

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MARGARET MARKEY

OCTOBER 17, 2008

I am pleased to speak out in support of the Willets Point project before you today.

In these challenging times for the economy of the city and the nation, it is of vital importance that we give the upmost consideration to projects that have a significant economic benefit.

I believe that the Willets Point project provides both immediate as well as long-term benefits for the economy of Queens and urge the Council to approve it.

The proposed project site, located adjacent to some of the most popular destinations in Queens, is currently underutilized and has long suffered from neglect and misuse. It presently has enormous environmental and infrastructure challenges.

The project that is proposed for the site would bring an exciting retail and entertainment complex to this location, including a new hotel and a first-class convention center that will attract regional conferences, trade shows and exhibitions to Queens. It will also bring thousands of mixed-income residential apartments and other community amenities to the site. In the process, the environmental problems at Willets Point will be erased and replaced with "green" buildings and public open spaces and waterfront access that will be a model for the entire city.

The economic benefits for us are enormous. Not only will the Willets Point proposal provide a one-time opportunity to bring \$4 billion of private investment to the site, it will also have a positive \$25 billion economic impact for Queens over the first 10 years.

Particularly important to me are the jobs that this project will provide. At a time when construction activity may already be slowing, Willets Point will provide some 18,000 construction jobs. The project will result in 5,500 permanent jobs, with another 1,000 part-time jobs associated with the convention center.



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

**TESTIMONY OF  
ROBERT C. LIEBER,  
DEPUTY MAYOR FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
ON WILLETS POINT REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

**BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE ON LAND USE,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PLANNING, DISPOSITIONS & CONCESSIONS**

OCTOBER 17, 2008  
*Testimony as Prepared*

Thank you, Council Member Garodnick, and members of the subcommittee.

The remediation and redevelopment of Willets Point is one of the most important projects in the borough of Queens in over a century. More than 75 years ago, the site was a coal ash dump immortalized in the "Great Gatsby." For more than 50 years, there has been a lot of discussion in Queens and around the City about how to clean and develop the site. Many of our predecessors have tried and come up short, and plans have come and plans have gone, but now is the time to act. It's time to seize this historic opportunity to clean up Willets Point once and for all and reclaim this environmental eyesore.

The benefits of this project are significant:

- Remediating a contaminated site, and cleaning up the Flushing River and Bay...cleaning the blight that affects all the surrounding communities.
- Creating new public open space
- Building a new school and community space
- Creating at least 1,100 units of affordable housing...50% of which will be set aside for local residents
- Adding three times the number of permanent jobs on site...at higher pay, with benefits, while relocating as many of the existing jobs as possible
- Creating 18,000 construction jobs
- Developing a comprehensive workforce training program that will be available to all 1,700 workers at Willets Point
- Supporting local, minority and women-owned businesses
- Catalyzing a projected \$25 billion in economic activity over the next 30 years, and generating significant incremental tax revenue...which can be used to pay our Police Officers, Firefighters, and teachers and make other investments in the City.

It's been described as the Valley of Ashes and the Iron Triangle. Indeed, Willets Point is a bleak area. This central 62-acre piece of land has been cordoned off from the rest of the City and the neighboring communities of Corona, Elmhurst, East Elmhurst, Jackson Heights, and Flushing. It's like the hole in the middle of a donut. The surrounding neighborhoods are vibrant...but the hole is, well, a hole. This is one of the most haphazard amalgamations of uses anywhere. Every worker, every business owner, and every landowner will acknowledge these are deplorable conditions. It is contaminated, with open petroleum spills and illegal dumping. It lacks roadways, sidewalks and utilities.

It lacks infrastructure so that industrial waste and even human waste have nowhere to go. Waste and sewage settles on the surface, seeps into the groundwater and, because of the high water table, flows into the Flushing River. These are the substandard conditions in which roughly 260 businesses have to operate. And there are a wide range of businesses here: some have operated in Willets Point for generations, while others are more transitory. Some look like they are located in any standard manufacturing or industrial park, but the overwhelming majority of the businesses operating here look like this.

The pictures behind me aren't from the third world, or a war-torn country half a world away. This exists right here in New York City – in Willets Point – and it has for decades. No matter how we get to this point, Willets Point is what it is – these] are the deplorable conditions in which approximately 1,700 New Yorkers are forced to work every day to support their families.

We have a unique opportunity to put Willets Point on a path towards a better future. A future that remediates the blight and rehabilitates the environment. A future that adds three-times as many permanent jobs to the site, and that's in addition to the jobs already on the site that will be relocated, as well as 18,000 new construction jobs. These are good jobs – adding thousands of prevailing wage and union jobs to the economy. A future that includes over eleven-hundred affordable housing units. A future that promotes new opportunities for minority and woman owned businesses. A future that includes new parks, new stores, new open space, and a safe place for New Yorkers to raise their families.

Willets Point is incredibly well situated for that future. It has excellent transit amenities including highways and mass transit. And it is in the center of so much activity – look at what's going on around Willets: there is the Flushing River and Bay, a booming population in Downtown Flushing that's clamoring for waterfront access, one of the largest parks in the City, the new CitiField, thriving cultural and recreational destinations like the Queens Museum and New York Hall of Science, and the growing communities of Corona, Elmhurst, East Elmhurst, and Jackson Heights. And literally in the middle of all of that is Willets Point – stifling development on the waterfront on the Flushing side, and continuing to contaminate the River and Bay.

It's not surprising – take a look at what the river looks like next to Willets Point. The odors waft about, the smell of sewage, open spills and decay, permeates the air. Untreated sewage flows into the river, along with automotive waste, chemicals, metals, corrosives and who knows what else. Unless we take care of the source of this contamination, we will never be able to turn this river into an oasis.

This plan originated in 2002 and developed within the surrounding communities. It has had constant and consistent public feedback. These communities in Queens demand a cleaner, healthier, and overall better Willets Point

So what's the plan to remediate and rehabilitate Willets Point?

First and foremost it must be cleaned of its decades-old contamination. It must be physically raised to an elevation up to 6 feet higher than it sits today to bring the site out of the FEMA 100-year flood plain. Infrastructure will be installed – with improved sewer outfalls and we will pave the way for a new, green and sustainable neighborhood.

After the area is fully remediated, the new Willets Point will be home to a neighborhood with up to 5,500 units of much-needed housing, more than 20% of which will be affordable. That means there will be more than 1,100 units of housing affordable to low- and moderate-income New Yorkers, 50% of which will be set aside for local residents. As we all know, we need more housing – and more affordable housing – in New York City and in the community.

The plan will require that a new K-8 public school be built on the site. Working with DOE and SCA, we will size the school to meet the community's needs. Also, there will be 150,000 SF of community space that will be programmed with input from area residents. Today, there are no community facilities.

Residents and visitors to Willets Point will enjoy at least 8 acres of publicly accessible open space, in addition to other open space that will be developed in building courtyards, green roofs and other areas. Today, the open spaces are littered with abandoned cars and craters of standing polluted water.

Leveraging its proximity to the City's two airports, Willets Point is a natural location for a convention center and hotel. The convention center would occupy the northeast corner of the site and become a destination for business and tourists who will bring their spending dollars to Willets Point, to Queens and the surrounding neighborhoods.

The new Willets Point will be characterized by a retail and entertainment district along 126<sup>th</sup> Street drawing visitors from Citifield, the #7 Station, and the LIRR stop. Today, the Borough of Queens is underserved by retail and loses out on about \$6 billion of economic activity from shoppers who leave the borough and do their shopping in Nassau and other counties outside the City. The nearly 2 million-square-feet of retail space in Willets Point will go a long way toward recapturing those revenues for the borough and the City.

Willets Point will be sustainable. This transit-oriented development was selected as a pilot project for the LEED-ND program by the U.S. Green Buildings Council. We are mandating dedicated bike lanes throughout the site, new parks and plazas, and rooftop landscaping. We're also exploring innovative green power generation and water reuse facilities.

This development will be built with M/WBE and Local Labor participation – with union jobs and good wages. We have worked with the Borough President's M/WBE Task Force and committed to target participation for M/WBE and Local Labor force hiring. We want to make sure that M/WBEs are aware of the opportunities open to them at Willets Point and will require the future developer or developers to dedicate \$2.5 million for capacity building programs that will help prepare M/WBEs for the work that they can access through the development.

So how are we going to realize this plan?

We have to start by remediating the land, and to ultimately clean this area, we need to clear it and remediate it comprehensively and contiguously. We can't do it in a random or checkerboard fashion.

We need to take title to the land. The City's first choice is always a negotiated transaction. We would only contemplate Eminent Domain as a last resort. But let me be clear – this Urban Renewal Plan is about remediating a 62-acre environmental hazard and finally bringing an end to decades-old blight, pollution and decay. We cannot abandon the people of Queens and we cannot turn a blind eye to this environmental devastation any longer. Queens deserves better.

Our vision for Willets Point is an example of the type of ambitious, forward-thinking projects that New York City is known for. The rebirth of the South Bronx and Melrose Commons, the revitalization of Times Square, the transformation of Hudson Yards, and the Nehemiah project and Metrotech in Brooklyn– all these projects transformed what was once a decrepit area into attractive, safe and clean neighborhoods. Our plan at Willets Point will do the same. But we are doing one thing differently here that we didn't do in the aforementioned projects - we have begun negotiations before the completion of ULURP – and have, in fact, completed several deals. In the past, we only began negotiations with landowners after the completion of ULURP. In this case, we have taken the relatively unprecedented and extraordinary step of reaching out to as many of the landowners as we can and negotiating transactions even before the completion of ULURP.

This effort has already yielded promising results, which I will discuss in a moment, but first let's talk about the lay of the land at Willets Point – let me break it down for you: There are about 260 businesses operating in the 62-acre site – a mixture of owner-occupied and tenant businesses – and 74 landowners. The vast majority of businesses that you see here, roughly 235, lease their space from 49 third-party landowners. Those third party landowners own nearly 24 acres, or nearly half of the private property at the site. The remaining 25 landowners own their own land and operate their own businesses on the site. These 25 own the other half of the private land in Willets Point. These 25 owner-occupants tend to be larger businesses, and many of them are sitting behind me here. All told, these businesses employ roughly 1,700 men and women at Willets Point.

We have undertaken an unprecedented three-pronged approach to addressing the needs of the businesses, the landowners and the workers: We are negotiating with the 25 owner-occupied businesses and 49 landowners to purchase property and assist with relocation; We continue to reach out to many of the 235 tenant businesses through our consultants and offer relocation assistance; and We are developing a comprehensive workforce training program for all of the roughly 1,700 Willets Points workers.

Our efforts have started to pay off. In fact, if the City were to complete all of its active negotiations successfully, it would – including land already secured by the City – own more than 60% of the 62 acres at Willets Point. Though of course not all of these negotiations will be completed prior to the end of ULURP, today the City already controls a significant amount of the land at Willets Point. In fact, today I'm happy to announce deals with three landowners – including Parts Authority and Willets Point Properties LLC – that together own nearly 3 acres at Willets Point. With today's news, we have reached negotiated acquisition or relocation deals with 8 landowners for more than 12% of the private land at the site. In addition, we are in active negotiations with 20 additional owners representing more than 36% of the private land at Willets Point.

When combined with the 14 acres, or 22.6% of the site, that is already City-owned, that means that the City owns, or has made progress on, more than three-fifths of the entire site – and this has been done in the face of opposition. True, there are some of the 74 landowners with whom we have not yet started

discussions. However, let's be clear – post-ULURP we will continue to pursue fair market, negotiated transaction with as many landowners as we can.

With regard to tenant businesses, the City is legally prevented from directly negotiating their relocation until after the completion of ULURP. But we have retained consultants who are already at work in Willets Point focusing on this community. Howard/Stein Hudson, a company experienced in business outreach and assessment, was brought on board in the beginning of the year to serve as tenant outreach specialists. They went door-to-door, performed an assessment of the tenant businesses, and answered questions on the ULURP process and the City's plan. Earlier this summer, we brought on Cornerstone Realty Group, a noted relocation expert that successfully worked with businesses at Hudson Yards, to offer relocation services to tenants at Willets Point. Cornerstone has already begun their outreach effort and will essentially act as a no-fee broker to identify new locations. Tenant businesses will be eligible for marketing and signage expenses associated with their relocation, along with some moving and storage costs.

We have aggressively reached out to landowners to negotiate agreements and assist with relocation. We've had more than 500 meetings and substantive communication with the businesses and have already cut 8 deals, as I mentioned. Many others are close to completion. It took a while to get to this point, since many of the businesses were reluctant to meet with us or engage in meaningful and substantive negotiations at the outset. But over the last two months, we've seen a real pick-up in talks. Candidly, the process of finding a suitable relocation site can be lengthy, and some uses are very difficult to relocate, but each and every business with whom we have reached deals will attest to the fact that we negotiate fairly, honestly and directly.

There are roughly 1,700 workers employed in dramatically varied conditions in Willets Point. Many are in the automotive sector and earn an average of \$22,000 annually and receive no healthcare benefits. That's 20% less than the average earned by workers in the automotive sector citywide. We expect that while many workers will relocate with their current employers, others may not be able to, or may choose not to. Our comprehensive workforce training program will be available to all of the workers of Willets Point – regardless of who they work for, and regardless of their immigration status.

We hired LaGuardia Community College, a well-respected Queens institution that specializes in training New Yorkers for jobs, to develop the \$2.5 million program. The CUNY on Wheels van has already visited Willets Point to begin outreach and program development. Through LaGuardia, workers will be able to access educational programs, ESL, immigration services, and job training and placement programs. Workers have begun to express interest in the program and have pre-registered for services.

Several weeks ago the Hotel and Motel Trades Council announced that they will, for the first time ever, open their training and job placement services to non-member workers from Willets Point. Workers can train for a variety of careers in the Hotel and Hospitality sector including food and beverage service, engineering mechanics, and other skills.

And today, I am happy to announce that we are planning a new element of the comprehensive training program. The Greater New York Automobile Dealers Association, in coordination with LaGuardia Community College, will develop and design a new curriculum tailor-made for Willets Point workers to train them for entry-level positions in car dealerships' service and repair departments and also make them eligible for various specialized certificates. This unprecedented training opportunity will give

Willetts Point workers yet another option and open even more doors helping them to access good-paying jobs throughout the city.

We expect that many workers will relocate with their current employers – and stay in New York City. But this program is about providing options to workers, so that they are armed with the tools, skills and support necessary to provide a better life for their families. No one will be forced to participate – everyone will have the option to do so.

The redevelopment of Willetts Point is the one of the biggest and most important reclamation and remediation programs the Borough of Queens has ever seen. It will clean an environmentally compromised area and pave the way for a new neighborhood, good paying jobs for local and minority and woman owned business enterprises, and new affordable housing units in an area sorely lacking in both. Willetts Point has been in this desperate state for too long, and we owe it to everyone to clean this space up and to bring some certainty to the future of the area.

We owe it to Queens to:

- Remediate a contaminated site, and clean up the Flushing River and Bay
- Build a new school and community space
- Create at least 1,100 units of affordable housing...50% of which will be set aside for local residents
- Adding three times the number of permanent jobs on site...at higher pay, with benefits, while relocating as many of the existing jobs as possible
- Create 18,000 construction jobs
- Develop a comprehensive workforce training program that will be available to all Willetts Point workers
- Support local, minority and women-owned businesses
- Catalyze a projected \$25 billion in economic activity over the next 30 years, and generate significant tax revenue...which can be used to pay for essential City services.

There is a broad and growing coalition of supporters for the program, many of whom you will hear from today – you'll hear from elected officials like Borough President Marshall, labor leaders like Jack Ahearn, and leading environmental advocates like the League of Conservation Voters and Environmental Defense Fund. You'll hear from large and established area businesses and the Queens Chamber of Commerce, and you'll hear from small business owners in the area who stand to benefit from an attractive and populated Willetts Point. Each of them supports this project.

But you're going to hear from folks who raise objections about this project as well. You'll hear that the City is at fault because infrastructure was never installed here. We can't turn back the clock and change history, and I'm not here to debate who is responsible for the Willetts Point of today. We have the chance to do something today to make sure that Willetts Point isn't sentenced to a future of blight and contamination. This plan is the only way to responsibly remediate Willetts Point, install infrastructure and raise the land so that the future of Willetts Point is bright. It's what the community has been saying for years needs to happen.

