Eibs Pond Park
Staten Island, New York

With The Parks Council, Fox Hill Tenant Association, Design Trust for Public Space, Friends of Eibs Pond Park, NYC Dept of Parks and Recreation, PS 57, Staten Island Community Board One, and funding from New York State Council on the Arts and National Endowment for the Arts

RECONNECTING ACROSS EDGES

Squeezed between a railway line, expressway, and low-income housing blocks, the 17-acre wetland that is now Eibs Pond Park survived decades of deforestation, erosion, and dumping. In a multi-phase project in collaboration with public organizations, MPA has helped to realize the site’s extraordinary potential as wildlife refuge, environmental education center, and gathering place for the diverse cultural communities surrounding the park, yet cut off from each other.

To reconnect surrounding communities to the park, the watershed, and one another, the Strategic Plan for Eibs Pond Park identified two sets of thresholds: that between city and park, and that between land and water.

Mediating the relationship between land and water, the Pedestrian Trails, Bridge, and Outdoor Classroom undertaken with the Parks Council invite movement and activity into the heart of the site, positioning visitors within the larger landscape and engaging existing topography, vegetation, and hydrology. These interventions contributed to transform the disused area into a valued ‘front yard’ and social center - into Eibs Pond Park.

The Thresholds Project undertaken with the Design Trust for Public Space negotiates the site’s ecologically-disturbed southern boundary, where park trails and city sidewalks dead-end, overcome by invasive plants, eroded topography, and accumulated debris. MPA employed strategies of stormwater management, increased visual and physical access, and edge programming to redefine the notion of perimeter control, in support of access and walkability.

The project integrates urban, social, and ecological issues with the restoration of a degraded wetland, transforming a disused site into a valuable community resource.

SELECTED RECOGNITION

The Power of Pro Bono, 2010
Places Design Journal, Honor Award for Place Design, 2003
AIA/US Dept of Housing & Urban Development, Community Building by Design Award, 2003
Staten Island AIA, Honor Awards, 2002 + 2003
Harvard Design Magazine, 2000