



THE ORIGINAL CHELSEA PIERS - NEW YORK'S MARITIME GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL PRESENTED BY WILLIAM ROKA

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 6:30 PM (ET) ZOOM MEMBER MEETING



The Original Chelsea Piers (left) and the current view (right).

Today the lonely iron arch of Pier 54 is an often-ignored reminder of what was New York's Grand Central Terminal of the Hudson River waterfront, the original Chelsea Piers complex that extended from Little 12th Street to 23rd Street that saw millions of immigrants and some of the wealthiest people in the world brought to New York City by ocean liners to this docking on the Hudson.

But how did it work? Thousands of passengers and pieces of luggage, supplies, mail, and cargo had to be loaded and unloaded. How did the ships prepare to depart or dock, and what did the passengers experience as they departed for or returned from their voyages overseas? This illustrated presentation will explore this extraordinary period of New York's waterfront, now nearly forgotten and unknown.



William Roka is the Director of Programs at Village Preservation. He is also an independent historian and writer. His research, presented at conferences in the United Kingdom, Argentina, Australia, and across the United States, has focused on the history of travel and ocean liners in the early 20th century. William is also a WSS-PONY Branch Board member.

CARNIVAL CRUISE LINE NEW BUILD DEVELOPMENT A BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK PRESENTED BY GLENN APRILE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 10AM (ET) ENCORE PRESENTATION



A YEAR - END SALUTATION DENISE DACEY, PONY BRANCH CHAIRPERSON

I hope each member has enjoyed 2025, and time with family and friends. I also hope you have enjoyed the quality PONY Branch meetings, and the encore presentations, brought to you in 2025. The wonderful Zoom presentations again were brought to you by maritime experts, seafarers, cruise industry leaders, and authors and not just from nearby locales but, thanks to Zoom, also from California, England, and even Australia. Of special note, this year we were very lucky to welcome Captain Mike Vinik (*Below right photo by Captain Mike Vinik*) of tugboat VINIK No. 6 where he, with his long-time friend and PONY Branch Secretary, Captain Jimmy Zatwarnicki, shared a lively chat of Captain Vinik's very recent first-person account of his historic tow of the SS UNITED STATES from its long-term home in the port of Philadelphia to an Alabama shipyard to be readied for sinking in Florida waters as a highly anticipated tourist diving site. Additionally, notable, four maritime authors presented to the PONY Branch in 2025: Holland America Line Fleet Captain Albert Schoonderbeek, maritime historians William Miller and Christopher Frame, as well as tug and barge Captain Erik Takajian. Cruise industry leaders, Alistair Greener, former Cunard Entertainment Director and Glenn Aprile, Assistant VP Brand Experience and Product Development Guest Experiences were first time PONY Branch presenters who took us behind the scenes on their respective ships and shared other industry workings and trends. Also new to PONY Branch in 2025 were the wonderful presentations by David Trevor Jones from the WSS-Dorset (UK) Branch on a topic close to his heart, the MARCO POLO, and Erhard Koehler, NS SAVANNAH Senior Program Manager, on the past, present and future of the NS SAVANNAH. On behalf of the PONY Branch, I sincerely thank all our 2025 presenters, and I am sure we all eagerly look forward to the presentations planned for 2026.



Enjoyed by all who attended were our 2025 in-person activities: January: 2024 60th Anniversary and Holiday celebration at The Churchill Tavern; May: SEA DART 2 ship spotting and harbor tour with lunch; June: *Maritime City* exhibit and guided tour at the South Street Seaport Museum; October: CELEBRITY SUMMIT 5-day WSS-PONY Branch Anniversary cruise to Key West and Nassau; November: CARNIVAL VENEZIA guided tour and lunch and, finishing the year; and December: PONY Branch Holiday Party at Tony's DiNapoli. (See page 9.)



Our 2025 event write-ups, photos, and more were shared on our website, Facebook page and in our Portholes. We hope you enjoyed them all. New in 2025 was the introduction of Constant Contact communications which not only make our digital email communications more professional and easier to navigate by you, our members, but also easier and more efficient for us to send them to you.