You'll hear others claim that the land doesn't need to be raised – well, that's plainly untrue. In order to improve the conditions that bedevil Willetts Point, our experts tell us that the entire site needs to be



raised up to 6 feet. It's not hard to believe that, just look across the street at Citifield – the Mets needed to raise the field 5 feet to get it out of the flood plain.

You'll hear that the City should just install the infrastructure around the businesses and let Willets Point develop naturally. We studied that scenario and it just doesn't make sense. There just isn't enough space between the high ground water table and the surface to install the pipes, utilities, and supports needed. The groundwater contamination would continue. The site needs to be remediated in a contiguous fashion; you cannot checkerboard you way around the site. The roads with infrastructure would sit up to 6 feet higher than the businesses that remain.

You'll hear that the ground isn't contaminated, that the businesses have already cleaned their sites. That challenges logic. If some businesses say they have cleaned their sites, they've likely only done so to a minimum required by DEC. The high water table which allows contaminants to spread widely across the site ensures that any space that was even momentarily cleaned, is either already compromised or will be shortly. We aren't the only ones saying that, the head of the region's Spills Division at DEC recognizes that any clean up any of the businesses may have done, is totally compromised because neighboring sites will easily continue to recontaminate.

You'll hear that because we have not yet selected a developer, you cannot be sure what final build out will look like. It's true, we have not yet selected a developer, but the special district controls that we are putting into place specify precisely where the uses will be, how tall buildings will be, how far the set backs will be, the width of the streets, the parks, the open space, the form of the residential neighborhood and school – it's all outlined in the special district.

You'll hear that in a time of economic turmoil the City shouldn't take on a project of this magnitude. That is just short-sighted and wrong. The decision to make these investments in Willets Point today will set the stage for development in the future. It is precisely at times like this that we need to invest in projects that create jobs, grow the tax base, build affordable housing, and make the City a better more competitive place. This project does all of that.

Members of the subcommittee, this is a project that began in the community, for the benefit of the community. It will result in thousands of good jobs, thousands of units of affordable housing, a new school and community space, new public open space, and a comprehensive workforce development program. It has taken decades to get to this point, and now we have a historic opportunity to fix what is broken in Willets Point.

We must make the choice between doing nothing and sentencing Willets Point to wallow in decades-old contamination and blight, or doing what's right and charting a better, cleaner and greener future for the area. The choice is clear. Willets Point has suffered too long. And now, we must act.

Thank you for your time. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

This proposal will not only create a new destination, amenities and infrastructure that will help not only those on the site, but also provide a boost for businesses in adjoining communities as well as the entire borough.

Day by day, the headlines report new examples that demonstrate how our city's economy is slowing. Approval of the Willets Point project is a positive, affirmative action that will ensure jobs for thousands of our city's construction workers as well as provide a significant boost to our economy for decades to come.

I respectfully urge the City Council to approve the Willets Point project. Thank you.

# Flushing Willets Point Corona LDC

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## INFORMATION

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Dear Council Members:

We are writing to urge you to support the City's plan to remediate and redevelop Willets Point, Queens. As citizens, community leaders, elected officials, merchants, environmentalists, urban planners, business leaders and union members, we all have a vested interest in the quality of life of our city. Many of us participated in the 2002 public meetings that urged action at Willets Point and led to the current plan. Ensuring the long-term stability of our neighborhoods, environment and economy is our collective goal.

The City's proposal for Willets Point is our best chance to transform a degraded section of New York into an engine for environmentally sensible growth and community development. Combined with its wonderful existing entertainment and cultural attractions, the addition of a new convention center, diverse new retail and restaurant options, as well as modern and affordable housing, all built on green environmental principles, Willets Point will become a one-of-a kind destination that will draw millions of new visitors to Queens.

Redevelopment also offers an opportunity to tap into the dynamic communities surrounding Willets Point and create new connections between our neighborhoods. As you know, Queens has become one of the great melting pots of the world; and those who come to Willets Point to shop, eat and spend the day can also visit nearby Jackson Heights, Elmhurst and Corona to taste the cuisines of Central and South America; or enjoy the Lunar New Year Parade and other cultural offerings in Flushing.

In this way, a redeveloped Willets Point will provide unprecedented benefits for the Queens economy and add to the city's economy as a whole. In addition to the billions of dollars in new tax revenue, it will create thousands of new construction and quality permanent jobs, translating to meaningful new work opportunities for the local community and beyond.

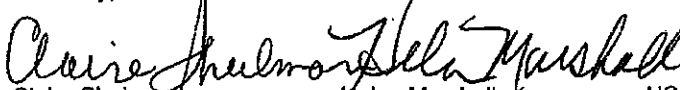
The environmental benefits of this project offer perhaps the greatest return: the rehabilitation of a 60 acre brownfield which has been abused for decades into a sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> century LEED community. The redevelopment of Willets Point will also lead to the clean up and renewal of the Flushing River.


And make no mistake, we are keenly sensitive to the businesses, property owners and workers located on the site now, and we believe this project can be a win-win opportunity for them as well. The City is negotiating with existing businesses, large and small, to relocate or to buy their land and has begun to make strong progress in this effort. We must all care about the workers at Willets Point, and their future must be considered, so we will closely monitor the City's workforce assistance program to ensure that they have new, meaningful opportunities.

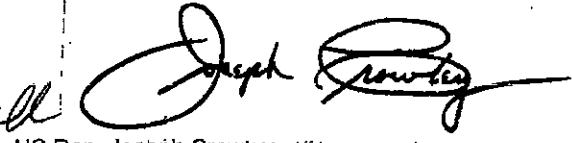
In conclusion, after more than 50 years of unsuccessful attempts the clean-up of Willets Point is at hand and we as community leaders face a historic opportunity: we can transform a long underused and polluted swath of land into a cornerstone of the City's future. We can create new jobs, new housing, build an environmentally sustainable community that generates better paying jobs and substantially more economic activity than it does today. As Council Members, you hold the key to the future of Willets Point, and we ask you to vote for the project and ensure it comes true.

We look forward to working with you to make this a reality.

Sincerely,

  
Claire Shulman  
President & CEO FWC LDC

  
Helen Marshall  
Queens Borough President

  
US Rep. Joseph Crowley  
Seventh District, New York

Helen Marshall  
Queens Borough President

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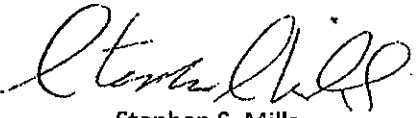
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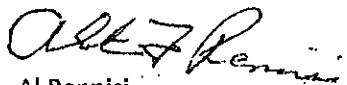
Michael Meyer  
TDC Development



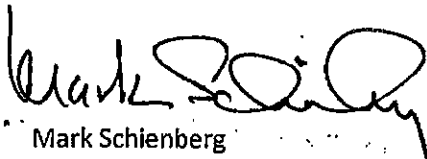
Stephen S. Mills  
New York Hospital Queens



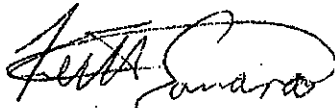
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Mark Schienberg  
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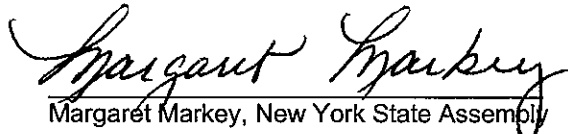
Keith Samaroo  
Paulus, Sartor & Sokolowski

  
Nettie Mayerson, New York State Assembly

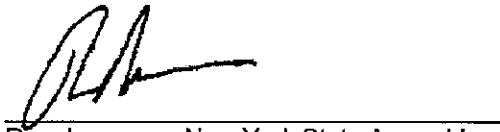
  
Jeff Aubry, New York State Assembly

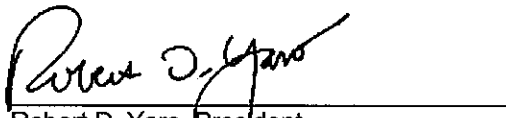
  
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Mark Weprin, New York State Assembly

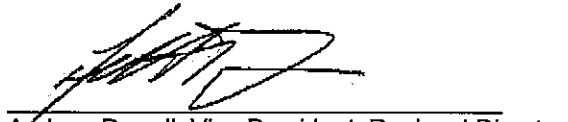
  
Margaret Markey, New York State Assembly

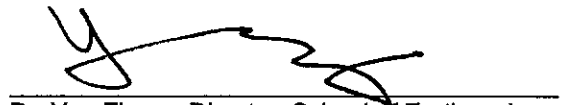
  
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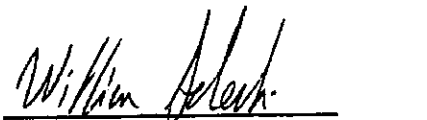
  
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Regional Plan Association

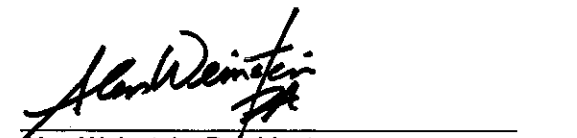
  
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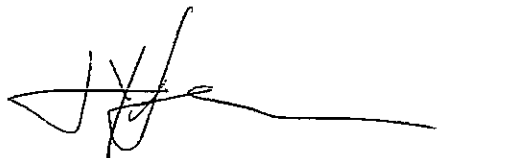
  
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Environmental Defense Fund

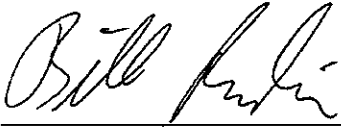
  
Dr. Yan Zheng, Director, School of Earth and  
Environmental Sciences, Professor Geochemistry  
Queens College, City University of New York

  
William Solecki, Director  
CUNY Institute for Sustainable Cities

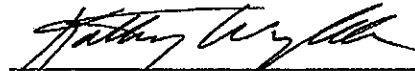
  
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Queens Botanical Garden

  
Alan Weinstein, President  
American Institute of Architects, Queens Chapter

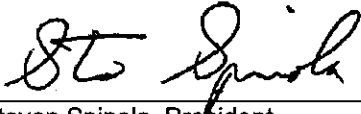
  
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Queens Council on the Arts



William Rudin, Chairman  
Association for a Better New York



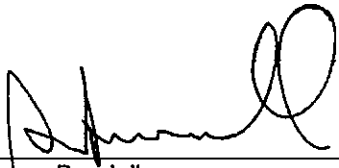
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Partnership for New York City



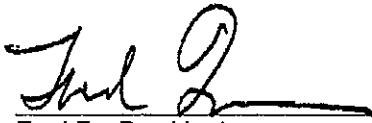
Steven Spinola, President  
Real Estate Board of New York



Richard T. Anderson, President  
New York Building Congress



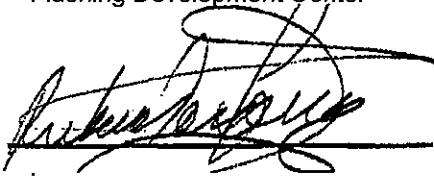
Bruce Bendell  
Major Automotive Companies



Fred Fu, President  
Flushing Development Center



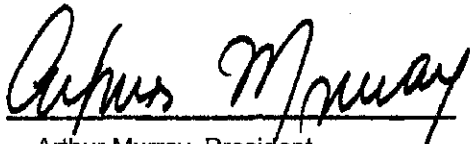
Charles McShane, Editor  
Develop Willets Point website



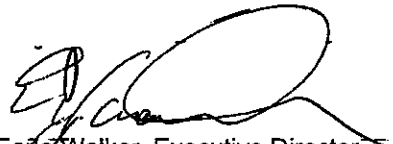
Ruben Pena, President  
Corona Action Network



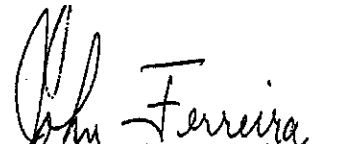
Amy Peterson, President  
Non Traditional Employment for Women



Arthur Murray, President  
Northern Boulevard Merchants Association



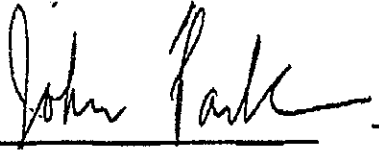
Earle Walker, Executive Director  
Regional Alliance for Small Contractors



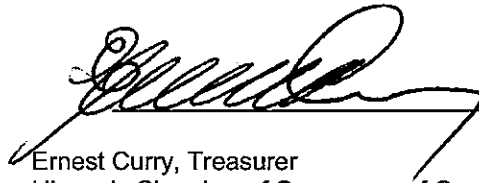
John Ferreira, President  
Junction Boulevard Merchants Association



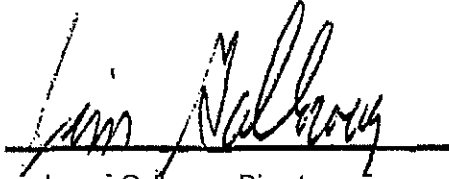
Lina Gottesman, Vice President  
Professional Women in Construction



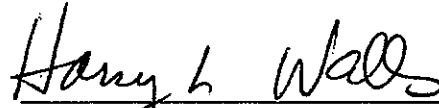
John Park, President  
Korean American Community Empowerment Council



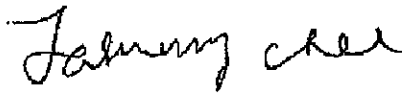
Ernest Curry, Treasurer  
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Queens



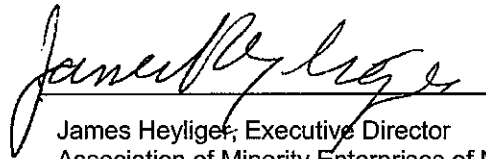
James Galloway, Director  
LeFrak City Merchants Association



Harry Wells, Executive Director  
York College Small Business Development  
Center




Jasmmy Chee, President  
American Asian Cultural Society



James Heyliger, Executive Director  
Association of Minority Enterprises of NY



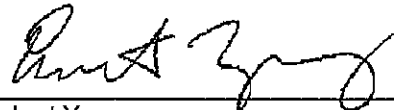
Kris Ram, Executive Director  
Hindu Temple Society of North America



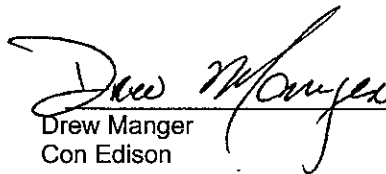
Howard Dai, President  
Zhe Jiang Business Association



Dennis Shi, COO  
Ouo Corporation



Robert Young  
Commerce Bank



Drew Manger  
Con Edison

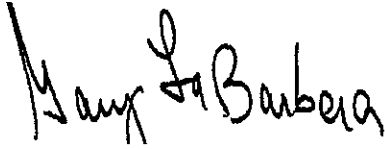


Joseph Ramaglia, Business Manager  
IUPAT District Council 9



Dr. Annie Martin, Trustee Emeritus  
American Red Cross of Greater NY, Labor Laison

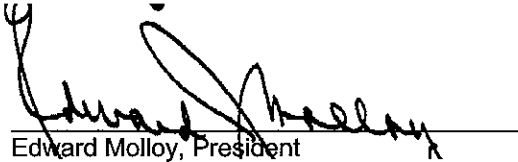




Gary LaBarbera, President  
New York City Central Labor Council



Peter Ward, President  
New York Hotel and Motel Trades Council



Edward Molloy, President  
Building and Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO



Edward F. Ott, Executive Director  
New York City Central Labor Council



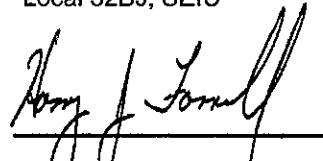
Stuart Applebaum, President  
Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union



Mike Fishman, President  
Local 32BJ, SEIU



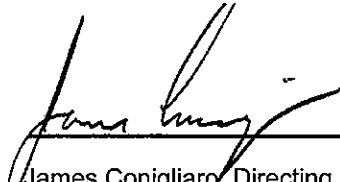
George Miranda, Secretary-Treasurer  
IBT Local 210



Harry Farrell, President  
Local 1-2 Utility Workers Union of America



Bruce Both  
President UFCW Local 1500



James Conigliaro, Directing Business Rep  
IAMAW District 15



## **Queens is a Cultural Destination**

**Wednesday, October 15, 2008**

As New York City contemplates the future of Willets Point, the cultural institutions of neighboring Flushing Meadows-Corona Park see an unprecedented opportunity to develop northern Queens as a cultural destination. This revitalization will serve not only the millions of New Yorkers who already visit our institutions annually, but also tourists and convention-goers from beyond the region.

