



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2020

Contact:

Roland Lewis, President and CEO, 212.935.9831 x101, rlewis@waterfrontalliance.org

Aria Cochran, Communications Manager, 212.935.9831 x105, acochran@waterfrontalliance.org

At a Critical Moment for Equity and Resilience, Bronx Point Achieves WEDG Verification for Excellence in Waterfront Design

As the First WEDG Verified Affordable Housing Development, Bronx Point Shows how Communities can Inform a Vision for more Resilient and Equitable Waterfronts

New York, NY—Today the Waterfront Alliance announced that Bronx Point is the first affordable housing project to achieve verification in the national version of its [WEDG®](#) (Waterfront Edge Design Guidelines). The project is the ninth waterfront project to be verified through the WEDG program, a rating system and set of guidelines to create resilient, ecological, and accessible waterfronts.

The need for equitable investment in waterfront communities has never been greater. Bronx Point's verification shows that community-driven design, affordability, high-quality access, and ecological restoration are achievable assets for waterfront projects.

From the outset, the design team embraced a robust community engagement process. Lead by developers L+M Development Partners and Type A Projects, the design team had more than 20 engagements with the local community, going beyond land use requirements to seek broader input by providing communications materials in Spanish and English, soliciting and publicizing surveys, visiting local community spaces such as senior centers, and canvassing on weekends in the future waterfront park. The improved BBQ picnic area, playground, restored shorelines, and get-down to the water reflect this diverse input while striking a balance between public water access and ecological restoration along the water's edge.

"Preparing our coastal communities for the growing risks of sea level rise and climate change is imperative, and we need to make sure that the benefits of resilient design are equitable throughout our region. By achieving WEDG Verification, Bronx Point is helping to push developers towards a higher standard and getting us closer to the future we need." said Roland Lewis, President and CEO of the Waterfront Alliance.

An award-winning program of the [Waterfront Alliance](#), WEDG Verification is the gold standard for resilient, ecologically sound, and accessible waterfront design. WEDG is a critical tool to cut through myriad challenges—complex ecosystems, overlapping regulatory jurisdictions, multiple stakeholders, sea level rise and coastal storms—providing clear guidance for excellent waterfront design. Used by design professionals and planners, government agencies, and community advocates alike, the [free WEDG manual](#) offers a common language that allows all users to work together toward the highest standards.

As coastal cities continue to grapple with needs for affordable, resilient housing, Bronx Point can serve as valuable case study for practitioners and community activists. The landscape designers, Marvel Architects, worked with Abel Bainnson Butz and Langan Engineering's waterfront engineering team to create a resilient

shoreline edge, by removing an existing relieving platform and creating a more naturalized shoreline slope and shape that can reduce tidal energy as sea levels rise. The team also reintroduced native tidal marsh vegetation, created a get-down in a cove at Mill Pond Park, and employed a joint planted revetment strategy that both stabilizes and ecologically-enhances the shoreline edge. This mixed shoreline strategy is all too rare for dense, urban residential projects; but because of the shoreline design, the project has been able to partner with the Billion Oyster Project to install an oyster reef in the inlet that will both improve shoreline resilience, and allow for regular programming to train students of the Bronx community as citizen scientists.

To gain a deeper, technical understanding of the WEDG standard, verification process, and utility for waterfront communities and advocates, the Waterfront Alliance will offer its second WEDG Professionals course from September 24–25, 2020. Registration and details will be announced in early summer.

“We are excited for Bronx Point’s achievement of WEDG Verification, recognizing the thoughtful, collaborative design of a renewed Bronx Harlem River waterfront for the public. It was a true team effort as we enjoyed working closely with Community Board 4, City agencies and departments, and elected officials to craft a resilient plan for the benefit of the local and City-wide community. We look forward to delivering this new narrative for the waterfront and welcoming new visitors to be part of the revitalizing story.” Josue Sanchez, L+M Development Partners

“Projects such as Bronx Point that are informed and guided by deep community engagement are priorities for Type A Projects. After a multi-year, interactive design process with Community Board 4, the resulting design synthesizes and responds to the community’s goals and desires for open space to create a dynamic waterfront esplanade design complete with a living water’s edge, active and passive recreation spaces and educational waterfront programming. Once built, Bronx Point will offer the community a waterfront esplanade experience among the best in the City and well worthy of their tremendous efforts. Thank you CB4 for your partnership.” Annie Tirschwell, Type A Projects

“We are very proud to have achieved a balanced design that provides the types of active spaces the neighborhood needs, while also creating a waterfront space that prioritizes ecology and learning. Bronx Point is a project that creates a strong link between the community and its waterfront, and its design was driven by the strong voice of the community. The balanced combination of activity and ecology will provide a much-needed space for learning, for neighbors to jog and exercise, families to gather at BBQs and where children can play and explore.” Yadiel Rivera-Diaz PLA, ASLA, Marvel Architects

“We are excited to see the Waterfront Alliance award the Bronx Point project with WEDG® Verification. The Bronx Point project implements principals of living shorelines that provides erosion protection in the high-energy environmental of the Harlem River, while re-establishing a more natural shoreline, enhancing ecological habitats, and reducing stormwater runoff. The project reconnects the community to the waterfront, expanding an existing public park, providing community space, and constructing 100% affordable housing. We are thrilled to be a part of this important project.” Kenneth Huber, PE, WEDG, Langan

“We look forward to developing oyster reef habitat with HDR that serves as an inspirational training ground for students and community scientists alike at Bronx Point.” says Pete Malinowski, Executive Director of Billion Oyster Project, “We hope to engage members of the community in both the installation of the reef and in educational monitoring activities afterward.”

“Protecting New York City from the threat of climate change and sea level rise requires a bold vision and smart investments across all of our waterfront communities,” said James Patchett, President and CEO of the New York City Economic Development Corporation. “As the first affordable housing development to achieve a WEDG Verification, Bronx Point is setting the standard for a more resilient and equitable waterfront. Projects like these, which put innovation and community at the center, are key to planning for and protecting the City for generations to come.”

##

The Waterfront Alliance inspires and effects resilient, revitalized, and accessible coastlines for all communities.