In recognition of our 60th Anniversary this year, we inaugurated a new embroidered and applied nautical burgee on the CELEBRITY SUMMIT in a celebratory group photo. Members will see this burgee with the 1947 World Ship Society (UK) lightship logo at upcoming group in-person events. Additionally, new or renewing 2026 Patron members will also receive an attractive WSS-PONY Branch canvas baseball cap with the embroidered lightship logo. (See page 9.)



None of the monthly member meeting presentations and in-person activities would have been possible without the incredible hard work of our Vice-Chairman, Program Committee Chairman and Activities Committee Chairman, Pat Dacey. As both the Chairperson and Porthole Editor, I can share that our organizational work and monthly Portholes are very efficiently managed by the shared leadership of our Board of Directors: Pat Dacey (Vice-Chairman), Stuart Gewirtzman (Membership Secretary), Marjorieann Matuszcek (Treasurer) and Jimmy Zatwarnicki, (Board Secretary). I also extend special thanks to Bill Miller for the monthly Porthole Ships in Port articles he contributes and to our additional Board members: Alan Zamchick (also a regular Porthole contributing editor and writer), William Roka, Bob Allen, Ted Scull, Carol Miles and Mario De Stafano.



I also thank you, our members, for your commitment and interest in this special organization, its monthly meetings and in-person ship-related events.

What do I ask of you? If not done yet, please renew your 2026 membership. (See page 7.) Also, don't be shy to share your interest in the PONY Branch and what we do with your friends, family, postings and even with anyone you may happen to strike up a ship-related conversation.

Continue to share your ship photos to share in our monthly Porthole Member Photos. We are unable to share every member photo we receive, but we do our best to share as many as possible.

Do you have a collection that would interest our members that you could write about as a future Collector's Corner article? Would you like to participate in one of our committees or help coordinate an upcoming in-person event?

In other words, could you see yourself assisting the PONY Branch volunteers with the activities and communications we complete throughout the year to the benefit of all our members? If so, we would welcome hearing from you at wsspony@gmail.com.



Wishing everyone fair winds and following seas for 2026!

Denise

(Photos: Stuart Gewirtzman except as noted.)

MEMBER PHOTOS



Princess Cruise Lines' ENCHANTED PRINCESS at Halifax, Nova Scotia. (Photo: Thomas O'Reilly)



*ENCHANTED PRINCESS docked behind OCEANIA ALLURA in Boston Harbor, MA, October 2025.
(Photo: Thomas O'Reilly)*

MEMBER NEWS
TED SCULL RECEIVES THE SSHSA 2025 SAMUEL WARD STANTON AWARD FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
BY DENISE DACEY



(Photo: SSHSA)

Ted Scull, current WSS-PONY Branch Board member and former PONY Branch Chairman, recently received the Steamship Historical Society of America 2025 Samuel Ward Stanton Award for Lifetime Achievement at the historic Griswold Inn on the Connecticut River in Essex, CT.

Ted was recognized for his maritime travel-related lecturing and writing, and contributing to SSHSA's educational program focusing on America's rich maritime heritage named *SHIPS* for Ships, History, Influence, and Power Series. Ted was also recognized for his support of the South Street Seaport Museum, NYC, including his generous backing of the exhibits: *Millions: Migrants and Millionaires Aboard the Great Liners: 1900-1915*, and *Maritime City*, as well as the important rehabilitation and reinstallation of the museum's treasured 22-foot Queen Mary ship model.

Pat Dacey, SSHSA President and WSS-PONY Vice-Chairman and former Chairman, presented Ted his SSHSA Lifetime Achievement Award. A number of PONY Branch members and Board members were also in attendance. Congratulations from all of us at the WSS-PONY Branch!