The planned redevelopment, including a mid-sized convention center and hotel, will entice people to come to Queens and contribute their discretionary time and money to the benefit of our borough. In addition, for the first time, New York City will compete nationally for the 2,000-5,000 registrant conferences that drive economic development in so many cities across the country.

Furthermore, the redevelopment of Willets Point will add to the resurgence already underway in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. All of the park's cultural institutions are making dramatic improvements to our facilities and developing new opportunities to engage with our audiences:

- The Queens Botanical Garden's revolutionary Visitor & Administration Center is the first public building in New York City to achieve LEED Platinum certification, the highest national standard for sustainable building, as well as an AIA Council on the Environment Top Ten Building Award.
- Since its 2004 expansion, the New York Hall of Science has seen its audience more than double. The Hall welcomed 485,000 visitors last year - placing it in the top 5 percent of cultural institutions by attendance citywide - and provided teacher training to more than 3,500 City science teachers.
- An expansion of Queens Theatre in the Park is underway, and new performance and event spaces will allow the Theatre to become the borough's destination for local, national and international performing arts.
- By 2010, the Queens Museum of Art will double its size with new galleries and educational spaces, encouraging a forum for the museum's diverse audience.
- The Mets' Citi Field and the U.S. Tennis Association's new visitor center will enhance sports entertainment experiences for millions of fans.
- Flushing Meadows-Corona Park Pool & Rink, in the midst of its inaugural season, is the largest recreation complex ever built in a city park.

Together, these projects represent hundreds of millions of dollars of investment - both public and private - providing services to millions of people each year. More importantly, these projects are an investment in the future of Queens, branding our borough as a destination for cultural tourism.

These exciting projects are occurring alongside the commercial and residential developments that are reinvigorating Flushing, Corona, and all of northern Queens. Forty-three residential developments are either

planned or already in construction, and a redeveloped Willets Point will unify northern Queens as a focal point for tourism and recreation.

Today, there are many reasons to visit northern Queens - go to a ballgame or tennis match, visit a museum, enjoy a great meal - but these are all one-day activities. With a convention center and hotel, Willets Point will transform this area from a great place to spend a few hours to a great place to stay for a few days. A revitalized Willets Point will reconnect northern Queens to its waterfront and integrate several world-class facilities into a cultural tourism hub.

Queens residents, of which more than one million visit our cultural institutions annually, will derive greater benefits from improved facilities, transit, and infrastructure. More importantly, an influx of tourism means more economic development, more investment in cultural institutions and more benefits for Queens.

To look at just one recent example: in July, more than 100,000 people came to Flushing Meadows for two Billy Joel concerts. They came from all over our region and beyond. They bought tickets, food and souvenirs. Then they got in their cars, or caught their trains, and left. If we provide people with an opportunity, they will come to Queens and contribute to our culture and our economy. And if we build a hotel and convention center at Willets Point - if we strengthen Queens as a world-class recreation and exposition venue - they will come more often and they will stay longer to see more of what we have to offer.

The redevelopment of Willets Point will undoubtedly create a vibrant corridor between bustling downtown Flushing, our expansive park, and the rest of northern Queens. In supporting this redevelopment, we echo the concerns of Queens Borough President Helen Marshall and urge the city to work with the current property owners, to assist businesses with relocation, and to stand behind its commitment to provide job training to those workers displaced by the project. We trust that the city will live up to its obligations and look forward to seeing the Willets Point redevelopment move forward, creating a new destination for residents of Queens, the city, and tourists from beyond the five boroughs.

*Tom Finkelpearl, Executive Director, Queens Museum of Art*

*Marilyn Hoyt, President and CEO, New York Hall of Science*

*Susan Lacerte, Executive Director, Queens Botanical Garden*

*Jeffrey Rosenstock, Executive Director, Queens Theatre in the Park*



**The Next Neighborhood**  
**By CLAIRE SHULMAN/August 14, 2008**

Yesterday, the City Planning Commission held a public hearing on the redevelopment of Willets Point, Queens. At such a critical time for our city, one project that will help keep our economy moving is the development of New York City's next great neighborhood — Willets Point. By September 24, the City Planning Commission will make their recommendation as to whether or not to proceed with the redevelopment plan.

In decades past, the boroughs outside of Manhattan have been hit hardest during times of fiscal crisis. But now, thanks to many years of hard work, Queens stands ready to serve as a catalyst for job growth and urban renewal not just for our borough but also for all of New York.

Willets Point is at the heart of many of the best destinations in Queens — Shea Stadium, the U.S. National Tennis Center, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, and a number of cultural institutions and recreational facilities. Unfortunately, Willets Point currently is a blighted and environmentally contaminated eyesore that is stifling the growth of Corona and downtown Flushing, vibrant communities that are otherwise thriving.

The close proximity of Willets Point to New York City's airports and its accessibility to mass transit make it one of the most underutilized areas in the region. Redevelopment of the area will unlock this vast potential, providing an opportunity to revitalize this section of Northern Queens and create a thriving center of commerce that will serve as an economic engine for years to come.

The development project will support 18,000 construction jobs and create more than 5,300 permanent jobs. A redeveloped Willets Point is projected to generate \$25 billion in economic activity over the next 30 years. In addition, more than 5,500 units of housing will be created — many of which will be affordable. A new hotel and convention center also will be built that will make Queens a destination for major business events.

In addition to the economic benefit, the development of Willets Point represents an unprecedented opportunity to clean up one of the most polluted areas of the city and create an environmentally sustainable neighborhood in its place. The contamination of the area, which was used for much of the 20th century as a coal ash dump, has increased through the years due to illegal dumping and poor housekeeping — with contaminants such as motor oil, antifreeze, and transmission fluid leaking into the ground water and Flushing River. Redevelopment will turn this polluted area into New York City's first green neighborhood, creating an open space connection to Flushing Bay and improving air quality.

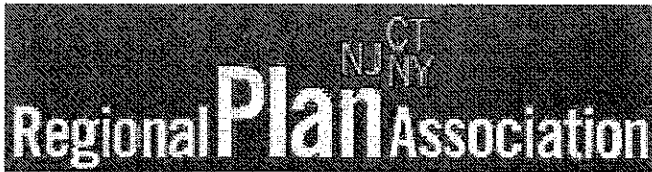
The environmental impact of cleaning up Willets Point is about more than buzzwords — it's about people's quality of life in the nearby area. Cleaning up the site will link the neighborhoods of Corona and Downtown Flushing to

Flushing Meadows Corona Park. The project will create open space, parks, trees, and a new bicycle and pedestrian connection to a revitalized Flushing Waterfront. The plan also calls for community space, new playgrounds, as well as a school. This will be a model neighborhood that Queens and New York City will be proud of.

To address some of the concerns raised about the project, I am working with the city to ensure that the Economic Development Corporation deals with the current property owners equitably and that every means of negotiation is exhausted before the use of eminent domain is considered. Already, EDC has reached agreements with four businesses on the site. The city also has retained LaGuardia Community College to develop a \$2.5 million Workforce Training and Assistance Program to benefit any impacted employees.

While there is no doubt that the existing businesses and people who work there provide valuable services and goods, these activities are no longer compatible or appropriate for the progress of the communities and institutions that have grown around Willets Point. By helping to relocate businesses, and offering training to displaced workers, we can protect the interests of the existing businesses without sacrificing a project that benefits so many and is vital to our future.

During times of economic uncertainty, it is critical that we exhibit bold and decisive leadership. The benefits of this development are simply too great to sit on and do nothing about it. That is why I call on our leaders in Queens and throughout New York City to join me in supporting the redevelopment of Willets Point and the creation of our next great neighborhood.



## **A Crossroads at Willets Point**

by Robert D. Yaro, President, Regional Plan Association

If you visit Willets Point in Queens, you'll see a hodge-podge of automobile repair shops, auto body shops, junk yards and unnamed dirty buildings full of intense activity. While this may seem unimpressive, you are seeing one of the largest surviving industrial areas in New York City.

All of this will change if a plan of Mayor Bloomberg's is approved. This past Monday a review process started that will ultimately lead to a decision by the City Council on whether to accept the Mayor's proposal to redevelop the area into a mixed-use district of new housing, retail stores, offices, park space and possibly a convention facility. Instead of junkyards and small manufacturers, in a few years one would see apartment buildings, small office towers, a hotel, even possibly a convention center.

The stakes are high. The proposed plan would displace an estimated 260 businesses and 1,711 employees. The City would also invest substantial public funds in new infrastructure to support the project.

In return, the City expects the redeveloped site to generate nearly 6,000 units of desperately needed housing, two million square feet of retail, 750,000 square feet of office space, a 400,000 square-foot convention center, a 700 room hotel, a 150,000 square-foot community facility and 8 acres of open space. It will also connect the nearby thriving residential neighborhoods of Flushing, Corona and Queensboro Hill with the largely commercial and industrial College Point area and integrate a number of Queens attractions, including the new Citi Field, Flushing Meadows Corona Park and the National Tennis Center. The proposed neighborhood has also qualified as a "green neighborhood" by the U.S. Green Building Council.

The threshold question is whether the public benefits justify the substantial public investment and use of eminent domain that go with this kind of large-scale urban redevelopment. If it was simply a question of displacing these largely industrial jobs with higher-value activity, the City would need a stronger economic justification. Over time, the City will need this location, and others like it that are close to transit, to make use of the waterfront and accommodate expected population and job growth. But ideally this could be done in a more organic manner that would develop the site incrementally, preferably in a way that retains some of the original businesses.

However, there is another aspect to Willets Point that tips the scales to favor wholesale redevelopment. The District's long history of industrial use, informal business practices and lack of basic infrastructure – including poor road and sidewalk conditions, chronic flooding and limited storm and sanitary sewer infrastructure – has left a legacy of hazardous contamination. PCBs, heavy metals and pesticides leach into Flushing Bay and impair air quality for workers and nearby residents. In order to remediate the area and prevent future pollution, contaminated soil will have to be

removed or covered with clean fill. Storm sewers need to be installed. Without clearing the site and starting over, not only will we be left with an area that is underperforming in its economic potential, but also we will be shirking our responsibility to protect public health and the urban environment.

This does not mean the plan proposed by the City cannot be improved. There are a host of potential benefits that should be maximized. A leading issue is the number of housing units that will be affordable to low- and moderate-income households. Pedestrian access to the waterfront and to adjoining neighborhoods, a desire of local communities, has not been solved. Finding homes for displaced manufacturing jobs – on site or elsewhere – needs to be certain and efficient. The feasibility and benefits of a convention center on the site is also an unresolved issue. City resources, and the dollars that can be generated by redevelopment of the site, are too scarce to meet all of these needs, so trade-offs need to be made. However, the important point is to move the process forward and take advantage of this opportunity to make Willets Point a model of both economic and environmental sustainability.



## **Chamber backs Willets Point project**

**BY ALBERT F. PENNISI**

Wednesday, June 4, 2008 6:40 PM EDT

No one can argue that Willets Point is in dire need of redevelopment. The success of removing the pollution and adding a convention center, a hotel, retail shops and office space is not only important to the economics of the immediate vicinity but to the extended communities of Flushing, Corona, Jackson Heights and the borough as a whole.

The existing businesses of Willets Point must be taken care of. Some of these companies have been providing goods and services to city residents for a half century, and their needs must be understood and respected. Equitable compensation and assistance in re-location needs to be the city's highest priority. The requirements of their employees for retraining and reeducation must be provided for.

However, while it is imperative to treat the current business owners fairly, overall progress on the plan cannot be slowed. The impact of this proposal is just too important. We cannot look back and ask why conditions at Willets Point were allowed to deteriorate to the point we are at today. We must look ahead.

Queens is in the midst of an economic developmental resurgence. Opportunities for jobs and business growth are occurring in every sector of our economy. Areas that for years have been in a downward spiral are rebounding like never before. Willets Point is yet another example. Projects like this are good for Queens' businesses, and if it is good for Queens' businesses, it's good for Queens.

The mission of the Queens Chamber has always been promoting the general welfare of the borough and fostering its commerce. The creation of new commercial and retail space along with the enormous short and long-term job opportunities afforded by the Willets Point plan are consistent with this mission.

We will continue working with Borough President Helen Marshall, former Borough President Claire Shulman and the Flushing/Willets Point/Corona LDC to ensure the success of this plan. We will work tirelessly to overcome any obstacles or roadblocks that may be presented. We will make certain that the needs of existing business and economic revitalization of the area remain balanced.

As Citi Field grows day by day, the promise of a re-vitalized Willets Point moves from fantasy to reality. As the ULURP process progresses, we will be vigilant to insure that final plans include a first-class Convention Center and the entire site remains slated for improvements.

The road ahead will be bumpy. Change is never easy. But at the end of the day, a Willets Point that brings economic vitality to an entire borough, a Willets Point that attracts conventions and shows from around the country and a Willets Point that connects downtown Flushing, Corona and Jackson Heights to a destination anchor is something we should all work together to achieve.

*Albert F. Pennisi is President of the Queens Chamber of Commerce*





## FOR THE RECORD

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### ***Testimony of Ericka Stallings, Housing Advocacy Coordinator for the New York Immigration Coalition, regarding the New York City Council Hearing on Willets Point***

***October 17, 2008***

Good Morning. I would like to first thank you for allowing our organization to testify at this very important hearing regarding Willets Point. My name is Ericka Stallings, and I am the housing advocacy coordinator of the New York Immigration Coalition, a policy and advocacy organization with more than 200 member groups throughout New York State that work with immigrants and refugees.

Affordable housing is an issue that affects nearly all New York residents, however immigrant New Yorkers are disproportionately impacted by the City's increasing lack of decent affordable housing. The affordable housing crisis for immigrant families is deeply felt in the borough of Queens because Queens has the highest concentration of immigrant families and is expected to absorb the majority of the city's future population growth. Immigrants make up two-third of New York City's low-wage workforce and subsequently have lower incomes on average. Substantial portions of the immigrant population have extremely high rent burdens, often spending more than 50% of their income on rent. Immigrants are also less likely than other New Yorkers to live in publicly-subsidized housing. The lack of affordable housing exacerbates the vulnerability of immigrant tenants. As a result, many immigrants find themselves in dangerous housing situations. New York's immigrant renters are 62% more likely to live in substandard housing conditions and are three times as likely to live in overcrowded conditions than native-born residents. Many immigrants are forced to rely on the informal housing market as a last resort.

We are therefore, deeply disturbed that the Willets Point project, as currently described, fails to address the housing concerns of many of our constituents, despite the grave need for more affordable housing. The income guidelines, as proposed, will exclude most Queens families and will have a particularly negative impact on immigrant families. Immigrants make up the fabric of this community and should be included. Finding decent and affordable housing for low-, moderate- and even middle income immigrant families in Queens is growing more difficult. To address this problem in Queens, two-thirds of the housing at Willets Point should be affordable, and half of the affordable units should be accessible to families earning less than \$25,000 a year; approximately half the lowest currently proposed income level.

Therefore, we urge you to advocate for the inclusion of not only more affordable units but also deeper levels of affordability, so that more of the people who make Queens a great borough to live in can actually afford to live in Willets Point.

Respectfully submitted by:

Ericka Stallings

Housing Advocacy Coordinator, New York Immigration Coalition

137-139 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street, 12<sup>th</sup> floor, NY, NY 10001

(t) 212 627-2227 x239; [estallings@thenyic.org](mailto:estallings@thenyic.org)

## FOR THE RECORD

### **A Vote Against Willets Point is a Vote For Common Sense**

Testimony delivered to the New York City Council  
October 17, 2008

By Dr. Tom Angotti  
Director, Hunter College Center for Community Planning & Development  
Professor of Urban Affairs & Planning, Hunter College/CUNY  
[tangetti@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:tangetti@hunter.cuny.edu)

After the bursting of the Wall Street bubble, the city's proposed plan for Willets Point in Queens makes absolutely no sense and should not be approved. It never did make much sense but now it is folly to authorize the *destruction of an active business district* when there is *no possibility of financing* the proposed redevelopment scheme unless increasingly scarce public funds are used.

