Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Meeting Notes

Meeting: MSK Kenneth C. Griffin Pavilion Construction Working Group (CWG) Meeting
Date: May 15, 2025
Location: Zoom and Memorial Hospital Room 108

Attendees:

MSK Project Team
CWG Co-Chair Shakima Grant, Senior Community Programs Manager, Community Engagement and Health Equity (CEHE)
CWG Co-Chair Terron Browne, Project Manager, Design and Construction
Ana Garcia, Senior Director, CEHE
Maribel Rodriguez, Senior Project Coordinator, CEHE
Charlie Whitney, Vice President & General Manager, Turner New York's Business Unit
Jason Tavarez, Project Executive, Turner Consigli
Thomas Drumm, Project Executive, Turner Consigli
Ryan Kiefer, Associate Director, Design and Construction
Shelly Friedman, MSK Land Use Counsel, Friedman & Gotbaum
Henry Kearney, Senior Vice President, Air Quality, AKRF
Erin Stolz, Senior Technical Director, Environmental Health and Safety, AKRF
Kenny Mui, Vice President, Construction Analysis, AKRF

Community Representatives
Will Brightbill, Community Board 8
Yasmina Caleo, F.A.C.T.
Julie Clarke, P.S. 183 PTA
Harry Gale, NYC Council Member Julie Menin's Office
Mary Gera, 436 E 66th St
Rachel George, 400 E 67th St (The Laurel)
Jack Glass, ALC Environmental
Laura Jackson, 438 E 66th St
Alex Kogan, Rockefeller University
Anat Rosenberg, F.A.C.T.
James (Jim) Rogers, Rockefeller University
Melanie Russo, P.S. 183 PTA
Judy Schneider, East Sixties Neighborhood Association
Myishia Taylor-Myke, NYC Department of Education
Gregg Wolpert, Stahl Organization (1213 York Ave)

Observers
Jochen Weber, 404 E 66th St.

Invitees not in Attendance:
Sarra Hale, NY State Senator Liz Krueger's Office
Kyle Kolich, P.S. 183
Valerie Mason, Community Board 8
Julie Menin, NYC Council Member Julie Menin's Office

Rene Ontal, NY State Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright's Office
Jennifer Rong, ALC Environmental
Celeste Royo, Manhattan Borough President's Office
Sowaibah Shahbaz, Manhattan Borough President's Office
Nate Sherfinski, NYC Mayor's Office
Moeun Son, Community Member
Serge St. Leger, NYC Department of Education
Jonathan Szott, NYC Council Member Julie Menin's Office
Audrey Tannen, NY State Senator Liz Krueger's Office
Mary Thomas, 404 E 66th St
Martin Woodard, P.S. 183

Welcome, Meeting Goals, Origin, and Format
Shakima Grant welcomed the Construction Working Group (CWG) members and observers. She reintroduced herself as the CWG co-chair. Shakima is the MSK Senior Community Programs Manager. She encouraged community members to reach out to her with community concerns, including issues beyond the scope of the CWG meetings. Shakima reviewed that the CWG meetings specifically provide a forum where the MSK project team can:

1. Provide timely updates to Upper East Side residents and leaders about Griffin Pavilion construction activities.
2. Receive information and questions about ways the project construction activities are affecting the community.
3. Report on how MSK is responding to community construction questions and concerns.

To ensure the CWG continues to meet its goals, moving forward, the forum will not be used to discuss topics outside of this scope, such as the Griffin Pavilion building design and operations, or other MSK operations. Shakima provided background on the origin of the CWG. The plans for the CWG were first discussed during Community Board 8 Task Force meetings. The CWG was later included in a Community Board 8 resolution. The current meeting structure, participating stakeholders, and purpose of the ongoing discussions were shaped by those early conversations and community input.

The CWG meetings are generally held on the third Thursday of the month from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Meetings are hybrid with members on Zoom or in person at MSK. CWG members include the MSK project team, representatives from neighboring buildings, and representatives from local agencies and officials. Each building or office may have one representative and a designated alternate. The CWG meetings are open to the public to observe. All comments and questions regarding Griffin Pavilion construction activities should be directed to CWG members to be raised for discussion during the meetings.

The CWG meetings are recorded. Recordings are available in the Construction Working Group Meetings section of MSK's website: https://www.msk.org/GriffinPavilionConstruction

Construction Report: Current Status & 6 Week Lookahead
Terron Browne reviewed site readiness activities completed to date, including completion of the site fence and the installation of overhead protection along the sidewalks; the removal of soil at the exterior planters; completion of the exterior scaffolding; and the abatement of asbestos-containing material (ACM) in the lining of the exterior planters and interior of the building.

Activities over the next six weeks will include: continuation of structural demolition activities of the buildings located at 1233 York Ave; abatement of ACM on the exterior of the buildings; and steel installation in the courtyard that separates the project site from the Rockefeller Research Laboratories building. The 6-week Lookahead is available in the Current Construction Lookahead section of MSK's website (link above).