WORLD SHIP SOCIETY – PONY BRANCH VISITS THE CARNIVAL VENEZIA BY STUART GEWIRTZMAN



CARNIVAL VENEZIA | WORLD SHIP SOCIETY
NOVEMBER 08, 2025

PONY Branch members with Captain Claudio Cupisti (at center) on the bridge of the CARNIVAL VENEZIA. (Photo: Carnival Cruise Lines)



On Saturday, November 8, 2025, PONY Branch members and friends traveled to the Manhattan Cruise Terminal for a guided tour and lunch onboard the CARNIVAL VENEZIA as guests of Carnival Cruise Line. (This was the second time Carnival hosted the PONY Branch onboard the VENEZIA as additional members had an opportunity to visit the ship in September 2024.) Originally built in 2019 as COSTA VENEZIA to serve the Chinese market for

Costa Cruises, the 135,225 GT, 4,208 passenger, VENEZIA-class ship was transferred to Carnival in 2023 after a refit in Spain. Now branded by Carnival as "Fun Italian Style", she still retains a Venetian-themed décor and Costa funnel colors. (Above photo: Stuart Gewirtzman)

The first stop on our tour was the impressive Piazza San Marco atrium (*right photo*) which features a replica of the Column San Marco topped with a golden Lion of Venice statue. We were then escorted to the bridge where we were warmly welcomed by the ship's master, Captain Claudio Cupisti. After a friendly question and answer session and group photo with the captain, we proceeded to the ship's main theater, the Teatro Rosso, for an opportunity to view the theater's elegant décor from the stage. Our next stop was the unique main dining room, the Canal Grande Restaurant, which features an actual Venetian gondola dramatically lit from beneath under a replica Rialto Bridge (*below photo*). This was followed by lunch at informal dining venues and the Lido Marketplace buffet where a seating area overlooking the adjacent Lido Pool had been reserved for our group. After the leisurely lunch, those attending had ample time to explore the ship's public spaces before disembarking prior to her departure on a 12-night repositioning cruise to Port Canaveral, Florida, via the southern Caribbean. (*Right photo: Stuart Gewirtzman*)



The WSS-PONY Branch would like to extend its sincere thanks to Carnival Cruise Line, Captain Claudio Cupisti, Peter from Guest Services, Marco from Shoreside Services and the Carnival photographer for welcoming us onboard the CARNIVAL VENEZIA.



PONY Branch members and our guide Peter in the Canal Grande Restaurant featuring an actual Venetian gondola beneath a replica Rialto Bridge. (Photo: Carnival Cruise Lines)

HOLIDAY PARTY AT TONY'S DI NAPOLI
UPPER EAST SIDE LOCATION
1081 3RD AVENUE BETWEEN 63RD and 64TH STREETS
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 12 - 3PM



Lunch with salad, pasta, entrée, dessert, and coffee/tea.
\$35 per member and \$50 per guest with a maximum of one guest per member.
Cash bar. Taxes and gratuities included.

Join us for an afternoon with your fellow members!
[2025 Holiday Party at Tony's Di Napoli – World Ship Society](#)

2026 NEW MEMBERSHIPS & MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership includes all digital Porthole newsletters, member meetings, access to encore presentations as well as member event invitations.

\$45 – Single \$65 – Single Patron \$70 – Family \$90 – Family Patron

Patron Memberships provide priority access to special events with capacity limitations.

Family Memberships include one additional person.



Patron Membership Promotion: Receive a free WSS-PONY Branch Embroidered Canvas Baseball Cap

- One free cap for each 2026 Patron member.
- Offer limited to one cap per person.
- One color and size with an adjustable back strap.

Notice the cap's lightship logo, which is the first logo of our parent organization, World Ship Society, UK, founded in 1947.

Join or renew online today at our website:
[Membership Application or Renewal – World Ship Society](#)

SHIPS IN PORT
THE IMMORTAL ANDREA DORIA
BY BILL MILLER



The 23-knot ANDREA DORIA outbound off Lower Manhattan.

It might have gone into the general records of ocean liner history, been just one of many more ordinary ships, but the ANDREA DORIA is immortal. It was a ship of tragedy, a sadly noted and well remembered tragedy. On July 25, 1956, it was rammed by another liner, the Swedish STOCKHOLM, and, being mortally wounded, the Italian Line flagship slowly rolled over on its starboard side and then sank the next morning. In those early days of black-and-white television broadcasting, it was the first major sea disaster brought into the living rooms of America. The sight of a great ocean liner dying slowly was horrific to many.

