

Scenic Hudson's River Center, the red barn

This structure was built in the 1860s for manufacturing and storing Slug Shot, an insecticide once popular with gardeners around the world. When Scenic Hudson acquired the property, the community encouraged us to keep the building for its historic presence. Scenic Hudson stabilized the barn and has renovated it as a "green building." We've transformed it into a community center, with the award-winning organization Mill Street Loft as its tenant, offering arts education programming. Scenic Hudson also will utilize the building for environmental-education programs. The building consists of three main public areas—ground-floor space for exhibitions and gatherings, and upstairs two classrooms. Doors on sliders throughout the building allow for the adjustment of space according to specific programming needs.



Courtesy the Beacon Historical Society

The barn, circa 1880

The City-owned property was historically fenced off from the Long Dock park property. This barrier now has been removed. The area to the west that remains fenced in has not been remediated. We kept as much of the original barn structure as possible, including the exposed post and beams throughout the building and the exposed ceiling on the ground floor. We are on track to have the finished River Center receive a Gold rating according to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—or LEED—rating system, which is the standard for sustainable construction used by developers and municipalities nationwide.

Among the River Center's "green" features:

- The walls are formaldehyde-free, forest-certified plywood finished with a no-VOC (volatile organic compounds) finish.
- The floors are recycled rubber.
- The building is highly insulated to keep it cool in summer and warm in winter, using less energy than a standard building.
- The heating/cooling system includes a highly efficient heat pump and uses ambient air temperature to heat and cool the structure. The building also has an attic fan to utilize cool river air rather than air conditioning when possible.
- Occupancy sensors turn lights off when rooms are not occupied.
- The deck framing is made of Timbersil—yellow pine boards impregnated with glass—which prevents the wood cells from being consumed by fungus and bugs. The decking is made of sustainably harvested cumaru, a wood from Peru certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

HRF

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Looking to Volunteer? Help maintain Long Dock Park by becoming a Long Dock Park Volunteer. There are great opportunities to monitor and maintain the newly rehabilitated wetlands and other plantings. We're also looking for friendly, energetic people to serve as Scenic Hudson ambassadors to help others enjoy and learn about the park. If you're interested in either of these opportunities, please contact Anthony Coneski, 845 473 4440, ext. 273 or aconeski@scenichudson.org. Scenic Hudson is looking for businesses or individuals to provide financing toward the park's ongoing stewardship. If you're interested in making a contribution, please contact Steve Rosenberg at srosenberg@scenichudson.org.

www.scenichudson.org

Created by Susan Hereth

SCENIC HUDSON'S
LONG DOCK PARK, BEACON

ParkTour



This post-industrial site has been transformed into one of the most exciting places to connect with the beauty and power of the Hudson River—and a national model of sustainable landscape design.



LONG DOCK PARK TOUR

Long Dock, circa 1890



Starting at the top of Long Dock Road, overlooking the site

Scenic Hudson's goal for Long Dock Park was to create an exciting addition to Beacon's vibrant waterfront that includes Dia:Beacon, the Beacon Sloop Club, the Beacon-Newburgh Ferry and Metro-North Station, the city's Riverfront Park, the Klara Sauer Trail and the Beacon Institute.

The 16 acres of parkland used to be under the Hudson River. In the early 19th century, the shoreline was located approximately where the railroad tracks are now. In the mid-1800s, the state encouraged property owners to fill in areas for ferry landings and other commercial activities. The shape of Long Dock Park is a result of this filling in and the need for trains to make a wide turn on their way to being loaded onto massive ferries to be shipped across the river. For a brief time Long Dock's rail ferry was a vital transportation link between New England and points west.



Scenic Hudson removed 75 dump-truck loads of debris from the former junkyard (2001)

The river continued to be filled in here up to the mid-20th century. After that, Long Dock served a variety of uses—a storage site for salt and sand, a major oil-storage facility and a junkyard. When Scenic Hudson purchased the property, it was considered a brownfield, filled with tons of debris and containing high levels of metals such as arsenic and lead.

