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## Council alerted to walkway vandalism

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EDGEWATER VIEW

Iris Borman, a homeowner at Grand Cove, a large housing complex on the Hudson River, raised concerns at a recent council meeting about security and vandalism on the waterfront walkway in [Edgewater](#).

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**EDGEWATER** — In a perfect world, the three-mile stretch of the waterfront walkway that runs through [Edgewater](#) from [Fort Lee](#) to [North Bergen](#) would be a continuous path with no gaps and safe and easy access for families, young professionals and seniors out for a stroll.

Unfortunately, the walkway is not continuous. Some sections have sustained major erosion damage, and some waterfront properties have been vandalized.

At the June 20 mayor and council meeting at the new municipal building at 55 River Road, Iris Borman a homeowner at the Grand Cove, a riverfront housing complex of some 200 town-house and apartment units, stated her concerns about the vandalism and what she described as the lack of safety and security on the walkway, which is

always open.

"The Grand Cove has had some vandalism in the past year," she said. "This past Saturday night, the police were called at about 2:20 a.m. to remove some people from the Grand Cove walkway. I would like to know what progress has been made to install cameras that can be monitored by the police department."

Borough Administrator Greg Franz explained that work had been delayed because the borough was preoccupied with the move into the new building.

"Essentially the progress has been little since we last spoke, but I know it is a priority of the police chief, who has discussed it with the mayor," he said.

"Hopefully, once we complete this project, we can initiate others. It was on the drawing board with Mayor Nancy Merse, and we had several proposals at that time," he added, referring to the late mayor.

Borman asked whether the borough could take advantage of federal Homeland Security grants released to the state. She also said Grand Cove homeowners would be willing to participate in talks on how to finance the project if federal grants or borough funds could not be allocated to install security cameras.

"Installing cameras on the walkway is a standing request to our grant consultant," Franz said. "She diligently reviews what we can apply for, but so far she's been unsuccessful."

Days after the meeting, Borman demonstrated where vandals had jumped over the Grand Cove fence and thrown lounge chairs into the complex's pool. She also pointed out where ropes installed on the walkway to prevent pedestrians from falling into the river had been damaged.

"We're lucky they didn't throw the chairs into the Hudson," Borman said.

Farouk Ahmad, a former director of the [Bergen County](#) Department of Planning and Economic Development, had been a strong advocate for the walkway, but he retired in January.

In the meantime, the department is preparing to post the final revision of the 180-page Hudson River Waterfront Walkway study, which addresses the gaps in the three-mile-stretch, and how it should be designed.

Although one of the recommended goals is for a single agency to provide reliable security along the walkway, the survey does not definitively answer how funds can be

allocated to install security cameras and how emergency personnel can get to the narrow walkway efficiently.

Adam Strobel, director of the county Division of Open Space, said he had numerous conversations with Borman regarding security concerns but added that her issues were more the purview of the state Department of Environmental Protection rather than the county.

"A lot of the things she's upset with are not controllable by the county," said Strobel, adding that while he finds Borman's concerns legitimate, the study is not intended to take over those responsibilities.


"Nor is the county proposing to come in and relieve owners of their responsibilities and obligations," Strobel added. "These things are more related to the DEP because they're mandating these property owners to build sections of the walkway, but not providing any other assistance in terms of maintenance or security."

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