



HIGH LINE FOOD OPEN HOUSE

MARCH 16, 2011

Summary of Comments & Recommendations

On Wednesday, March 16, 2011, more than 100 participants from the greater High Line community gathered in the Dan Carpenter Room at Hudson Guild, a community center in Chelsea, to receive an update on the vision and guiding principles for High Line Food, a new program that will introduce food and beverage concessions at the High Line. Below is a summary of participant comments and the reoccurring themes that emerged from the evening's dialogue.

Overall, participants felt strongly that food and beverage concessions are necessary public amenities that will enhance the visitor experience at the High Line.

- People would like to see healthy food that is sourced from local farmers who are practicing sustainable growing methods.
- Food and beverage concessions at the High Line should be unique, welcoming, and affordable.
- People want the option of grabbing a bite to eat on the run, or sitting for a longer meal.

COMMENTS

- *"From what I can tell, I think you're on the right track and I'd like to be kept up to date."*
- *"I want to see sandwich man vendors, like in the ball parks, for people who want some snacks."*
- *"I'm a big fan of the food available at today's Open House because during the hot summer days, I want to feel refreshed and light."*
- *"I think the food needs to belong to New York City. It should have ethnic diversity – gyro, taco, sandwiches, etc."*
- *"Talk to other concessions at public parks and see what works well."*
- *"There should be a range of different types of food catering – diverse food, fresh food."*
- *"I want to see dumplings, French fries, and falafel."*
- *"Basically food like you had tonight. The potatoes were amazing."*
- *"There should be locally-sourced cool food and hot food, as well as small foods that have simple and complex flavors."*
- *"Vegetarian options are a must."*
- *"A beer and wine stand will be nice."*
- *"Frozen grapes for a hot summer afternoon – ideas like that, quick snacks that are refreshing."*
- *"There needs to be vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free foods."*
- *"Ethnic diversity is a plus. Food should be similar to strolling concession stands but have popcorn, and other healthy snacks."*

- *“Healthy choices and gourmet sandwiches will be nice.”*
- *“Good hot dogs will be welcome!”*
- *“The food served tonight was amazing. Keep this quality.”*
- *“I want to have juices, wines, and water.”*
- *“Office workers love a place to grab a sandwich outside at lunch time in the summer.”*
- *“A rotation of carts from our neighborhood vendors would be interesting.”*
- *“I think you should offer nuts, berries, cured meats, greens, foccaccia or baguettes, and organic produce.”*
- *“I want egg creams, pies, and brownies.”*
- *“I’d like to see food that is suitable for lunchtime and dinner, i.e, hamburgers and hot dogs.”*
- *“Fresh vegetables and salads, cupcakes from Billy’s, French fries, and fruits would do well.”*
- *“There should be fresh smoothies, healthy food, fruits, and veggies.”*
- *“I want to see organic food, hot dogs, Central Park-quality food.”*
- *“One word: KFC.”*
- *“Standard foods, such as sandwiches, soft pretzels, donuts, pastries, coffee, soft drinks, etc. should be available for purchase.”*
- *“A classic NYC ‘dirty water’ hot dog cart should fit into the elevator and prove to be a successful addition. In addition, ice cream, Italian ices, and perhaps a shaved ice cart would be a welcome addition, especially in the summer months.”*
- *“International street food carts, especially “Vendy Award” winners would do well, provided they can fit into the elevator. These carts have huge followings and generate a lot of publicity.”*

REOCCURRING THEMES

GREENMARKET, EATING LOCAL, FRUITS & VEGS

- *“Use local and organic food whenever possible.”*
- *“Locavores should be encouraged. Perhaps soliciting merchants at the Union Square, or other Greenmarkets, might be fruitful.”*
- *“Make the food healthy, socially responsible.”*
- *“It might be nice to have a fresh fruit and vegetable stand. Fruit should be preferably those not requiring peeling. Vegetables might be pre-cut crudités with dips (finger food).”*
- *“Bring a farmer’s market onto the High Line that include more ready-to-eat items in addition to fresh produce to take home.”*

MAKE IT EASY TO EAT

- *“Offer portable food items and sandwiches.”*
- *“There should be something easy to eat at the park, like a well-wrapped sandwich or fish taco.”*
- *“Crepes – they’re easy to grab and eat.”*
- *“Light food that could be carried through the park – like popcorn.”*
- *Small bites, just like the food from the event!”*
- *“Food that’s easy to grab and go, like the food from the event.”*

CUT DOWN ON PACKAGING

- *“There should be no wrapping or utensils, and you should minimize waste.”*
- *“Please offer self-contained food with very little packaging.”*
- *“There should be food that doesn’t produce much garbage.”*