Two years ago I co-authored a study of Willets Point that uncovered some 225 businesses and 1,800 jobs – much more than the city's Economic Development Corporation said there were at the time. We found a viable business community that for decades had paid taxes but failed to benefit from basic city services. We found that over 80% of all businesses were renters and unable to cash in on city buyouts. Almost 70% had been in business 5 or more years, which means they had built up a customer base that they would lose. At a time when the city is bleeding jobs, it makes no sense at all to deliberately eliminate so many more jobs. Promises of relocation and training cannot be taken seriously in this business climate.

Because the Willets Point plan treats unequally property owners and renters, it would have a discriminatory effect: most of the renters are Latinos and recent immigrants who have been left out of the discussions. To be blunt, besides being undemocratic *the plan is discriminatory and racist*. The planning process was flawed from the start. Instead of engaging local businesses and residents in an open, transparent and democratic process (which would have to be conducted in at least three languages), EDC issued a Request for Expression of Interest that only giant developers with deep pockets could respond to. Based on these responses, not any examination of the needs of people who live and work in Queens or New York City, EDC put together their plan.

Eminent domain is an important and useful government power but Willets Point is an example of *eminent domain abuse*. From the start of the planning process, it was used as a loaded gun against business owners. EDC said they were open and willing to talk about their plan but they never took the gun off the table.

While EDC considers Willets Point to be "blighted," if its plan is approved *the most likely result will be decades of business abandonment and extensive blight*.

This is reminiscent of the 1960s urban renewal plans that crashed during the 1970s fiscal crisis and left acres of vacant lots for decades.

Some say that the sacrifices to be made by Willets Point businesses are necessary to achieve a greater good – a new, purportedly green neighborhood. As someone who has long advocated dramatically new approaches to development that are environmentally sensitive and sustainable over the long term, I can say that the Willets Point plan promises some short-term benefits but is *unsustainable in the long term*.

- At a time when sea-level rise is a certainty but its full effect cannot be measured, it makes no sense to build in low-lying areas like Willets Point and place new residents and businesses at risk.
- The city's plan for Willets Point would create an insular enclave physically and economically separate from the neighborhoods of Corona and Flushing. This violates a major principle of ecological planning that requires integration with the surrounding environment.
- Willets Point is surrounded by heavy traffic and is in the direct flight path of LaGuardia Airport. New residential development there will not prevent exposures to dangerous levels of air pollution and noise. Proposals to mitigate these exposures by creating insulated interiors would mean that people have to stay indoors in order to stay healthy. What kind of community is that going to be?
- Instead of helping to green auto repair and keep auto uses away from residential neighborhoods, the city is encouraging more unregulated auto repair in Queens neighborhoods. The end of the Willets Point auto community will mean more unregulated auto repair, more direct discharges into the city's sewer system, less regulation of air pollution, and serious public health consequences.
- New York City has a rare opportunity to implement an intensive pollution prevention program in Willets Point by working with business owners and managers. It is an opportunity to turn auto jobs from gray to green. It is an opportunity to support local entrepreneurship for new immigrant populations at a time of global crisis.

For these reasons I urge the City Council to vote against the Willets Point plan. It makes no sense in terms of economics, environment or social justice.

**Statement of Representative Nydia M. Velazquez  
On the Development of Willets Point  
New York City Council  
October 17, 2008**

Shea Stadium just saw its last game, unfortunately. However, the Mets will celebrate next spring when they move into their new stadium, Citi Field, where more than \$250 million from the City of New York is helping them build a state-of-the-art new ballpark, complete with more luxury sky boxes.

Just a few blocks away, the 1,500 workers in 250 businesses, who have been the Mets' neighbors in Willets Point for decades aren't so lucky. Instead of helping them to upgrade their businesses, the City is getting set to evict them.

Why? To build several thousand market-rate condos, a million square feet of retail and commercial space, and maybe a convention center - at a cost of at least \$398 million to the City, probably more - even as the city is facing an economic crisis and weakening housing market.

It just doesn't make sense. Don't we need to protect manufacturing and blue collar jobs, rather than more luxury condos no one can afford?

Willets Point is a great location for manufacturing, warehouses, and automotive businesses - for exactly the same reasons it is foolish place for housing. It is bordered by two regional highways. Planes from LaGuardia fly over every few minutes. It is environmentally polluted, and there is no plan to clean up or provide access to the contaminated Flushing River on the edge of the community. In a recession, who does the City really think is going to pay top dollar for a condo here?

Unfortunately, the NYC Economic Development Corporation doesn't know a good thing when it sees one. They look at Willets Point and see "blight." I see one billion dollars of business. I see the House of Spices, the largest distributor of Indian food in the country, employing over 100 people, and three generations working at Feinstein Iron Works. They see "a burden on the health of the city's residents and economy." I see several hundred immigrant entrepreneurs and workers, who have found a place to repair and recycle cars - something we need, but mostly don't want in our own backyards - in a collaborative location separated from people's homes.

This kind of "land grab" gives eminent domain a bad name. Seriously neglected by the City for decades, Willets Point has been deprived of the most basic services, such as sanitary sewers, paved roads, sidewalks, snow removal and trash pickup. In spite of this neglect, it has continued to thrive as a vibrant business area. But now that they have big redevelopment plans, they are putting enormous pressure on owners to sell. The City doesn't "want" to use eminent domain, the owners are told - if you'll just agree to sell your property to us, then we won't have to take it from you.

Even if the Economic Development Corporation reaches a deal with the handful of property owners, the vast majority of businesses (who mostly rent space) and workers will be displaced. EDC says it will provide job training, but the program defines success as serving only 15 to 20% of the current workers. EDC says it will help relocate the 225 businesses who rent their space, but it hasn't even talked to them yet. And as the result of rezonings by the Bloomberg Administration, the land area where manufacturing businesses can locate has shrunk by 20% in just a few years.

Of course, it seems unlikely that any developer will step forward at this moment to build on such a risky site, and almost impossible that they could find a bank to lend them money. In which case, we'll be asked to give hundreds of millions more in public subsidies. Or perhaps, after the businesses are evicted, the site will just sit vacant. Then we'll really see what blight looks like.

What's the rush? Why are we hurrying to drive out over a thousand blue collar jobs, in the midst of a recession, in order to spend hundreds of millions in taxpayer dollars to build luxury condos that its unclear anyone wants to buy? The possible end of a mayoral administration is not a reason to push through a bad plan quickly.

Let's save the taxpayers' money and the workers' jobs. Send the plan for Willets Point redevelopment back to the minor leagues, where it belongs. Instead, the City should work with the owners and workers - just like it did with the Mets - to help them strengthen and improve and grow their businesses.

*Rep. Velazquez (NY-12) represents parts of Queens, Brooklyn, and Manhattan, and is the Chair of the Small Business Committee in the US House of Representatives.*

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*Rep. Velazquez (NY-12) represents parts of Queens, Brooklyn, and Manhattan, and is the Chair of the Small Business Committee in the US House of Representatives.*

## FOR THE RECORD

### ACORN Testimony of Lloyd Ervin Against Willets Point Plan October 17, 2008

**I am Lloyd Ervin.** I live in Lefrak City, Queens resident and I am a member of ACORN.

They are trying to price me out of Lefrak City. I used to be an MTA worker and I am on disability and it is still hard for me to keep up with the rising prices. I am paying 1400 a month and with them building these luxury condos it will raise the affordability of Queens. A blind man can see what they are trying to do. This Mayor is not looking out for us but for the rich developers and people in Manhattan from 96<sup>th</sup> street and below. Something needs to happen to match the cost a living in our lives.

Any development in Queens MUST have housing that I can afford. The current Willets Point Plan does not. This plan must be stopped now, for the good of people like me.



## **FOR THE RECORD**

### **ACORN Testimony of Ms. Green Against Willets Point Plan October 17, 2008**

**My name is Ms Green.** I live in Queens and I am a member of ACORN.

We need more Affordable Housing in Queens.

I grew up in Queens and have seen the prices skyrocket. I have lived in Flushing for about 20 years and have seen the massive amount changes in affordability in my neighborhood.

Affordable housing is really needed for people who make fewer than forty thousand. I have a clerical position and it is a daily struggle to make ends meet with the rising prices.

Another personal reason why this affects me is that high rent effects my own personal retirement thru my employer; also the cost of living like electric and gas make it even more difficult to live in New York which doesn't ease the burden when rent keeps on rising.

We are asking you to vote **AGAINST** the Willets Point Plan until there is a significant amount of housing in the plan that is actually affordable to the average Queens resident like myself.

## **FOR THE RECORD**

### **ACORN Testimony of Kenneth Reed Against Willets Point Plan October 17, 2008**

**My name is Kenneth Reed and I live in Queens. I am also a member of ACORN.**

For those people who can't afford a house, affordable housing is need. That means affordable for people who make \$30,000.

I am a driver and warehousemen and my income has not increased in past 2 years but the cost of living has kept on going higher.

Half of the new development at Willets Point should be set aside for affordable housing. The range for it should be \$25,000 to \$30,000.

We need real affordable housing.

## **FOR THE RECORD**

### **ACORN Testimony of Shante Bailey Against Willets Point Plan October 17, 2008**

**My name is Shante Bailey and I am a member of Corona ACORN in Queens.**

Affordable housing is badly needed in Queens. If new developments are made they need housing set aside for me and my children and all New Yorkers. I want to continue living in New York City and I feel like I am being driven out. I am a mortgage processor at Flushing Bank and the cost of living is going up and up but the wages stay the same.

The Willets Point plan must be voted down until there are guarantees for housing that will be affordable for me, my children and all New Yorkers.

**JOHN C. LIU**  
COUNCIL MEMBER  
20<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

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THE COUNCIL  
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LAND USE  
CONTRACTS

OVERSIGHT & INVESTIGATION  
LOWER MANHATTAN REDEVELOPMENT

October 7, 2008

Robert Lieber  
Deputy Mayor for Economic Development  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

**RE: Eminent Domain and Willets Point**

Dear Mr. ~~Lieber~~ *Bob*:

With a month to go before the Willets Point redevelopment plan comes before the City Council for consideration, I am greatly concerned that the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) has reached agreement with only a small number of the existing businesses with regard to the City's plans for relocation and/or compensation. Even more problematic is my understanding that the agreements reached are non-binding on the EDC.

The EDC and this Administration has consistently maintained that "one or two holdouts" should not impede progress. I can agree with that approach and application of eminent domain to condemn private property for greater public good. However, it appears at the moment that almost everyone at Willets Point is a "holdout". At the moment, it appears the plan would invoke eminent domain to seize over 90% of the properties at Willets Point.

This is patently indefensible. I implore you and the EDC to kick the negotiations into high gear immediately.

After two years of what the City has described as "best efforts", more binding agreements should have already been reached. Nonetheless, it's not too late. There's still a month left for negotiations. Engage the business owners round the clock if need be. Just don't ask me and my colleagues to support a plan that would take land wholesale.

Good public policy sometimes necessitates invoking eminent domain to make progress. Coming to agreement for the acquisition of 90% of the land for this redevelopment and condemning the remaining holdouts probably makes sense. Seizing 90% of the land would be wrong and inexcusable, and I cannot in good conscience support a plan that amounts to that.

I'm available to assist you and the EDC in any discussions and negotiations to get the job done.

Sincerely,

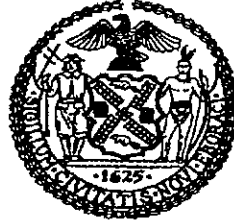
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "JL" or similar initials, written over the name "John C. Liu".

John C. Liu

**HIRAM MONSERRATE**  
COUNCIL MEMBER  
21<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT, QUEENS

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FAX (212) 442-2725



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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

**CHAIR**  
VETERAN'S AFFAIRS

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**COMMITTEES**  
FIRE & CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
SERVICES  
CIVIL RIGHTS  
PUBLIC SAFETY  
STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION

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**MEMBER**  
Black, Latino & Asian Caucus

August 12, 2008

Commissioner Amanda M. Burden  
NYC Department of City Planning  
22 Reade Street  
New York, New York 10007-1216

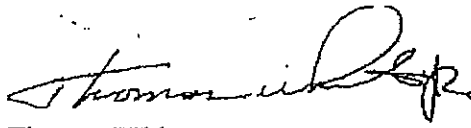
Dear Commissioner Burden:

We write to share with you our absolute opposition to the current Willets Point Development Plan.

The project that comes before the Department of City Planning on August 13<sup>th</sup> is far from the best our city can offer for a long-term plan that will affect hundreds of thousands of residents for decades to come. Unfortunately, this is a product of a flawed process that has continuously ignored the requests of the community in pursuit of a top-down planning process that sets a dangerous precedent for large-scale development projects citywide.

Since the first community meetings of the Flushing redevelopment process, when community residents expressed a desire to include the Iron Triangle in any long-term development plans, the details of this plan have been determined not by residents, but by the Economic Development Corporation.

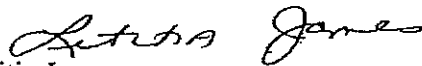
This state of affairs is not for a lack of community feedback. On the contrary, the community has been outspoken in its attempts to work with the EDC to resolve what it considers to be gaping holes in the plan. First and foremost, despite a two year, two-tiered RFP process to determine a developer, the community has yet to be informed of who will be responsible for the project's implementation. Additionally, the community has unified around an agenda calling for a plan that takes eminent domain off the table in all acquisition negotiations, a guarantee that fifty percent of new housing created will be affordable, a comprehensive relocation and compensation plan for current small business



Thomas White  
Council Member District 28



Maria del Carmen Arroyo  
Council Member District 17



Letitia James  
Council Member District 35



Darlene Mealy  
Council Member District 41



Vincent J. Gentile  
Council Member District 43



Albert Vann  
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James Gennaro  
Council Member District 24



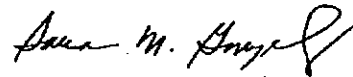
Rosie Mendez  
Council Member District 2

*James Sanders, Jr*

James Sanders, Jr  
Council Member District 31



Annabel Palma  
Council Member District 18



Sara M. Gonzalez  
Council Member District 38

*Matthieu Eugene*

Mathieu Eugene  
Council Member District 40



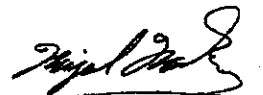
Diana Reyna  
Council Member District 34



Charles Barron  
Council Member District 42



David Weprin  
Council Member District 23



Miguel Martinez  
Council Member District 10

*Gale A. Brewer*

Gale Brewer  
Council Member District 6

*Robert Jackson*

Robert Jackson  
Council Member District 7

*Joseph Addabbo*

Joseph Addabbo  
Council Member District 32

*Larry Seabrook*

Larry Seabrook  
Council Member District 12

*Kendall Stewart*

Kendall Stewart  
Council Member District 45

*Inez E. Dickens*

Inez E. Dickens  
Majority Whip

Council Member District 9

*Alan Gerson*

Alan Gerson  
Council Member District 1

*Leroy G. Comrie*

Leroy G. Comrie  
Council Member District 27

*Eric N. Gioia*

Eric N. Gioia  
Council Member District 26

*Melissa Mark-Viverito*

Melissa Mark-Viverito  
Council Member District 8

*Bill de Blasio*

Bill deBlasio  
Council Member District 39

*Erik Martin-Dilan*

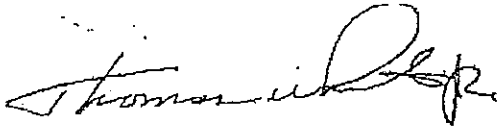
Erik Martin-Dilan  
Council Member District 37

*Helen Diane Foster*

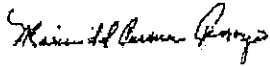
Helen Foster  
Council Member District 16

*David Yassky*

David Yassky  
Council Member District 33



Thomas White  
Council Member District 28



Maria del Carmen Arroyo  
Council Member District 17



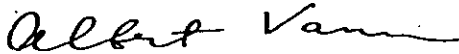
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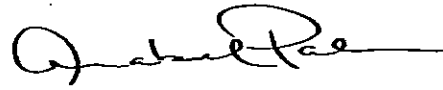
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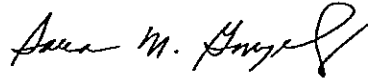
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Council Member District 10



## Community Board 7 Conditions on EDC Plan

The Community Board Chair Gene Kelty stated that the community board vote is a NO unless these conditions are adopted in their entirety by the City Planning Commission.