In December 1952, the 29,000-ton DORIA was brand new, Italy's post-war "renaissance ship," the pride of a reawakened Italian Line. Along with its sister, the CRISTOFORO COLOMBO, which first appeared in the summer of 1954, they were travel sensations on the New York-Mediterranean run and the arch rivals to another sparkling team, American Export Lines' INDEPENDENCE and CONSTITUTION. The DORIA ran in regular three-week, round-trip service between Naples, Genoa, Cannes, Gibraltar, New

York and back in reverse. Fares in the mid-1950s started at \$330 in first class, \$255 in cabin class and \$200 in tourist class.



Sisters: ANDREA DORIA (left) and CRISTOFORO COLOMBO (right) at Genoa.



The popular Lido Deck in Cabin Class

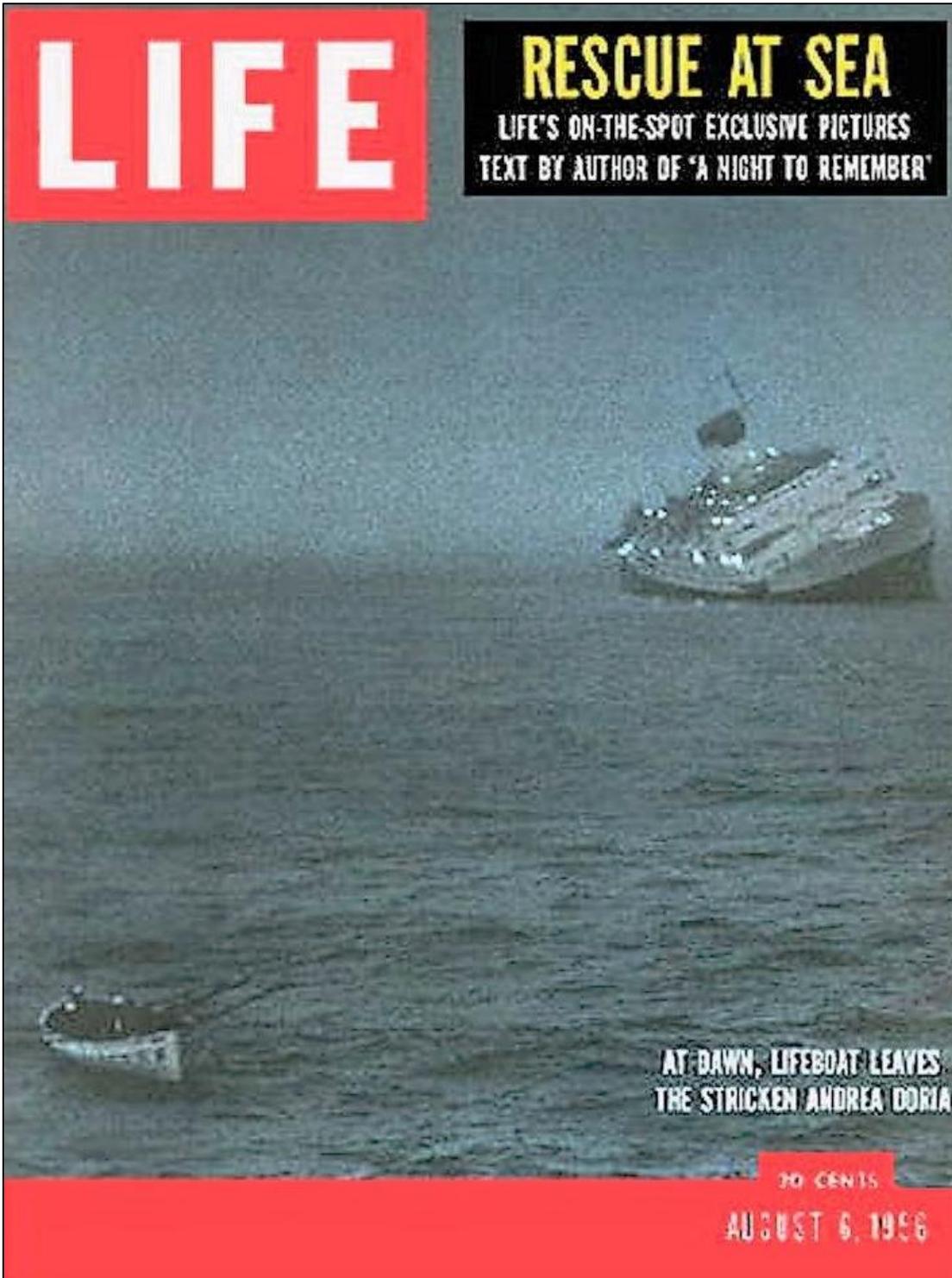


Cabin class travel.

