the 100-year flood zone, providing further protection.

The continuous ribbon of terraced promenades and upland landscape features act as a barrier to potentially encroaching flooding and sea level rise incorporating FEMA flood maps and the City’s freeboard guidelines. In addition, a comprehensive flood protection strategy protects other elements of the project, including wet and dry flood-proofing, elevated and redundant mechanical systems, and deployable flood barriers for vulnerable entrances.

The site is being transformed from a lumber storage yard, and will include a significant increase of vegetation—a majority of native perennials, groundcover, and grass species. And, nearly two acres of the site is enrolled in the NYC Voluntary Cleanup Program, benefiting the site and surrounding habitat.

Mechanical equipment rooms have been located above flood elevation and redundant emergency electrical systems have been located on the rooftops and designed to support “optional standby” loads, including sewage ejectors, sump pumps, and other amenities for building operations in emergency situations.

Greenpoint Landing’s esplanade and terraced landscape reconnect the community and its waterfront by creating accessible green space and social activity at the water’s edge, accented by public amenities such as lawns, play areas, and picnic spaces.