Those marked in "NOT AGREED" have not been agreed to by EDC as outlined in Robert Leiber's letter of July 27, 2008.

1- Continued oversight of development which has more than just advisory role. Approval on disposition of acquired property. (CB will have a vote in how the property is sold once it has been acquired.) NOT AGREED

2- A traffic Mitigation fund equal to 10% of the final project cost, less land acquisition costs. This fund would equal \$300M. NOT AGREED

3 - 100% parking requirement for all residential units. (The City has proposed .5 spaces per living unit, the CB wants 1-1) This adds over 2500 parking spaces to the project. City proposes only 6700 total parking spaces. NOT AGREED

4 - Inclusion of a requirement for a K-8 public school with 850 seats. (This was agreed to by the EDC)

5 - **The CB does not approve of eminent domain for this project** and insists that the EDC exhaust all efforts to reach amicable agreements with the area businesses and notify the CB in writing with back up documentation before it uses eminent domain. NOT AGREED

6 - CB wants 30% affordable housing for families earning \$45k or less. (City has not agreed to this. They offered 20% with only half going to \$45k or less, the rest up to \$100k) NOT AGREED

7 - ½ of the affordable housing must be reserved for CB residents. (This is actually required by law)

8 - LEED certification to ND (Neighborhood Designation)

9 - The developer must give preference to local workers and use best efforts to use Union workers. NOT AGREED

### **Eminent Domain Language –**

1. The EDC must not use eminent domain on more than 10% of the private property in Willets Point.
2. This must not be instituted until a developer has been chosen for the project and a final plan has been approved.

**HIRAM MONSERRATE**  
COUNCIL MEMBER, 21ST DISTRICT

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BLACK, LATINO & ASIAN CAUCAS

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FIRE & CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES

PUBLIC SAFETY

STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION

CIVIL RIGHTS

Dear Queens Assembly (Senate) Members;

I write to request your support as the countdown begins towards a contentious vote in the City Council on the Bloomberg plan to redevelop Willets Point. Specifically, I urge you to support the efforts of the community to have their voice heard in a process that will determine the future of their homes for decades to come.

Unfortunately, the current plan put forth by the Bloomberg Administration is a product of a flawed process that has continuously ignored the requests of the community in pursuit of a top-down planning process that sets a dangerous precedent for large-scale development projects citywide. Since the first community meetings of the Flushing redevelopment process, when community residents expressed a desire to include the Iron Triangle in any long-term development plans, the details of this plan have been determined not by residents, but by the Economic Development Corporation.

This state of affairs is not for a lack of community feedback. On the contrary, the community has been outspoken in its attempts to work with the EDC to resolve what it considers to be gaping holes in the plan.

First, the EDC refuses to name a developer with whom the community can negotiate. After two years and a two-tiered RFP process with selected developers, the EDC now asks the community and the City Council to support this plan blind, that a developer has yet to be chosen. This leaves vital issues such as a congestion mitigation plan and formal roles for community input unaddressed. With less than a few hundred days left in office for Bloomberg and his officials at the EDC, the Mayor can't possibly tell the people of Queens to trust him. He simply won't be there when the shovels hit the ground.

Second, this plan also fails to address the need for responsible use of eminent domain, the sledgehammer of the government toolbox. Historically, its use has been severely curtailed to projects that serve the public good. These are highways, hospitals, and schools - not shopping malls and convention centers. Rather than holding this tool in reserve in case one or two owners don't sell, the Administration seems to be using eminent domain as a threat to drive down property values before negotiations even begin.

For example, with less than two months left before a final vote in the City Council, the Administration has made a deal with only 5 of more than 260 property owners.

Third, this plan fails to create enough affordable housing. In a community of working class families, why should we invest taxpayer dollars to create luxury housing? The community coalition has asked for 50% of the housing created to be affordable the low- and middle-income families that live in the neighborhoods surrounding the project, where median income is nearly ten thousand dollars a year less than the borough average. The Administration says it will set aside 20%, a level that prices residents out of their own neighborhood -- and even these few units are not guaranteed.

Fourth, the Bloomberg Administration is pursuing this project under the rubric of 'economic development.' Unfortunately, this exhausted shorthand has been used to disguise significant details of the plan, including who pays the costs. Willets Point is home to over 250 businesses providing jobs to over 1,700 workers, including a high number of new Americans in the large and diverse communities of color surrounding the area. Contributing a combined \$2 million a year in tax revenue, the area is far from a drain on city coffers. However, the plan to 'redevelop' Willets Point will cost an estimated \$1 billion just to put a shovel in the ground. This cost comes amid Bloomberg's announcement that the turmoil on Wall Street and New York City's growing budget deficit require city agencies to cut their budgets by \$1.5 billion in the next two years. These cuts include \$95 million from the Police Department and \$185 million from the city school system. In effect, redeveloping Willets Point takes priority over our city's safety and our children's education.

This Administration's failure to address these concerns and engage in a negotiation process with the community has resulted in a deep and broad opposition. Residents, community leaders, affordable housing advocates, and current business owners and employees have unified around their similar demand for -- quite simply -- a voice.

This trajectory is documented in the plan's progression through the ULURP process. The vote in the representative community board (CB 7) was held after five hours of intense debate and passed by a slim margin -- but only after Deputy Mayor Lieber wrote that he would address the Board's concerns, which mirror those mentioned above. Additionally, the Queens Borough President put forth recommendations that call for the plan to address these needs. However, to date these assurances have yet to turn into answers.

**HIRAM MONSERRATE**  
COUNCIL MEMBER, 21<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT

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**VETERANS COMMITTEE**  
**BLACK, LATINO & ASIAN CAUCUS**  
**COMMITTEES**  
**FIRE & CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES**  
**PUBLIC SAFETY**  
**STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION**  
**CIVIL RIGHTS**

February 8, 2008

Dear Colleagues:

I am writing you regarding the "Redevelopment of Willets Point" project, which is being proposed by the New York City Economic Redevelopment Corporation (EDC). All prudent elected officials should support economic development that balances the critical prongs of environmental consciousness, community sensitivity, and the broadest level of economic stimulus with full fervor. Unfortunately, I must inform you that EDC's plan fails to harmonize these critical factors.

As you are all aware Willets Point falls within the 21<sup>st</sup> Council District, which I represent. This development project will have a dramatic effect on the lives of my constituents. It will result in major disruptions to the local communities and businesses in the vicinity and throughout Queens in general. Therefore, this project must be critically assessed to ensure equity at every step of the process.

I have been working in earnest with our Council colleagues John Liu and Tony Avella. We have hosted a series of Town Hall meetings to ensure that every stakeholder has the opportunity to voice their concerns and that a record is created of the public debate regarding this project.

Some of the most glaring deficiencies include the failure to provide equitable remuneration to those facing forced evictions. Small businesses that have survived, without the benefit of even the most basic of municipal resources like working sewers, or paved roads, through a self-supporting network mutual assistance and market competition will be scattered without even a basic assurance the continuity or support of their business model.

The EDC plan also fails to ensure assistance to the hundreds of local workers who will become unemployed due to the redevelopment project. The EDC proposal provides job training for a maximum of 360 workers for jobs that pay near the minimum wage. There are, however, currently over 1300 workers at Willets Point. Further, I cannot support a proposal that fails to include prevailing wage protections for displaced workers.

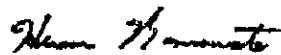
The Willets Point area has been neglected for over 30 years by the City of New York. This City has underserved the small businesses, which currently operate there, for an even longer period of time. I cannot find it within myself to agree to a plan that hands over this land to a private developer without guaranteeing the viability and security of those that will be displaced. As of the writing of this letter no formal agreements, or provisions have been forwarded that would lead me to believe that drafters of this project have labored over the interests of the people they are planning to evict. The EDC proposal provides no hard numbers, no real Dollar amounts, as regards to how business owners that rent property at Willets Point will be compensated. No hard numbers are provided for

the number of affordable housing units the project will create. Property owners have informed my office directly that negotiations have not even been initiated yet by the EDC as to the fate of their properties.

These facts considered in totality amount to the EDC requesting a "blank check" for the Willets Point project. I am not prepared to give the EDC a blank check and I believe that neither are the astute members of this chamber.

I simply cannot support this project in its current form. There are just too many unanswered questions regarding the businesses and the workers who will be displaced. Therefore I am ask you my colleagues to not support the present plan until the Administration and EDC present a Proposal that has resolved these blatant deficiencies.

Yours Truly,



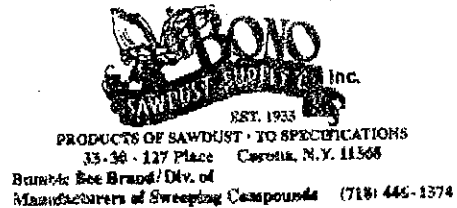
Hiram Monserrate  
Council Member District 21

To the Chair and Committee Members of the NYC  
Council Land Use Subcommittee: Planning,  
Dispositions and Concessions

Hearing on Willets Point

October 17, 2008

Testimony from the Willets Point Industry & Realty  
Association (WPIRA) Land and Business  
Owners and Workers



October 16, 2008

The New York City Council  
City Hall  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Honorable New York City Council Members:

We the proud employees of Bono Sawdust Supply Company, a owned business that has been operating in New York City since 1933. If you vote in favor of Mayor Bloomberg's plan to redevelop Willets Point, we will more than likely lose our jobs if our employer is not relocated.

Like all Americans, we are feeling the effects of the downturn in the economy and we are worried about our nation's financial future. We already feel the pinch of these hard times. Our incomes may be steady, but our daily cost of living keeps rising. We are paying more to put food on the table and fill our gas tanks. We worry about how much it will cost to heat our homes this winter. How will we pay our bills if we lose our jobs?

**Please vote NO to Mayor Bloomberg's plan to seize the land and businesses of Willets Point.** Our livelihoods and future depend on your vote!

Sincerely,

Bono Sawdust Supply Company

Signatures Attached

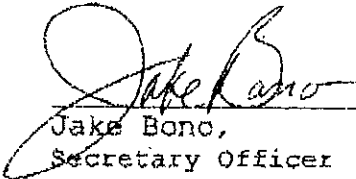




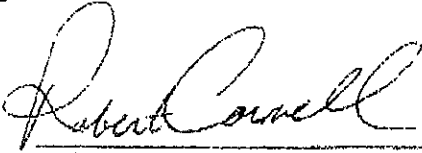
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President



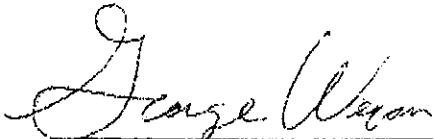
Tommy Bono,  
Vice President



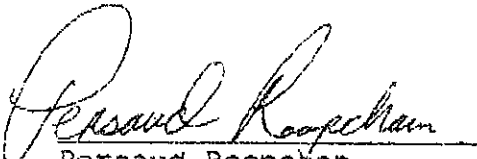
Jake Bono,  
Secretary Officer



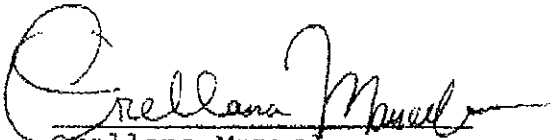
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Driver



George Wegan,  
Driver



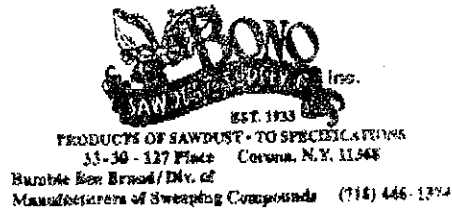
Persaud Roopchan,  
Driver



Orellana Manuel,  
Driver



Marie Venti,  
Office



October 16, 2008

The New York City Council  
City Hall  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Honorable New York City Council Members:

Bono Sawdust Supply is the only company in New York City that manufactures a sweeping compound used in construction and for animal bedding by local stables, race tracks and circuses. Emigrating from Italy in 1933, to pursue the American Dream, my father and his two brothers founded this company, paddling bags of sawdust in the city during the day and at night, laying the bricks for the building that still houses our business today.

Continuing the tradition of operating a family business, my son joined the company and we both work very hard to keep alive the American Dream that drew my father and uncles to America and to our great City of New York. Bono Sawdust provides well-paying jobs with excellent benefits to 15 men and women employees. Over the years, our company has paid enormous sums in taxes to the city but it has yet to receive basic municipal services. Willets Point has been intentionally neglected for decades. It does not have any basic infrastructure and it lacks sewers, streetlights and paved roads. In addition, the city has never provided Willets Point with essential services such as trash and snow removal.

I served my country in the armed forces during the Vietnam War and I now find myself waging a personal battle to prevent my business and land from being seized by eminent domain, which would enable a private developer to steal my family's legacy and profit handsomely. The use of eminent domain in this instance is unjustified and my family and I intend to continue this battle until we win.

It is our ardent hope that you will support the businesses of Willets Point and that your vote will be a NO to Mayor Bloomberg's plan to seize my land and my business.

Sincerely,

Jack Bono  
President  
Bono Sawdust Supply Company

September 29, 2008

Honorable Members Of The Council of The City Of New York

Dear Honorable Council Member

My family has owned and operated Feinstein Iron Works Inc. since 1931, designing, fabricating and erecting structural steel buildings throughout the city of New York. My brother and I are the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation currently running the business, and we have several 4<sup>th</sup> generation family members who are now studying in College who have shown an interest in joining our firm.

The American dream guarantees the right for everyone of our citizens to have this hope, this chance of doing something great with their lives, of providing not only their families but all of the families that work with them the chance to share in this dream. How can you let this administration steal that dream from us. Take it away from the seventy plus years of dedication and sacrifice that our family has made to ensure our legacy.

Eminent Domain is a necessary tool for our elected officials to use to build schools, highways, parks and those things that the citizens of our city and state cannot do on their own. But to abuse this tool is a crime. To take away private land from one owner to give it to another for their private gain is just wrong. To have deprived Willets Point of the very basic services that every citizen is entitled too, so now someone can claim that the lack of these very services creates a blighted situation is absurd.

We ask you, and all of our elected officials to exercise the common sense and act with very moral compass that you have been called upon to use in representing the citizens of this great city, and say NO to this horrible abuse of power, say NO to Eminent Domain Abuse. Ensure that our American Dream is within our reach, and leave it up to us to reach for it.

Yours Truly

Daniel J Feinstein  
FEINSTEIN IRON WORKS INC.  
126-85 Willets Point Boulevard  
Flushing NY 11368

Hon. Daniel R. Garodnick  
Chairman  
Committee on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions  
Council of the City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, New York 10007

Re: Willets Point

Dear Chairman Garodnick:

I am writing as environmental counsel to the Willets Point Industry and Realty Association (WPIRA). We submitted extensive comments on the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) for the Willets Point Development Plan (Proposed Project). These comments (including our experts' reports) are incorporated by reference. For your convenience, I am attaching my transmittal letter of August 25, 2008.

The Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS) responds to many of our comments, but it does so in a way that attempts to imply that the problems we identified are not present or have been corrected. In fact, the FGEIS shows that our key concerns are entirely justified. Here are a few examples..

#### Traffic

Our comments on the DGEIS said, "The most striking feature of the DGEIS is its unabashed acknowledgment that the Proposed Project will cause traffic impacts so severe that, during peak hours, speeds on the Van Wyck Expressway will be cut by more than half, local access ramps will become parking lots and delays will increase significantly at between 66% and 83% of the intersections studied." The FGEIS in essence confirms this observation. It states that "[t]he GEIS analysis fully documents the level of operations on the highway network," and merely says that it employed a conservative analysis as it accounts for background development projects and assumes additional background growth (as is standard for CEQR analysis) (FGEIS p. 29-60).

The FGEIS expresses the hope that better ways will be devised to make the traffic impacts somewhat less terrible, such as through the addition of acceleration and deceleration lanes to the new Van Wyck ramps (FGEIS p. 29-60). However, the FGEIS gives not so much as a conceptual sketch of where these lanes would go; we are not told how much more they would cost (a City expense), how much land they would consume, and how much they would improve traffic. The FGEIS merely expresses unsupported hope that someone will devise some kind of vaguely better plan at some undefined point in the future.