Air Quality Report
Terron Browne reviewed the air quality controls in place for the project and the locations of the air quality monitors. He presented a display of the continuous air quality readings from the air monitors since last month's CWG meeting. The readings are of overall air quality levels, to which the Griffin Pavilion construction activities contribute. The readings use the PM10 scale, which measures the amount of particulate matter in the air in micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu g/m^3$). On the PM10 scale, a level of 0-50 is generally considered good, and above 150 is considered potentially unhealthy. The highest measurement recorded since last month's CWG meeting was 39 on the PM10 scale.

ALC Environmental Update
Jack Glass from ALC Environmental shared that during the third week of April, ALC transitioned from using stationary monitors to handheld devices—one for measuring noise and one for particulate matter (PM). They walk the construction perimeter twice a week with the handheld monitors.

The observed levels particulate matter has remained stable, and ALC Environmental has not identified any issues that would raise concerns regarding environmental or health exposure risks.

In response to questions, ALC Environmental confirmed that the current handheld monitors are tracking PM2.5 levels and that they are installing a hydrogen sulfide monitor. It will be operational by May 20th.

Old Business
MSK reported that subsequent to gas delivery issues reported in April, MSK has been working with its gas delivery vendor on service improvements. There were 9 community inquiries since the previous CWG meeting. The issues were as follows

- Neighbors asked for an update on reimbursements for air purifier units. It was explained that reimbursements take approximately 60 days to process following submission.
- There was an inquiry on May 2 regarding vibrations in a nearby building. MSK reviewed data from May 1 and May 2 and did not identify anything to indicate a seismic event occurred. MSK will continue to investigate this report.
- There were inquiries regarding noise and work performed on weekends. MSK reiterated its commitment to noise reduction and shared the measures put in place to reduce construction noise impacts. MSK also clarified that, in the multiple public forums where the MSK construction team discussed the project, MSK did not commit to forgoing after-hours work. MSK also clarified that work observed by neighbors on Sunday, May 3, was performed by Con Edison and not MSK. The work related to a vault Con Edison maintains. MSK will continue to notify neighbors whenever we are aware of after-hours work for which we are responsible.

Questions and Answers
The following additional questions were raised during the meeting and answered as indicated.

- When will the community have the opportunity to discuss the design of the building?

  The aim of the CWG is to update the members on the construction timeline and to address concerns and questions regarding construction activity. MSK will share design elements for informational purposes, as we've done in the past.

- Will the Griffin Pavilion have the same type of gas deliveries as the current MSK buildings, and if so, can we expect the same noise levels—particularly during late-night deliveries?

  Oxygen and other medical gas deliveries for the Griffin Pavilion will follow refill procedures used at other MSK sites. Gas levels are assessed weekly, and deliveries are scheduled accordingly. On average, refills are needed every three to four weeks.

- Is there a reason the oxygen deliveries cannot happen during the day?

  We've been in contact with the vendor and are actively coordinating with MSK Facilities to explore daytime delivery options. We'll provide a full update at the June meeting.

- What happens in the clean bay area that was shown in a previous meeting?

  The clean bay is for sterile patient transport, not emergency ambulance arrivals. Ambulances will back into the building to allow for clean, non-emergency patient transfers without the use of sirens.

- Where and how will garbage be stored and removed from the new Griffin Pavilion?

  Garbage will be stored within the building and removed via a dedicated loading dock located on the north side of 67th Street. The goal is to concentrate truck traffic—including deliveries, loading, and waste removal—into that single location, which is situated away from the residential zone and among other existing loading docks on the street.

- Why wasn't this level of Saturday work disclosed before getting Community Board approval? Why are we only now hearing that the project will operate six days a week?

  There was a presentation to Community Board 8 on May 29, 2023, that included discussion of weekend work. It was stated that weekend work would occur "when necessary" and that after-hours variances would be applied for as needed.

- Why not extend work hours during weekdays, especially in the summer when school is out, and the sunset is later?

  The project team has considered various options. Extending work into the evening presents safety concerns, particularly for structural demolition work at the top of the building. While all alternatives are evaluated, extended weekday hours come with their own challenges and may not necessarily result in less community impact.

- Is Saturday work expected to continue every week for the entire six-year duration?

  MSK will continue to avail itself of the options provided in the Building Code to all construction permit holders for seeking permission to conduct weekend or after-hours work and remains committed to complying with all DOB regulations while doing so. Saturday work is planned every week through the structural demolition phase, which ends in September. After that, any Saturday activity will depend on the project schedule.

- There was work done on a Sunday to install scaffolding. Why couldn't that be done on a weekday or Saturday?

Sunday work occurred to erect a crane, which required removing and re-installing the site's pedestrian protection on a Sunday. This was done in accordance with the Department of Transportation's safety requirements, which govern vehicular and pedestrian safety whenever the work occurs on a public street or sidewalk.

Adjournment and Next Meeting

The next meeting is Thursday, June 26, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. For project updates, visit msk.org/GriffinPavilionConstruction, email communityaffairs@mskcc.org, or call the construction hotline at 212-639-4444.