Scenic Hudson remediated all public park areas through a process approved by the state Department of Environmental Conservation. The worst contamination was removed and replaced with clean fill. Less polluted soils were buried beneath two feet of clean fill.

The southern portion of the park had been filled with concrete slabs from the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge when it was re-decked several decades ago. We salvaged many of these to create parking spaces and a patio area near the kayak pavilion.

Invasive species remediation

Invasive species flourish in disturbed habitats such as brownfields. Extensive work has been undertaken here to remove them. In some areas, we resorted to using herbicides to get rid of especially aggressive species such as Japanese knotweed and Phragmites (Common Reed). Elsewhere plants have been eradicated by hand.

Our long-term goal is to keep invasives at bay and encourage native species we are planting to re-establish themselves.

Green landscaping features

Handicapped-accessible spaces were created with "ecopavers" that allow for better drainage and less surface run-off.

"Rain gardens" filter surface water run-off. They will be filled with native wetland plants that thrive on nutrients from the run-off while removing pollutants that otherwise would reach the river.

Berms along the parking area prevent people from driving into the park and limit the visibility of cars from the rest of the park and from the river.

The kayak pavilion

This site once was filled with trees struggling to grow amongst castaway bridge pavers and overrun poison ivy. The area was cleared, new gravel was laid down and regraded into the bay area, and a kayak pavilion was built. Areas surrounding the kayak pavilion were created to be handicapped accessible. The pavilion's wood decking is clad with sustainably harvested cumaru, which will age to a silky gray patina.



Wetlands

After extensive removal of trash, debris and invasive plant species, we have reconstructed and rehabilitated the property's tidal wetlands. Special soils have been brought in to adjust with water fluctuations. These areas have been planted with native wetland species.

Wetlands are fragile habitats. We ask visitors to assist us in protecting them by leaving them undisturbed.

The paths and hills

Park paths are made of stabilized stone dust. They connect with the Klara Sauer Trail (named after Scenic Hudson's former executive director), which leads to Denning's Point State Park and the home of the Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries. The shape of the paths is meant to evoke the historical use of the landscape—the curvature of the train tracks that once led out to the point.

The park was designed with berms to create smaller, more intimate "rooms" within the larger 16-acre landscape. The berms also create visual interest and will mitigate flooding.

Environmental Learning Area

This space with its incredible river views and wetland overlook will be used to gather school groups and host small events. From here, we can access the Hudson River, hold lessons or performances, and share topics about the estuary and watershed.

Peter J. Sharp Park/George Trakas sculpture

This park within a park was named for entrepreneur Peter Jay Sharp, an avid supporter of the arts. Generous support for its creation was provided by The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation.

The park contains George Trakas's environmental sculpture, *Beacon Point*. It is made of steel and wood decks, pathways and stairs that lead to the water making Long Dock's dramatic point accessible to the public. The work's stepped forms interact with tides, river currents and waves, creating the sounds of cascading water while providing stunning views. The work also includes a terraced angling deck and a new boardwalk popular for fishing and crabbing.



Artist George Trakas working on Beacon Point, 2004

Mountain Tops Outfitters in Beacon runs a paddle-sport concession offering kayak rentals and Hudson River tours at the pavilion. There also are 45 spaces people can rent to store their own kayak or canoe.

SITES™

The American Society of Landscape Architects, U.S. Botanical Gardens and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center have partnered to create a pilot program for sustainable landscapes called the Sustainable Sites Initiative, or simply SITES. Long Dock Park is a SITES participant—one of only 150 across the country. SITES evaluates how sustainably a landscape is built and managed. Sustainable practices examined include brownfield remediation, managing stormwater on site, using native plantings and the innovative re-use of materials found on site. Scenic Hudson strives to integrate such features into all of our parks and preserves.