#### Ramp Approvals

Our comments on the DGEIS pointed out that the Van Wyck ramps will require the approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the New York State Department

of Transportation (NYSDOT), and that FHWA policy provides that, in order to receive approval, new access points to the existing Interstate System should meet the requirement that “[t]he proposed access point does not have a significant adverse impact on the safety and operation of the Interstate facility based on an analysis of current and future traffic.” NYSDOT has a similar policy.

The FGEIS acknowledges the need for FHWA and NYSDOT approvals, and it admits the applicability of the NYSDOT policy (FGEIS p. 29-20). It states, “The City has maintained communication and close coordination with NYSDOT from the inception of the project, outlining a range of conceptual design options and working with options that NYSDOT determined were preferable. It is fully expected that such approvals will be obtained and the design will be progressed in light of design suggestions to be made by both NYSDOT and the FHWA.” (FGEIS p. 29-62) Several aspects of this statement should be noted:

- The City’s contacts appear to be solely with NYSDOT, not FHWA
- Unless there are communications that both NYSDOT and the City have failed to produce in response to our numerous Freedom of Information Law requests to both, the NYSDOT has great concerns about the project and has nowhere given the City any comfort that the approvals will be granted.
- The design suggestions are “to be made” by the highway agencies. Thus they have not yet been made, and it is unknown if they are feasible or are physically or financially compatible with the Proposed Project.

The FGEIS does not even attempt to argue that the ramps are anything less than essential to the Proposed Project. To the contrary, it states that “the proposed ramps are an integral part of the Willets Point Development Plan.” (FGEIS p. 29-62) And it contains this remarkable sentence: “If the Plan is approved, *the City would not take possession of any property acquired by eminent domain until the ramps have been approved by NYSDOT and FHWA.*” (FGEIS p. 29-9) (emphasis added) To the best of our knowledge, this kind of statement is unprecedented. It acknowledges that the project does not work unless the state and federal approvals have been granted. But it says the City will go ahead and seize title to the properties without any assurance that the project can ever go forward. Thus the project as it now stands lacks the “public purpose” that is a prerequisite to condemnation. The property owners would be able to stay put (presumably in exchange for use and occupancy payments to the City), but without title to the land and under the constant cloud of eviction they could not borrow money (or rationally spend much of their own money) to improve or significantly repair their properties. Those owners who lease out their property could not attract any but the most transient tenants. The poor conditions that have been caused by the City’s neglect of the area would be worsened by this condemnation-without-possession limbo.

## NEPA

Our comments on the DGEIS pointed out that the FHWA approval of the ramps makes the project subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The FGEIS admits the

applicability of NEPA, and states, "The City will not take possession of property acquired by eminent domain before the NEPA process is complete and the ramps are approved." (FGEIS p. 29-96) But this misses two very important points.

First, the effects of a project on community character and development are very much a part of NEPA analysis. As just shown, the acquisition of property by eminent domain has adverse community effects, even before the government takes possession. Thus NEPA is not satisfied merely by delaying possession.

Second, the NEPA process can be quite protracted. The project schedule completely ignores the several years that it would take to complete a federal environmental impact statement.

#### Historic preservation laws

Our comments on the DGEIS pointed out that the demolition of the former Empire Millwork building in connection with a federal project would invoke the Section 106 process under the National Historic Preservation Act, and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act. In response, the FGEIS states, "If the specific development plan proposed by a developer would not require demolition of the building but the design preferred by NYSDOT and FHWA for the ramps would require such demolition, FHWA would undertake the required Section 106 and Section 4(f) analysis." (P. 29-48).

The FGEIS is applying the wrong test. As noted above, the FGEIS acknowledges that "the proposed ramps are an integral part of the Willets Point Development Plan." (P. 29-62) It would be impermissible segmentation to carve out the ramps in this fashion and apply Section 106 and Section 4(f) only if a developer decides it would not want to tear down the historic building anyway. This also gives the developer an irresistible motivation to tear down the building (which is completely contrary to the purpose of the historic preservation laws). The sketches in the FGEIS make it appear that the Empire Millwork building is directly in the path of the proposed Van Wyck ramps, and the suggested addition of acceleration and deceleration lanes increases the likelihood that the building is within the ramps' footprints.

The developer will not be selected until after the project receives its City approvals. Thus the whole purpose of the Section 106 process -- advance consultation with the community and with historic preservation groups -- will be defeated if the process does not begin until after the design decisions have been made. Moreover, leaving the applicability of Section 4(f) hanging in the air creates an additional key uncertainty over whether the ramps (and therefore the whole project) can go forward, further undermining the "public purpose" that is essential to condemnation.

#### DEC permit

Our comments on the DGEIS pointed out that the project would require the construction of a new stormwater outfall, requiring a State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The FGEIS states, "If,

notwithstanding the stormwater management features selected for a detailed development plan, runoff would exceed the allowable flow to the existing outfalls, a new outfall would be proposed to augment the discharge capacity of the existing system. This new outfall would require DEC and Army Corps of Engineers permits.” (FGEIS p. 29-58)

The problem is that the DGEIS nowhere claims that stormwater management features would obviate the need for an additional stormwater outfall; the reader is left with the opposite impression. The City is attempting to defer DEC review to much later in the process, after (the City hopes) there is unstoppable momentum to proceed with the project, effectively tying DEC’s hands and creating another sort of segmentation. Moreover, the FGEIS admission that an Army Corps of Engineers permit would be required for a new outfall would invoke yet another approval process and increases the relevance of NEPA.

### Contamination

The City has made a major point about the soil contamination in the area. The City has still not demonstrated that there is much more than surficial contamination of the sort that is found in many manufacturing areas and that is routinely remediated without extraordinary effort. The City is adopting a “we must destroy the community in order to save it” approach. This is both unprecedented and unwarranted.

To the contrary, our experts’ comments on the DGEIS showed that the project increases, rather than decreases, the risk of contamination, because the enormous weight burden of the fill needed for the project would squeeze existing deep contamination into a groundwater aquifer. The FGEIS claims that there are aquitards beneath the area that would prevent this effect from occurring (p. 29-53). However, the FGEIS does not present the geological borings that would support this assertion.

### Freedom of Information Searches

Our DGEIS comments complained that the City was withholding information we had requested under the Freedom of Information Law as long ago as February 15, 2008. The FGEIS states, “A number of responsive materials have been sent to WPIRA. The City is continuing to review other documents and correspondence to determine whether or not they are responsive to WPIRA’s request and if they are within the purview of FOIL.” It is now eight months since that first request, and six months since the most recent ones; the conclusion is inescapable that the City’s feet are not merely dragging but are firmly implanted in the sand. (The first request was addressed to the exact address listed on the City’s web site for such requests, so the City’s complaint about an insufficient address ring hollow.)

### Conclusion

The FGEIS has failed to satisfy the many concerns we expressed about the project based on the DGEIS -- those listed above and many others. The City Council should deny approval of the project.

Sincerely,

Michael B. Gerrard

Attachment



**Crown Container Co. Inc.**  
**126-46 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue**  
**Flushing, NY 11368**  
**(718) 527-1414 (718) 335-6845**  
**Fax: (718) 446-7296**  
**Email: [crowncontainer@aol.com](mailto:crowncontainer@aol.com)**

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October 15, 2008

Constantinople & Vallone Consulting LLC.  
The Woolworth Bldg  
233 Broadway  
Suite 830  
New York, NY 10279

Attention: Laura Imperiale

Dear Laura:

The attached is for Friday's testimony.

Any questions, please contact me.

Thanks:

Jerry Antonacci

Hi my name is Gerald antonacci and I am the president of crown container. And I would like to thank you for the opportunity of letting me speak --- I would like to start out and say that I am against this land grab with eminent domain attached to it , I am opposed to Bloombergism and just wish to get the services I pay for. I am in negotiations with the edc and its not because I want to leave my place of business for the last 32 years but out of concern of keeping my business alive in case this ulurp goes thru . I have faith that the council will do the right thing and keep the american dream alive, after all it is our right to own land and to have a dream . I ask you just not for all the land owners in willets point but for all the land owners in this city that I hope the pressures from the one's affected out weigh the pressures from the one's looking to gain . I think the time has come in our city to stand up and say no to eminent domain. We have endured years of neglect and have been thrown to the curb --to be slapped in the face now after how we have survived with no help of the city would be wrong and an insult. Remember this city is at fault for every picture and every reason they have given you about what's wrong with willets point . Show me a picture and I'll ask if you knew then why didn't you do something to fix it. When you ask the same question to yourself and can't come up with an good answer of why they would do that than just turn you head and look at the other pictures of what they intend to do and that is why it was never fixed.. Like they say pictures don't lie and the last picture I have in my head is 16 years ago of claire shulman telling us she had better plans for willets point . Like they say pictures don't lie --- The last time I sat in this room I looked up and saw the quote from Lincoln from the Gettysburg address and I ask you for the sake of this city and this country did Lincoln say a government of the developers --- by the rich --- for profit or did he say-- a government of the people -- by the people--- for the people shall not perish from this earth ? I ask you to think of what he meant before you make your decision and after you do I believe you will stand up once and for all and strike dead this dreadfull thing called eminent domain thank you for your time

October 13, 2008

The New York City Council  
City Hall  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Honorable Members of the New York City Council:

We are the employees of Crown Container Co. Inc., a family owned business that has been operating in Willets Point since 1976. If you vote in favor of Mayor Bloomberg's plan to redevelop Willets Point and our employer is not able to relocate, all 75 of us will join the New York State unemployment line. We are truck drivers, salespersons, office workers, welders, mechanics, and recycling workers. Where will we find new jobs? The country and city are headed into deeper economic troubles and our chances of finding new jobs will be next to impossible.

Last week, La Guardia Community College sent their "job retraining" bus to Willets Point. What a waste of time and taxpayer dollars. We are all skilled and good at our jobs. We don't want to be "re-trained" for a minimum wage job. We want to stay in Willets Point and continue to work hard and provide for our families. crown pays us well and with union benefits

Like all Americans, we are feeling the effects of the downturn in the economy and we are worried about our nation's financial future. We already feel the pinch of these hard times. Our incomes may be steady, but our daily cost of living keeps rising. We are paying more to put food on the table and fill our gas tanks. We worry about how much it will cost to heat our homes this winter. How will we pay our bills if we lose our jobs?

We intend to fight for our jobs. And as our elected officials, we hope you will stand up for us and do what is right for the working families of Willets Point. Please vote *NO* to Mayor Bloomberg's plan to seize the land and businesses at Willets Point. Our livelihoods depend on your vote. we hope the pressure from the ones affected outweigh the pressures from the ones who are looking to gain from our loss

Sincerely,

The Employees of Crown Container Co. Inc.

*Signatures attached*

Wilfredo Garcia  
Name

Wilfredo Garcia  
Signature

Manager  
Job Title

ALEX TORRES  
Name

Alex  
Signature

MGR -  
Job Title

R. Pottier  
Name

R. Pottier  
Signature

Driver  
Job Title

DERRICK MITCHELL  
Name

D. Mitchell  
Signature

DRIVER  
Job Title

NASIR ROBINSON  
Name

Nasir  
Signature

Driver  
Job Title

SEERAM SANKAR  
Name

Seeram Sankar  
Signature

PRIVER  
Job Title

Anthony Cummins  
Name

Anthony Cummins  
Signature

Driver  
Job Title

OMAR MARRON  
Name

Omar Marron  
Signature

Labor  
Job Title

Ismael Mendez  
Name

Ismael Mendez  
Signature

labor  
Job Title

NOE MOLINA  
Name

Noe Molina  
Signature

DRIVER  
Job Title

Jorge Zurita  
Name

Jorge Zurita  
Signature

DRIVER  
Job Title

Wilfredo Garcia W. Garcia  
Name

W. Garcia  
Signature

Labor  
Job Title

Rafael Pagan  
Name

Rafael Pagan  
Signature

Driver  
Job Title

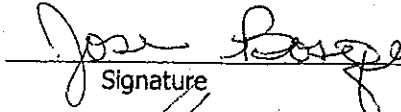
Crown Container Co. Inc.

Steve Robert  
Name

  
Signature

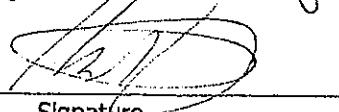
DRIVER  
Job Title

Jose Baeque  
Name

  
Signature

DRIVER  
Job Title

MARVIN GONZALEZ  
Name

  
Signature

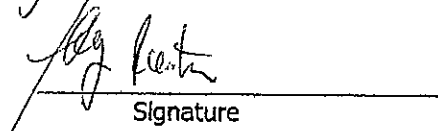
HELPER  
Job Title

Jennifer Antonacci  
Name

  
Signature

SEC  
Job Title

Joyce Reister  
Name

  
Signature

SEC  
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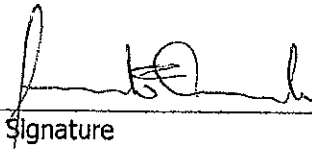
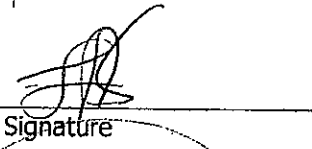
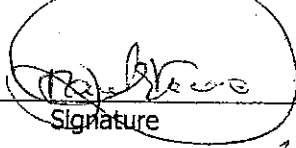
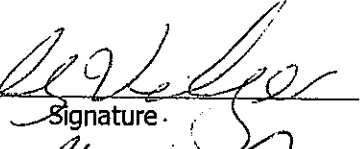
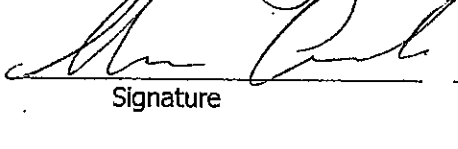
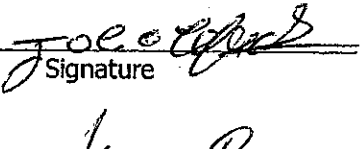
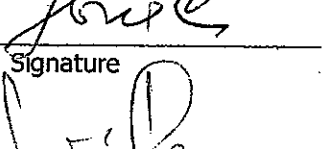
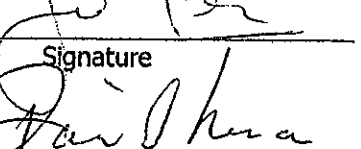
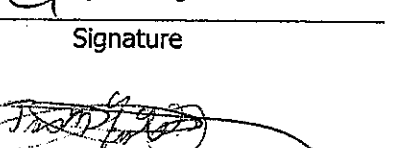
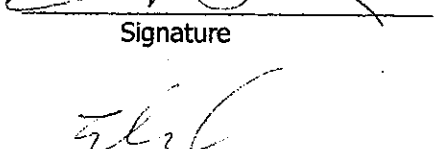
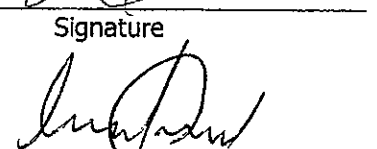
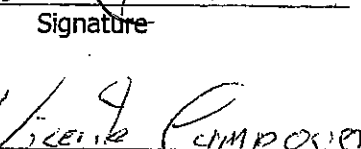
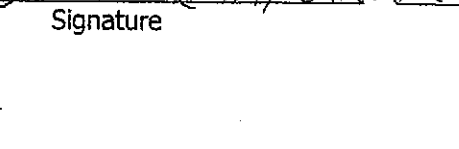
Signature

Job Title

Name

Signature

Job Title

FERNANDO CORDOVA Name	 Signature	MECHANIC Job Title
Luis Soto Name	 Signature	MECHANIC Job Title
Paul Vera O. Name	 Signature	SOLDADOR Job Title
Luis Verdugo Name	 Signature	OPERADOR Job Title
Moises Acevedo Name	 Signature	Dispatcher Job Title
JOE ASEBEDO Name	 Signature	SOLDADOR Job Title
José Cook Name	 Signature	DRIVER Job Title
José Perez Name	 Signature	OPERATION Job Title
DAVID MENA Name	 Signature	DRIVER Job Title
Juan Lopez Name	 Signature	welder Job Title
Edwin Nieves Name	 Signature	Helper Job Title
Potrero Luján Name	 Signature	SCALE OPERATOR Job Title
Vicente Compañero Name	 Signature	operator Job Title

Angel Beltran Angel Beltran DRIVER  
Name Signature Job Title

DAVID BOZZI David Bozzi DRIVER  
Name Signature Job Title

CHARLENE Charlene recycling worker  
Name Signature Job Title

German Flores German Flores recycling worker  
Name Signature Job Title

Manuel Molina Manuel Molina Recycling Worker  
Name Signature Job Title

Victor Pina Victor Pina Recycling worker  
Name Signature Job Title

Francis Morales Francis Morales RECYCLING WORKER  
Name Signature Job Title

Jose Encalada Jose Encalada recycling worker  
Name Signature Job Title

John Westby John Westby DRIVER  
Name Signature Job Title

Rector Cedeno Rector Cedeno Helper  
Name Signature Job Title

Phillip Curry Phillip Curry DRIVER  
Name Signature Job Title

James Michael James Michael DRIVER  
Name Signature Job Title

Donna Antonacci Donna Antonacci sec  
Name Signature Job Title



## HOUSE OF SPICES (INDIA) INC.

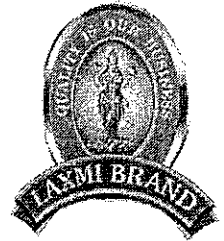
127-40 WILLETS POINT BLVD., FLUSHING NY-11368

Sales : (718) 507- 4900 Fax : (718) 507- 4683

Corporate : (718) 507- 4600 Fax : (718) 507 4798

Visit us at [www.hosindia.com](http://www.hosindia.com)

E-mail us at: [hosindia@aol.com](mailto:hosindia@aol.com)



October 14, 2008

House of Spices corporate headquarters and production facilities are in Willets Point in the area the City wants to condemn for redevelopment. The condemnation will have a profound adverse impact upon our operations and sends the wrong signal to businesses seeking to start in New York City.

