

Bye, bye Broadway

Three stores are closing on Broadway due to long languid sales, page A2.



Senior success

Jasper seniors' last home game at Draddy Gym was a bittersweet experience, page B12.



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Point of view

Somewhere over the train tracks

By Cliff Stanton

"If we walk far enough," says Dorothy, "we shall sometime come to someplace." Certainly L. Frank Baum, author of "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz," understood what we in the Bronx have come to learn about the creation of the Hudson River Greenway.

We have walked far since New York's state legislature mandated the creation of the Hudson River Greenway in 1991. In the Bronx, an effort that began over 30 years ago followed its own Yellow Brick Road only to have a \$1 million federally funded report soundly rejected by our community last year. During that time, we whose communities have been alienated from our river for over 150 years, have watched longingly as Greenways were created with hundreds of millions in taxpayer dollars north of us in the Hudson River Valley and south of us along the entire stretch of the west side of Manhattan. And new projects have been recently announced along the Brooklyn waterfront and for the Hi Line-esque QueensWay.

Yet, the forces of the undeterred trudge on. And there is renewed reason for hope, if not anticipation. Community Board 8 passed a resolution last June supporting an all-river multi-use path and formed a Special Committee on the Greenway. That committee has been meeting monthly and is expected to produce a report and recommendation to the full board in June. The MTA, proprietor of the Metro-North tracks along which the Greenway will run, recently expressed its willingness to work with the community. One of its top priorities in the wake of Superstorm Sandy is to fortify its shoreline infrastructure. This will require public funds, which may now reside in a reported \$5 billion state surplus.

Riverdale's own state Sen. Jeff Klein announced in January a plan that would set aside \$150 million for "sustainable communities," which includes waterfront revitalization. The Special Greenway Committee has already asked Mr. Klein and Assemblyman

Jeffrey Dinowitz — who, along with our Rep. Eliot Engel and Councilman Andrew Cohen, have already declared their support for the project — to tap into the surplus for the design and construction of the Greenway.

Two major waterfront stakeholders, the Hebrew Home of Riverdale and the College of Mount St. Vincent have made substantial commitments to the future Greenway. Political realities, seemingly competing interests and public demand finally appear to be aligning where the water meets the shore.

One need only take a walk or a ride along the west side of Manhattan to appreciate what our community stands to gain from the Greenway. A cultural, economic and recreational renaissance is within our reach.

Now that our own Emerald City appears to be morphing from fictional dream to inevitable reality, it's time for us as a community to use our brains, heart and courage to continue along this road. We will need the smarts to navigate the complexities of the design process and to address the concerns of the myriad special interests that stand opposed to change. We will need heart and fortitude to keep our eyes on the prize for a community that through resolutions, petitions, and an iconic festival (RiverFest), has resoundingly demonstrated its wishes. And above all, we will need courage. Courage to not give in to the pessimism that says this community simply cannot agree upon something with so many moving parts. Courage to confront our own fears about sharing a beautiful and grand community project with the outside world. And courage to respectfully but firmly partner with a behemoth like the MTA that may seek to unilaterally impose its own considerable footprint on the project, or worse, block it altogether.

If we can do these things, we will have our Greenway and a real opportunity to actually get "someplace"... someplace truly special.

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