

CONEY ISLAND - LIFE EXTENDED

Risk-based Urban Design as a Catalyst for Intergenerational Activities



Proposal with Infrastructural Boardwalk, Canals and Dam



Multi-phase Master Plan



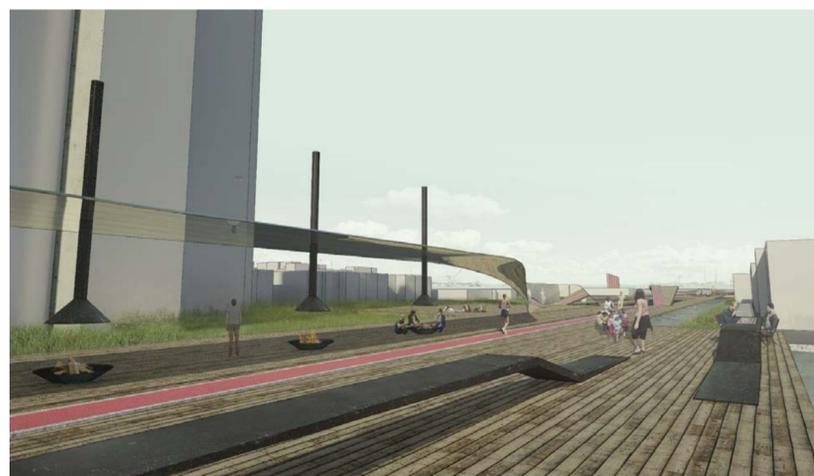
View of Wellness District from the new Infrastructural Boardwalk



View of the Canals and the new Beach on the Coney Island Creek side



View from the Beach Double Dune System with Programmatic Marshlands



Canals that link the Beach to the Coney Island Creek

Our provocative ideas about health and urbanism on Coney Island are inspired by ground-breaking phenomena in contemporary science and technology:

It is now possible to extend, reverse, improve and diversify the predictable downhill path from birth to death. For example, from a biological point of view, the Immortal Jellyfish has the ability to go back to its polyp stage when it is under any kind of stress - thus reversing time. In addition, it has been shown that older bees are able to reverse brain aging by engaging in child care responsibilities, which are usually held by younger bees. Increasingly, humans have been augmenting and extending their brains through information technology with the help of computers and smartphones. In each of these examples, a reversal, rupture or new juxtaposition is made that increases the evolutionary capacity of the bee, jellyfish or human.

Clearly, the abundance, diversity and complexity of 21st Century culture creates new models for advancing health care and urbanism; they supersede the typological, institutionalized and rational paradigms which were formed in past centuries.

Our goal is not only to extend the life of the Coney Island peninsula which is threatened by sea level rise, but also to take the opportunity to create urban conditions that activate the human body and mind, while extending the life of the community.

We propose a Wellness District that features a new elevated boardwalk infrastructure on the ocean side, a multifunctional dam that connects the peninsula to mainland Brooklyn across Coney Island Creek, and a series of inland canals. These interventions will be developed over time, starting with a "double dune" beach defense system (concept: Local Office Landscape Architecture). As sea levels rise and eventually submerge the dunes, the new boardwalk will be constructed behind the beach to protect against the rising seas. This "smart" and flexible boardwalk-defense system will include multiple levels that are designed as technologically-enabled leisure and fitness parcours.

The design of the Wellness District was made by studying the culture and customs of local residents. Each of the design elements engages these local habits - and nudges, challenges and augments them in order to incentivize wellness, fitness and preventive care. For example, new public facilities are designed to promote synergies between the wisdom of the elderly and the energy of the young. Together, these strategic urban interventions foster the exchange of intergenerational information and augment the body in a variety of physical and virtual ways, while reconnecting the fragmented urban fabric.

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