- *“All foods should not require any eating utensils, like plastic forks and knives. Everything should be able to be eaten by hand.”*
- *“Aim for no packaging, utensils, or packaging that is totally compostable, including napkins.”*
- *“Choose compostable packaging.”*

CONCERNS

- *“The wait for food is my major concern”*
- *“Watch out for anything that could stain the concrete planks if dropped.”*

GOOD FOR FAMILIES & GROUPS

- *“Food should be welcoming for groups and families.”*
- *“There must be healthy options for families.”*
- *“Don’t forget to think of school groups coming on field trips.”*

PRICES

- *“You should offer smaller-sized food that is high quality.”*
- *“Focus on affordability. Having to spend more on organic food is not necessary. Keep it around \$12.00.”*
- *“Please offer reasonable prices for gelato, like \$3.00.”*
- *“I’d like something we can enjoy on a regular basis.”*
- *“Please find an economical price point.”*
- *“Food should be affordable for students, homeless, and children at the age of seven.”*
- *“Price should be comparable to the food’s quality.”*
- *“Food should be less than \$12.00.”*
- *“\$1.75 to \$6.00 price range.”*
- *“The price range \$3.00 to \$8.00.”*
- *“Around \$6.50.”*
- *“Not much over \$5.00.”*
- *“\$5:00 to \$6.00 for good beverages. \$3.00 to \$4.00 for ice cream.”*
- *“Around \$10.00.”*
- *“Affordable, which means under \$10.00.”*
- *“\$12.00 to \$15.00 for two.”*
- *“Price should be comparable to Chelsea Market.”*
- *“Price should be comparable to New York street vendors.”*

PICNICS

- *“Please bring your own blankets.”*
- *“Host a family picnic night at the High Line.”*
- *“A cheese plate for a High Line picnic sounds great.”*
- *“Please offer ethnic foods, seasonal food. Think picnics.”*

EXTENSIONS OF HIGH LINE FOOD

- *“Please hold food workshops on the High Line.”*
- *“You could host food festivals (“Bite of...”)”*
- *“There should be classes for children to grow things or involve schools.”*
- *“Maybe you could have a vegetable garden for kids or a model farm.”*
- *“Combine the food aspect of the High Line with a vegetable garden on the park!”*

LOCATIONS

- *“I don’t want to have to walk all the way to the Chelsea Market Passage if I am at West 27th Street. There should be multiple locations for food.”*
- *“I think you guys really need to have a cool little gelato stand by the lawn.”*
- *“Offer several options along the High Line, so people can nibble and stop anywhere for something to eat.”*

UNIQUE TO THE HIGH LINE

- *“Have a “High Line” branded food item. A specific type of ice cream flavor maybe? That could (and should) be more expensive.”*
- *“Food that people seek out, and make them come to the High Line, like knishes.”*
- *“There should be un-fussy options with a unique, High Line vibe.”*

CHANGE THE FOOD WITH THE SEASONS

- *“Make sure you have cold refreshing items in the summer months, like ice cream, smoothies, Jamba Juice, and Pinkberry.”*
- *“There should be gelato and other cold options that don’t require heat, but are still tasty and desirable.”*

OTHER

- *“There should be more signage leading up to the High Line for visitors.”*
- *“There should be painted arrows or green sidewalks.”*
- *“You guys need more restrooms and clearer signage.”*
- *Please build some kiosks with clear maps of the area.”*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: Is the food prepped somewhere before it is brought to the High Line?

Food will be prepared off-site and brought to the High Line to be assembled on-site. Over time, we hope to develop the infrastructure for cooking to happen at the High Line.

Q: Why are there no concessions planned between West 23rd to West 30th Streets?

The second section of the High Line is much narrower than the first. We hope that providing multiple locations, clearly located and designated on maps and the High Line Web site will help visitors plan their trips and food and beverage stops.

Q: How will you keep the park clean?

As part of our comprehensive plan for food and beverage concessions in the park, we are developing detailed protocols for handling waste and keeping the park maintained at the high level we have all come to love. Our food and beverage vendors will be required to minimize waste, and we will actively work with them to identify ways to cut down on packaging, utensils, and trash on site.

Q: “It’s great to have those kind of principles... But, can you guys do it and turn it into a revenue stream?”

While food and beverage concessions are an important revenue stream for the park, first and foremost we want to enhance the visitor experience. We will need to balance these principles over time, and we will make every effort to achieve our principles. We are rolling out our plan incrementally, so that we can test our principles in action. We are committed to working with the vendors to make this work for the High Line. We look forward to feedback from the community on how we are doing.