It was on a high summer season westbound crossing, a mere few hours before reaching New York's Pier 84, that the 23-knot ship met her untimely end. In those early days of radar, the officers on the outbound STOCKHOLM misjudged the DORIA's position, a lighted bleep on the radar screen, and so the smaller, but strong and sturdy Swede rammed the Italian just below the starboard bridge. It was a deadly wound. While the 1,248-passenger DORIA was said to be among the safest and most advanced ships then afloat, in fact practically "unsinkable," it began to flood and list almost immediately. Other ships including the ILE DE FRANCE sped to the site. Even the heavily damaged, 12,500-ton STOCKHOLM became part of the rescue fleet. Later, it returned to New York, its razor-like bow gone and the remaining foredeck badly gnashed.

The DORIA remains well remembered and, among others, was the subject of a large commemorative book published in Italy in 2004. The STOCKHOLM went on to live a long, diverse life. After becoming the East German workers' cruise ship VOLKERFREUNDSCHAFT in 1960, it began taking on a long list of new names in 1985: VOLKER, FRIDJOF NANSEN, ITALIA I, ITALIA PRIMA, VALTUR PRIMA, CARIBE, ATHENA, AZORES and finally, in 2017, ASTORIA. After a long lay-up (at Rotterdam), the 77-year-old ship was finally sold to shipbreakers in nearby Belgium last winter.

"The ANDREA DORIA had great symbolism in post-war Italy, in the early 1950s," according to Maurizio Eliseo, one of that country's finest maritime scholars and authors. "Its construction was symbolic of the renaissance of Italy, coming out of the ashes from the Second World War. It was the finest ship in every way that Italy could produce at that time. It also symbolized the rebirth of Italian shipbuilding. And so, there was really something of a national funeral when it was lost. People cried in the streets, for example, and stood in vigils outside the Italian Line headquarters in Genoa. It was, to many Italians, like seeing a dream turn to a nightmare. The Italian Government as well as the Italian Line and all within two days, on July 28th, 1956, announced the construction of a bigger, more beautiful, even more gorgeous liner. Of course, it was the LEONARDO DA VINCI, completed in 1960."



Tragedy on the high seas.

