



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – June 17, 2014  
STUDY ASSESSES IMPACT OF NEW URBAN OPEN SPACE IN BROOKLYN

New York, June 17 – Langer Research Associates, Brooklyn Greenway Initiative and the Horticultural Society of New York today announced the start of a research project studying the potential impact of a new natural urban open space on the nature-related attitudes and experiences of nearby residents.

Work on the multiyear project began last month with interviews of a group of ninth-grade students at The Green School in the East Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, asking about their views of the environment, parks and open spaces, and their feelings of connection with nature.

The interviews are part of a larger project examining whether and how opportunities for reflection and tranquility created by immersion in a planned natural setting in the Brooklyn Navy Yard – the former Brooklyn Naval Hospital Cemetery site – may yield benefits for individuals and the community.

In addition to youth, the research will focus on clients of Brooklyn Community Housing and Services, which provides supportive housing for formerly homeless New Yorkers, as well as the new park's potential impacts on surrounding areas.

The Green School, a New York City public high school focused on environmental and community sustainability, has structured its science curriculum to include activities and lessons tied to the new open space. Students will be able to use the site as a natural laboratory, extending and expanding their understanding of natural processes learned in class. The Horticultural Society of New York is supporting the Green School and BCHS efforts through programs to engage both populations in activities on the site.

Last month's interviews were the first of a series planned at the school in the next three years. Participants will be interviewed again next fall and spring, as will a new group of ninth-grade students and a third set of students added the following year. The study will assess how these students interact with the site and any changes in their nature-related attitudes over time.

The 1.7-acre site is located on Williamsburg Street West between Kent and Flushing Avenues. The remains of Marines, naval shipmen and others interred there from 1831 to 1910 were relocated to Cypress Hills Cemetery in the late 1920s. Work is under way to transform the site

into a natural meadow of wildflower and warm-season grasses surrounded by an enveloping border of canopy and understory trees.

Funds for this project are provided by the TKF Foundation as part of the National Open Spaces Sacred Places Initiative. The mission of the TKF Foundation is to provide the opportunity for a deeper human experience by inspiring and supporting the creation of public greenspace that offers a temporary place of sanctuary, encourages reflection, provides solace and engenders peace and well-being.

### **About Langer Research Associates**

Langer Research Associates is a custom research firm specializing in survey design, management and analysis. The New York-based company is the primary news polling provider for ABC News and produces in-depth surveys and data analysis for other media, foundation, business, association and government clients.

### **About Brooklyn Greenway Initiative**

Brooklyn Greenway Initiative (BGI) is the non-profit organization committed to the establishment, development and long-term stewardship of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway. When complete, this 14-mile landscaped route for pedestrians and cyclists will connect neighborhood parks and open spaces from Greenpoint to Bay Ridge. The Greenway also will remove storm water from NYC's combined sewer system with the use of green infrastructure improvements along the East River watershed.

### **For more information**

Please contact: Milton Puryear, Brooklyn Greenway Initiative, (347) 432-4897  
Christopher C. Weiss, Langer Research Associates, (212) 456-2621