

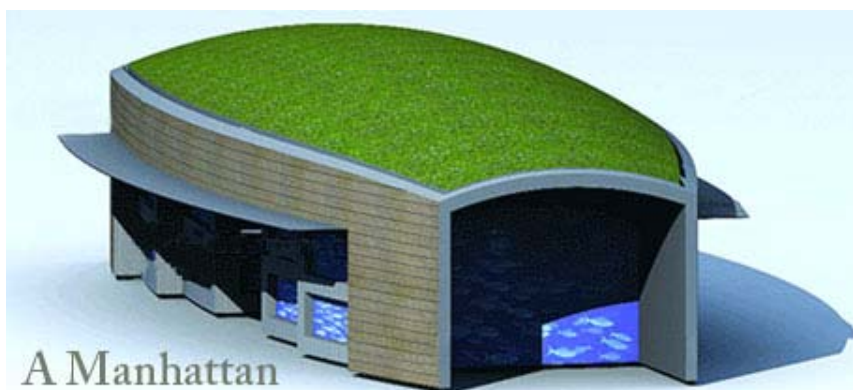


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## A Manhattan Home for Hudson River Creatures?

By  
Ronda Kaysen

THE RIVER PROJECT HOPES TO INSTALL A TEMPORARY FISH TANK DOWNTOWN

posted  
Apr 17, 2006

*This is an updated version of an article that originally appeared in the [Downtown Express](#) in January.*

New York Harbor fish might soon make an appearance on the bank of the Hudson River, if a Tribeca marine science field station gets its way.

The River Project, a 19-year old nonprofit organization, hopes to build City Fish, a temporary, modular outdoor aquarium exhibit on the bike path/walkway, near Stuyvesant High School. Designed with sweeping windows, passersby will be able to observe native New York Harbor fish, invertebrates and seaweed from outside. Visitors could also step inside the 1,000-sq. ft. aquarium structure, which might open to the public as soon as this summer. Greenery will cascade down from the rooftop and decorate the ground level as well.

The River Project was displaced from its longtime home at Pier 26 for the renovation of Segment 3 of the Hudson River Park project. The Hudson River Park Trust, which is developing the park, donated park space north of Chambers St. to the River Project until renovation begins on that portion of the park.

Last week, River Project publicity director Tad Barnes said the aquarium is still in a "holding pattern" contending for funding from the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, but that the group was "no closer or no further" from its goal to open the aquarium by July 4 and keep it open until construction begins near the bike path, which will start sometime in 2007.

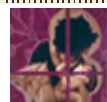
**Fighting for fish funds**

In December, the organization submitted a proposal to the LMDC for a \$1 million cultural enhancement grant. "This is basically our one chance of doing this project," said River Project founder and executive director Cathy Drew in a telephone interview. "We're putting all our resources into this [aquarium]."

Late last year, LMDC announced plans to distribute \$35 million in cultural enhancement grants for individuals and organizations Downtown. The corporation received more than 100 applications by the Dec. 22 deadline and expected to make a first round of decisions this spring.

Because of the brief period that the space is available, the River Project must get funding immediately in order to proceed with the project, which has been in the works for five months. "This was a godsend to hear about the LMDC proposal," said Drew. "If we don't get this award, we can't [build the aquarium] because there wouldn't be time to apply for anything else."

As part of the grant requirements, the River Project must match the \$1 million grant with \$1 million in additional funds. LMDC funds would be used to construct the aquarium and the matching funds would be used for operating costs. The corporation is also paying \$70 million to build the Hudson River Park segment.



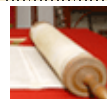
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### Temporary tank

Trust officials have thrown their support behind the aquarium, which is designed by the same team designing Segment 3, Weisz + Yoes Studio and landscape architect Signe Nielsen. However, the aquarium will be positioned on a swath of land slated for renovation and will need to move when the construction schedule demands it.

"It's something that is definitely a consistent use in terms of the types of interim uses that we've encouraged over the years," said Noreen Doyle, a Trust vice president. Although Doyle is "certain" work on the bike path will not begin next summer, "We cant commit as to how far into the following year it will be there."

Aware of the time restraints, Drew hopes to eventually relocate the aquarium to the East River, which is slated for a \$150-million, LMDC-funded redevelopment of its own. As part of the East River Waterfront redevelopment, the city plans to create several pavilions beneath the FDR Drive. Drew envisions placing the aquarium inside one of pavilions. "You could see through the aquarium" to the river, said Drew, adding that it would be inexpensive to transport the aquarium. "It would fit in perfectly."

Ronda Kaysen is a staff reporter for the [Downtown Express](#).



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