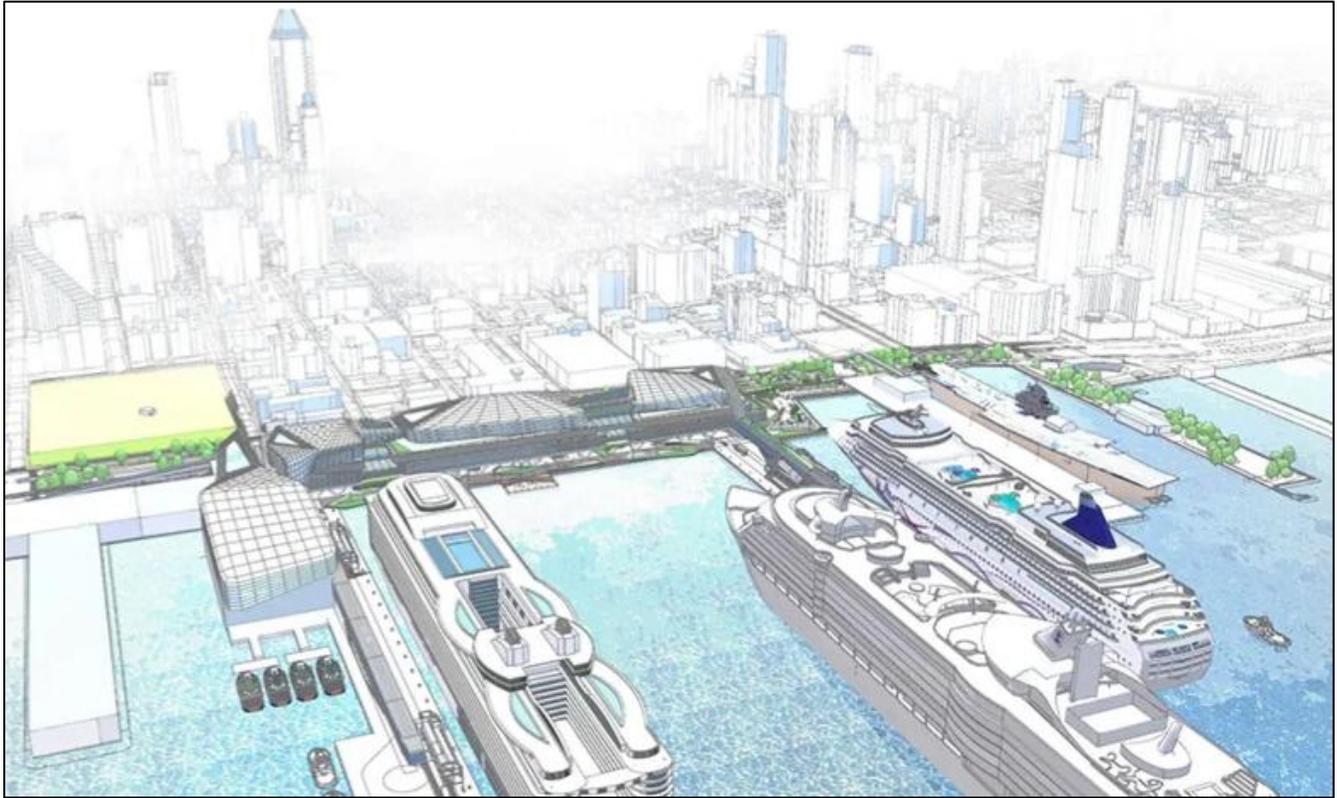
The 700-foot long ANDREA DORIA is one of the best remembered of the great Italian ocean liners of yesteryear, joining the prestigious ranks of the likes of the REX, CONTE DI SAVOIA, LEONARDO DA VINCI and MICHELANGELO.

(Images: Bill Miller Collection)

SHIP NEWS

NYC UNVEILS A MASTER PLAN FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE MANHATTAN CRUISE TERMINAL

COMPILED BY STUART GEWIRTZMAN



In 2024, the Manhattan and Brooklyn cruise terminals welcomed approximately 1.5 million passengers, generated an estimated \$500 million in economic impact, and supported nearly 3,000 local jobs. Looking forward, it is anticipated that demand will continue to grow.

To accommodate this demand, the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) released a comprehensive master plan for the modernization of the Manhattan Cruise Terminal. Key components of the plan include a large new terminal building and replacement of existing piers 88, 90 and 92 with two new, longer piers capable of simultaneously accommodating two 8,000-passenger ships and one 6,000-passenger ship. The plan also includes infrastructure upgrades to allow cruise ships, tug boats and other harbor vessels to connect to the city's electric grid and turn off their engines while berthed and to support future hybrid and fully electric propulsion harbor vessels. Similar upgrades to shore power infrastructure were recently unveiled at the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal.

Other features of the plan include a marine freight landing to support the City's Blue Highways initiative to reduce truck traffic by shifting local freight movement from roadways to waterways; a potential ferry stop; and public area enhancements including expanded pedestrian and bike access, new plazas, widened sidewalks and more visible crosswalks.

Construction would be phased to ensure uninterrupted cruise operations. No information was provided for when the construction might begin or how long the project might take.



A copy of the full master plan can be found on NYCEDC's website at www.edc.nyc. (Images: NYCEDC)



Members may submit the following for consideration for publication in The Porthole: member photos with descriptions and dates taken, ship news, and maritime articles that may be of interest to your fellow members. Please direct submissions to wsspony@gmail.com. Please note published materials are subject to editing and, if printed, are not necessarily the opinion of the WSS-PONY Branch.

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