Please consider our history. House of Spices began business in 1970 selling spices and specialty Indian food products out of a small Jackson Heights store. Through hard work and sound business judgments we grew in reputation and stature and began to process a variety of specialty foods, which we both sold and distributed to other retailers. We expanded our own retail chain both within the region and nationwide while substantially

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**Distribution Centers Located In:**

NEWYORK, N.Y. HOUSTON, TX. CHIGAGO, IL. LOSANGELES, CA. FREEMONT, CA. WASHINGTON, D.C.  
ORLANDO, FL. BOSTON, MA, ATLANTA, GA.





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increasing our wholesale distribution business. We have grown into a national company with an expanding customer base and line of products. We now market over 3,000 specialty products and manufacture 600 product sku's in Flushing

While growing into a national business we resisted advice to reduce overhead by relocating to New Jersey. We instead purchased our current 110,000 square foot facility on four acres of land in Willets Point. This facility houses our corporate headquarters, manufacturing and main distribution activities.

The primary reason for our decision to remain in Queens was our recognition of the importance of our work force, which lives in Queens. Our highly skilled, motivated, and most importantly, loyal employees have served our company well and deserve our loyalty in return. Losing our staff due to a forced relocation would

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severely damage our business and our Queens employees.

Moreover, our prime location near highway access and major airport terminals enables us to efficiently serve our clients and customers

The loss of our current facility to condemnation would be devastating. Notwithstanding the claims of the Economic Development Corporation, an affordable replacement could not be found in our area. We all know the soaring cost of real estate in our city and the constant pressure to rezone the few remaining manufacturing areas to residential. Facilities like ours have become increasingly rare as the price of our underlying property continues to increase.

Moreover, any move distancing ourselves from our highly trained work force would further damage our business and disrupt

---

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the lives of our employees. Indeed, because our current facility and work force are so important to us we have opted to remain in Willets Point despite the City's failure to provide basic infrastructure in the form of sanitary sewers, drainage and paved streets even though we have been a viable, tax-paying business for almost 40 years.

I must note that the House of Spices and our immediate neighbors make up a diverse community of long-standing, successful New York City companies employing a significant number of employees and contributing their fair share to the City's tax base. I am talking about large companies located on substantial well-kept tracts of property. Our neighbors and we are really a corporate park, albeit one that is traditionally poorly served by the

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City's neglect of its infrastructure. We should not be confused with the auto junkyards in the immediate vicinity of Shea Stadium.

We have remained for many years in Willets Point through mostly thin times. We have contributed to the City's economy while receiving little, if anything, in return from the City. Both the House of Spices and its loyal employees deserve better than to be shown the door when the value of our property has finally increased after decades of City neglect.

Regards,  
Neil Soni

Vice President

House of Spices (India) Inc  
127-40 Willets Point Blvd  
Flushing NY 11368  
Tel: 718-507-4600  
Fax: 718-507-4798  
Email: [hosindia@aol.com](mailto:hosindia@aol.com)  
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126-53 36<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Flushing, NY 11368

718-397-5200 fax 718-397-5206

T. Mina Supply, Inc.

October 9, 2008

NYC Council Member  
250 Broadway  
New York, NY 10007

Re: City Council vote on  
November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Dear Honorable Council Member:

I am the General Manager of T. Mina Supply, Inc. I am writing this letter representing all the employees of T. Mina, a vital (to NYC) piping distribution business in Willets Point. We are truck drivers, bookkeepers, salespersons, fork lift operators, etc. We are paid good wages, have excellent healthcare coverage, retirement programs and bonuses based upon business success, and we all contribute to that success. The Mina's treat us like family and there is very little turnover at T. Mina Supply. In time of service, the youngest is here 4 years. Many of us have come to America from other countries and our employment at T. Mina has allowed us to pursue our individual American dream. Now, we are told that NYC is in the process of taking the property that we toil on daily, and put up apartment buildings and recreations centers. We are scared and the Mina's assure us that they are looking after our interests.


Over the past few months, we have felt helpless as we stand by and watch our future battled out in the press by our owners and others vs. Mayor Bloomberg. The city likes to present an image of Willets Point as an eyesore: a ramshackle community of junkyards, auto repair shops and potholes. Some of that may be true, but Willets Point has been intentionally neglected by the City of New York for decades and there are no sewers, streetlights or paved roads. Yet we are proud to come to work every day because inside our property we work in a clean, well-maintained environment but the streets and other blocks are terrible. We have seen dead bodies, garbage dumped in the middle of the night, mountains of tires, etc. Mr. Mina has had to Beg for cleanup and sometimes it works. Most times it does not. So we as employees clean the streets ourselves.

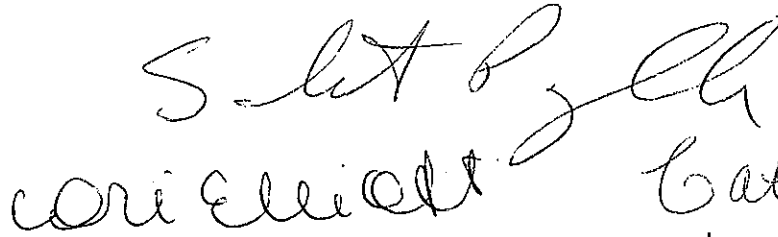
The Mina's contribute mightily to NYC tax rolls and we contribute our share as well. And it is unsettling and tense as we wait to hear if we will, or will not be able to move ahead, feed our families as we accustomed to doing. Sometimes people like us go unheard and unrecognized. But we need the City Council to hear us now. Please, please vote **NO** on this plan.

Sometimes the right thing to do is **VOTE FOR THE LITTLE GUY, NOT THE MEGA DEVELOPER THAT CARES NOT FOR THE WORKING PEOPLE!**

For All the employees at T. Mina, I remain,

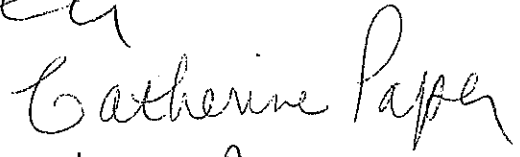
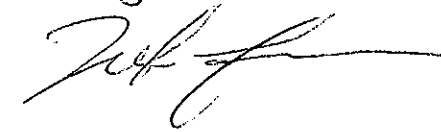
Sincerely yours,

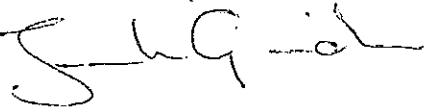
  
Roberto Cano  
Vice President

  
Cori Elliott

North La Marco

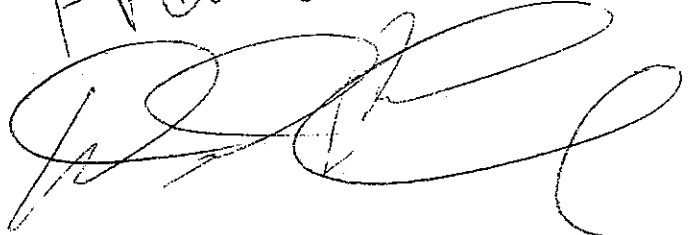
  
Edwin Vazquez

  
Catherine Papp  
Meagan Asmoogan  


Michelle Alvar  


Michael Boston

Musa Berg

Franca Alisei  


126-53 36<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Flushing, NY 11368

718-397-5200 fax 718-397-5206

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**T. Mina Supply, Inc.**

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NYC Council Member  
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New York, NY 10007

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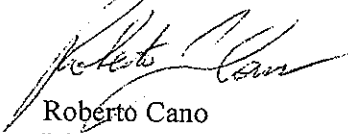
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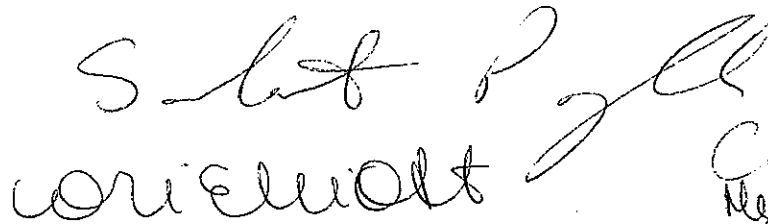
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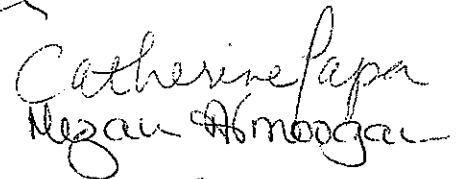
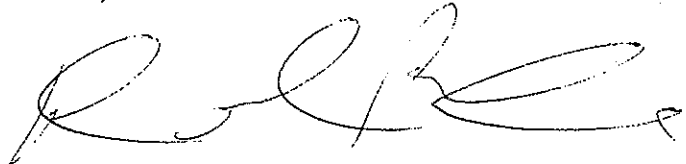
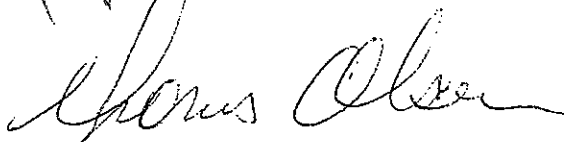
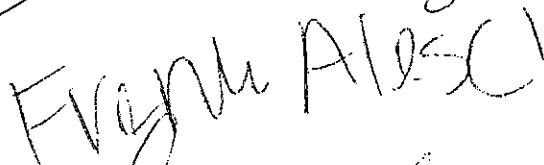
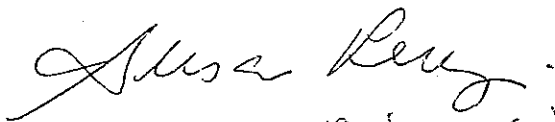
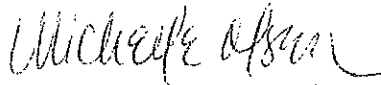
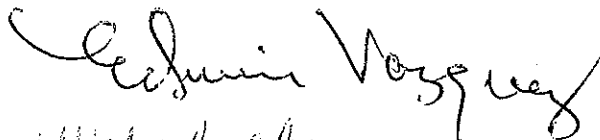
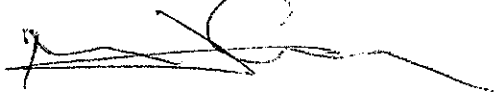
Sincerely yours,



Roberto Cano  
Vice President



Nick De Marco



Catherine Papa  
Negan Abmogau







EST. 1933  
PRODUCTS OF SAWDUST TO SPECIFICATIONS  
33-36 - 127 Place Corona, N.Y. 11368  
Bono's Saw Brand/Div. of  
Manufacturers of Sweeping Compounds (718) 446-1374

October 16, 2008

The New York City Council  
City Hall  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Honorable New York City Council Members:

We the proud employees of Bono Sawdust Supply Company, a owned business that has been operating in New York City since 1933. If you vote in favor of Mayor Bloomberg's plan to redevelop Willets Point, we will more than likely lose our jobs if our employer is not relocated.


Like all Americans, we are feeling the effects of the downturn in the economy and we are worried about our nation's financial future. We already feel the pinch of these hard times. Our incomes may be steady, but our daily cost of living keeps rising. We are paying more to put food on the table and fill our gas tanks. We worry about how much it will cost to heat our homes this winter. How will we pay our bills if we lose our jobs?

**Please vote NO to Mayor Bloomberg's plan to seize the land and businesses at Willets Point. Our livelihoods and future depend on your vote!**

Sincerely,

Bono Sawdust Supply Company

*Signatures Attached*



Jack Bono,  
President



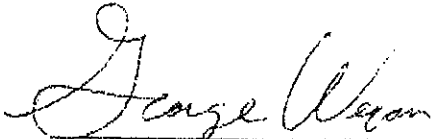
Tommy Bono,  
Vice President



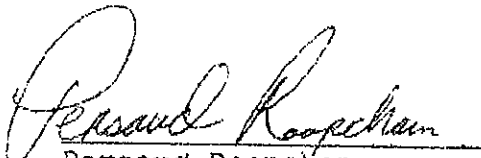
Jake Bono,  
Secretary Officer



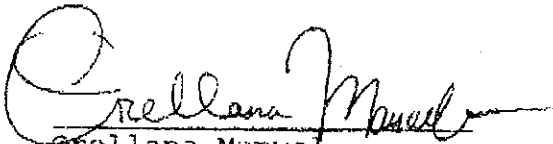
Robert Cornell,  
Driver



George Wegan,  
Driver



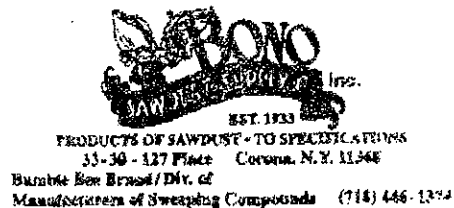
Persaud Roopchan,  
Driver



Ofellana Manuel,  
Driver



Marie Venti,  
Office



October 16, 2008

The New York City Council  
City Hall  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Honorable New York City Council Members:

Bono Sawdust Supply is the only company in New York City that manufactures a sweeping compound used in construction and for animal bedding by local stables, race tracks and circuses. Emigrating from Italy in 1933, to pursue the American Dream, my father and his two brothers founded this company, paddling bags of sawdust in the city during the day and at night, laying the bricks for the building that still houses our business today.

Continuing the tradition of operating a family business, my son joined the company and we both work very hard to keep alive the American Dream that drew my father and uncles to America and to our great City of New York. Bono Sawdust provides well-paying jobs with excellent benefits to 15 men and women employees. Over the years, our company has paid enormous sums in taxes to the city but it has yet to receive basic municipal services. Willets Point has been intentionally neglected for decades. It does not have any basic infrastructure and it lacks sewers, streetlights and paved roads. In addition, the city has never provided Willets Point with essential services such as trash and snow removal.

I served my country in the armed forces during the Vietnam War and I now find myself waging a personal battle to prevent my business and land from being seized by eminent domain, which would enable a private developer to steal my family's legacy and profit handsomely. The use of eminent domain in this instance is unjustified and my family and I intend to continue this battle until we win.

It is our ardent hope that you will support the businesses of Willets Point and that your vote will be a **NO** to Mayor Bloomberg's plan to seize my land and my business.

Sincerely,

Jack Bono  
President  
Bono Sawdust Supply Company

October 16, 2008

Hon. Daniel R. Garodnick  
Chairman  
Committee on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions  
Council of the City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, New York 10007

Re: Willets Point

Dear Chairman Garodnick:

I am writing as environmental counsel to the Willets Point Industry and Realty Association (WPIRA). We submitted extensive comments on the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) for the Willets Point Development Plan (Proposed Project). These comments (including our experts' reports) are incorporated by reference. For your convenience, I am attaching my transmittal letter of August 25, 2008.

The Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS) responds to many of our comments, but it does so in a way that attempts to imply that the problems we identified are not present or have been corrected. In fact, the FGEIS shows that our key concerns are entirely justified. Here are a few examples.

Traffic

Our comments on the DGEIS said, "The most striking feature of the DGEIS is its unabashed acknowledgment that the Proposed Project will cause traffic impacts so severe that, during peak hours, speeds on the Van Wyck Expressway will be cut by more than half, local access ramps will become parking lots and delays will increase significantly at between 66% and 83% of the intersections studied." The FGEIS in essence confirms this observation. It states that "[t]he GEIS analysis fully documents the level of operations on the highway network," and merely says that it employed a conservative analysis as it accounts for background development projects and assumes additional background growth (as is standard for CEQR analysis) (FGEIS p. 29-60).

The FGEIS expresses the hope that better ways will be devised to make the traffic impacts somewhat less terrible, such as through the addition of acceleration and deceleration lanes to the new Van Wyck ramps (FGEIS p. 29-60). However, the FGEIS

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# ARNOLD & PORTER LLP

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Hon. Daniel R. Garodnick  
October 16, 2008  
Page 2

gives not so much as a conceptual sketch of where these lanes would go; we are not told how much more they would cost (a City expense), how much land they would consume, and how much they would improve traffic. The FGEIS merely expresses unsupported hope that someone will devise some kind of vaguely better plan at some undefined point in the future.

## Ramp Approvals

Our comments on the DGEIS pointed out that the Van Wyck ramps will require the approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), and that FHWA policy provides that, in order to receive approval, new access points to the existing Interstate System should meet the requirement that “[t]he proposed access point does not have a significant adverse impact on the safety and operation of the Interstate facility based on an analysis of current and future traffic.” NYSDOT has a similar policy.

The FGEIS acknowledges the need for FHWA and NYSDOT approvals, and it admits the applicability of the NYSDOT policy (FGEIS p. 29-20). It states, “The City has maintained communication and close coordination with NYSDOT from the inception of the project, outlining a range of conceptual design options and working with options that NYSDOT determined were preferable. It is fully expected that such approvals will be obtained and the design will be progressed in light of design suggestions to be made by both NYSDOT and the FHWA.” (FGEIS p. 29-62) Several aspects of this statement should be noted:

- The City’s contacts appear to be solely with NYSDOT, not FHWA
- Unless there are communications that both NYSDOT and the City have failed to produce in response to our numerous Freedom of Information Law requests to both, the NYSDOT has great concerns about the project and has nowhere given the City any comfort that the approvals will be granted.
- The design suggestions are “to be made” by the highway agencies. Thus they have not yet been made, and it is unknown if they are feasible or are physically or financially compatible with the Proposed Project.

The FGEIS does not even attempt to argue that the ramps are anything less than essential to the Proposed Project. To the contrary, it states that “the proposed ramps are an integral part of the Willets Point Development Plan.” (FGEIS p. 29-62) And it contains this remarkable sentence: “If the Plan is approved, *the City would not take possession of any property acquired by eminent domain until the ramps have been approved by NYSDOT and FHWA.*” (FGEIS p. 29-9) (emphasis added) To the best of

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# ARNOLD & PORTER LLP

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Hon. Daniel R. Garodnick  
October 16, 2008  
Page 3

our knowledge, this kind of statement is unprecedented. It acknowledges that the project does not work unless the state and federal approvals have been granted. But it says the City will go ahead and seize title to the properties without any assurance that the project can ever go forward. Thus the project as it now stands lacks the "public purpose" that is a prerequisite to condemnation. The property owners would be able to stay put (presumably in exchange for use and occupancy payments to the City), but without title to the land and under the constant cloud of eviction they could not borrow money (or rationally spend much of their own money) to improve or significantly repair their properties. Those owners who lease out their property could not attract any but the most transient tenants. The poor conditions that have been caused by the City's neglect of the area would be worsened by this condemnation-without-possession limbo.

## NEPA

Our comments on the DGEIS pointed out that the FHWA approval of the ramps makes the project subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The FGEIS admits the applicability of NEPA, and states, "The City will not take possession of property acquired by eminent domain before the NEPA process is complete and the ramps are approved." (FGEIS p. 29-96) But this misses two very important points.

First, the effects of a project on community character and development are very much a part of NEPA analysis. As just shown, the acquisition of property by eminent domain has adverse community effects, even before the government takes possession. Thus NEPA is not satisfied merely by delaying possession.

Second, the NEPA process can be quite protracted. The project schedule completely ignores the several years that it would take to complete a federal environmental impact statement.

## Historic preservation laws

Our comments on the DGEIS pointed out that the demolition of the former Empire Millwork building in connection with a federal project would invoke the Section 106 process under the National Historic Preservation Act, and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act. In response, the FGEIS states, "If the specific development plan proposed by a developer would not require demolition of the building but the design preferred by NYSDOT and FHWA for the ramps would require such demolition, FHWA would undertake the required Section 106 and Section 4(f) analysis." (P. 29-48).

The FGEIS is applying the wrong test. As noted above, the FGEIS acknowledges that "the proposed ramps are an integral part of the Willets Point Development Plan." (P.

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29-62) It would be impermissible segmentation to carve out the ramps in this fashion and apply Section 106 and Section 4(f) only if a developer decides it would not want to tear down the historic building anyway. This also gives the developer an irresistible motivation to tear down the building (which is completely contrary to the purpose of the historic preservation laws). The sketches in the FGEIS make it appear that the Empire Millwork building is directly in the path of the proposed Van Wyck ramps, and the suggested addition of acceleration and deceleration lanes increases the likelihood that the building is within the ramps' footprints.

The developer will not be selected until after the project receives its City approvals. Thus the whole purpose of the Section 106 process -- advance consultation with the community and with historic preservation groups -- will be defeated if the process does not begin until after the design decisions have been made. Moreover, leaving the applicability of Section 4(f) hanging in the air creates an additional key uncertainty over whether the ramps (and therefore the whole project) can go forward, further undermining the "public purpose" that is essential to condemnation.

## DEC permit

Our comments on the DGEIS pointed out that the project would require the construction of a new stormwater outfall, requiring a State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The FGEIS states, "If, notwithstanding the stormwater management features selected for a detailed development plan, runoff would exceed the allowable flow to the existing outfalls, a new outfall would be proposed to augment the discharge capacity of the existing system. This new outfall would require DEC and Army Corps of Engineers permits." (FGEIS p. 29-58)

The problem is that the DGEIS nowhere claims that stormwater management features would obviate the need for an additional stormwater outfall; the reader is left with the opposite impression. The City is attempting to defer DEC review to much later in the process, after (the City hopes) there is unstoppable momentum to proceed with the project, effectively tying DEC's hands and creating another sort of segmentation. Moreover, the FGEIS admission that an Army Corps of Engineers permit would be required for a new outfall would invoke yet another approval process and increases the relevance of NEPA.

## Contamination

The City has made a major point about the soil contamination in the area. The City has still not demonstrated that there is much more than surficial contamination of the sort that is found in many manufacturing areas and that is routinely remediated without

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extraordinary effort. The City is adopting a "we must destroy the community in order to save it" approach. This is both unprecedented and unwarranted.

To the contrary, our experts' comments on the DGEIS showed that the project increases, rather than decreases, the risk of contamination, because the enormous weight burden of the fill needed for the project would squeeze existing deep contamination into a groundwater aquifer. The FGEIS claims that there are aquitards beneath the area that would prevent this effect from occurring (p. 29-53). However, the FGEIS does not present the geological borings that would support this assertion.

## Freedom of Information Searches

Our DGEIS comments complained that the City was withholding information we had requested under the Freedom of Information Law as long ago as February 15, 2008. The FGEIS states, "A number of responsive materials have been sent to WPIRA. The City is continuing to review other documents and correspondence to determine whether or not they are responsive to WPIRA's request and if they are within the purview of FOIL." It is now eight months since that first request, and six months since the most recent ones; the conclusion is inescapable that the City's feet are not merely dragging but are firmly implanted in the sand. (The first request was addressed to the exact address listed on the City's web site for such requests, so the City's complaint about an insufficient address ring hollow.)

## Conclusion

The FGEIS has failed to satisfy the many concerns we expressed about the project based on the DGEIS -- those listed above and many others. The City Council should deny approval of the project.

Sincerely,



Michael B. Gerrard

Attachment



August 25, 2008

Asma Syed, Planner  
NYC Economic Development Corporation  
110 William Street  
New York, NY 10038

**Re: Comments -- Willets Point Development Plan  
Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement**

Dear Ms. Syed:

This letter provides the comments of the Willets Point Industry and Realty Association ("WPIRA") on the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement ("DGEIS") prepared by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development ("Lead Agency") for the Willets Point Development Plan ("Proposed Project") for the Willets Point area of Flushing, Queens.

WPIRA's comments incorporate by reference the comments set forth in the four letters attached hereto. These letters include analyses of traffic and transportation, by Adler Consulting, Transportation Planning & Traffic Engineering, PLLC ("Adler Consulting," Exhibit A); climate change, by Svante Scientific, Inc. ("Svante Scientific," Exhibit B); and hazardous materials, by FPM Group Ltd. ("FPM," Exhibit C); as well as WPIRA's earlier comments on the Draft Scope of Work, many of which went unaddressed in the DGEIS (Exhibit D).

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The most striking feature of the DGEIS is its unabashed acknowledgement that the Proposed Project will cause traffic impacts so severe that, during peak hours, speeds on the Van Wyck Expressway will be cut by more than half, local access ramps will become parking lots and delays will increase significantly at between 66% and 83% of the intersections studied. During the August 13, 2008 public hearing, Bernard Adler, a leading New York traffic engineer and president of Adler Consulting, captured well the magnitude of the traffic impacts when he stated that "I have never seen this level of unmitigated impact in over 40 years of practice as a traffic engineer."

We note that the magnitude of these traffic impacts will be fully explored during the Federal Highway Administration ("FHWA") and New York State Department of Transportation ("NYSDOT") approval processes for the proposed interchanges. As a result these approvals will surely be denied, so it would be both unconscionable and unlawful for the City to start condemnation before completing the FHWA and NYSDOT

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processes. We hope the City will reject this project, but even if approved, the institution of any eminent domain proceedings should be contingent on, at minimum, receiving FHWA and NYSDOT approvals.

The traffic impacts are not the only flaws in the DGEIS that should cause the City to reject this project. Two other significant environmental impacts are those of climate change and surcharge of the local aquifer with the hazardous substances that the DGEIS alleges are present in the Willets Point soils and groundwater. It is notable that the DGEIS failed to consider these impacts at all, even though both were specifically identified in comments on the draft Scope of Work.

In addition, the DGEIS failed to adequately evaluate the regulatory requirements for the project, particularly the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation ("DEC") requirements for constructing sewage outfalls, the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") requirements for approvals by the FHWA, the federal Department of Transportation Act requirements for actions affecting historic structures, the NYSDOT requirements for highway access modifications, and the violation of the regulatory requirements applicable to the selection of the Lead Agency.

The DGEIS failed in numerous other regards as well, and in the remainder of this letter and attached exhibits we discuss these and the other failures of the DGEIS.

## II. SPECIFIC COMMENTS

### A. *The City Has Withheld Information By Failing To Respond To FOIL Requests*

WPIRA, through its counsel, has sent numerous Freedom of Information Law ("FOIL") and Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") requests to various City, State and Federal agencies. The City agencies have failed to respond to these in a timely manner, thereby withholding information from WPIRA. Accordingly, WPIRA has not yet had a full and fair opportunity to review information relevant to the Proposed Project.

For example, the Lead Agency has provided a small number of documents but claims that it has not yet completed its records review in response to WPIRA's FOIL request dated February 15, 2008, more than six months ago. The Economic Development Corporation only recently provided a partial response to WPIRA's request dated June 24, 2008,<sup>1</sup> and is still reviewing its files. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority has acknowledged WPIRA's FOIL request dated June 5, 2008, but only to advise WPIRA that its file review will not be complete until September 11, 2008. The Department of

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<sup>1</sup> WPIRA's original request dated February 15, 2008, apparently was not delivered to the Economic Development Corporation, even though the request was addressed exactly as stated on the Economic Development Corporation's web site.

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City Planning likewise has acknowledged WPIRA's FOIL request dated June 5, 2008, but has provided no further response. A copy of the FOIL correspondence is attached hereto as Exhibit E. We reserve our right to supplement these comments to reflect subsequent responses to our FOIL and FOIA requests.

*B. The DGEIS Fails To Address The Necessary State And Federal Approvals And Procedures*

It is notable that the DGEIS failed to identify so many key state and federal regulatory requirements, including the NEPA process, the section 4(f) process for historic places, the NYSDEC permitting requirements for outfalls, the NYSDOT guidelines for access modifications and the State Environmental Quality Review Act ("SEQRA") requirement that the Lead Agency have jurisdiction over at least one project approval.

1. The DGEIS Fails To Address Federal Approvals Under NEPA

The Proposed Project requires a new interchange with the Van Wyck Expressway, which carries I-678 and thus is part of the federal interstate highway system financed by state and federal fuel taxes and tolls. Ever since it was established by the National Interstate and Defense Highways Act of 1956, the system has been a matter of profound federal interest. As the DGEIS acknowledges (p. S-5), this interchange will require approval not only by NYSDOT but also by the FHWA. This federal review is mandated by 23 U.S.C. § 111(a) and 40 C.F.R. § 148(b)(10). FHWA approval is highly doubtful, especially in view of the FHWA policy that approval of new access points to the existing Interstate System should meet the requirement that "[t]he proposed access point does not have a significant adverse impact on the safety and operation of the Interstate facility based on an analysis of current and future traffic." 63 *Fed. Reg.* 7045, 7046 (Feb. 11, 1998). The DGEIS admits that the proposed Van Wyck access points would utterly ruin the operation of the Van Wyck and impair its safety, and therefore they cannot be approved.

FHWA will have to prepare its own assessment of the environmental impacts of the Proposed Project under the National Environmental Policy Act. *See West v. Department of Transportation*, 206 F.3d 920, 926 (9th Cir. 2000) (FHWA approval of access and exit points to an interstate highway is subject to NEPA). A proposed adverse impact on an element of the National Interstate and Defense Highway System such as that proposed here surely requires a federal EIS under NEPA. The DGEIS, prepared under SEQRA, does not address this requirement, nor its important timing implications.

For actions that are subject to NEPA, actions that could have an adverse environmental impact are prohibited before the NEPA process has been completed. 40 C.F.R. § 1502.1(a)(1). NEPA is concerned with the "human environment," which it defines broadly. 40 C.F.R. §§ 1500.2, 1508.8, 1508.14. The institution of eminent domain proceedings would have an adverse impact on the human environment of Willets Point by forcing the closure of several businesses that are significant sources of employment,

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that provide important services, and that as a practical matter cannot be relocated. Thus any and all condemnation actions should await completion of the NEPA process for the Van Wyck ramps.

2. The DGEIS Fails To Address The Procedures For Evaluating Impacts On Historic Property

The DGEIS states that a building at the site is eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The DGEIS also states that this building would be demolished as part of the Proposed Project. It is apparent from the maps in the DGEIS that this demolition is necessary for the construction of the new ramps on and off the Van Wyck Expressway which, as noted above, will require the approval of both the NYSDOT and FHWA.

Consequently, the demolition of the historic building presents serious implications under section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act. The FHWA will have to demonstrate, among other things, that alternatives to the demolition of the building are not feasible and prudent because of unique problems such as extraordinary costs, environmental impacts or community disruption.

In addition, the demolition will trigger the consultation process under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, in which the FHWA affords the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and other agencies, organizations and individuals an opportunity to comment on the demolition of the historic building. This process has not begun and can be very time-consuming.

The noise impact of the project on the World's Fair Marina Park (DGEIS pp. S-31, 20-1) also has section 4(f) consequences. The DGEIS should have discussed both the section 4(f) and the section 106 processes, but it discussed neither.

3. The DGEIS Fails To Address State Requirements For Obtaining Approval Of The Proposed Interchange

The proposed Van Wyck Expressway interchange will require not only federal approval, but State approval as well. The State has specific guidance for obtaining this approval as set forth in Appendix 8 to NYSDOT's *Project Development Manual* ("*PDM*").<sup>2</sup> The DGEIS fails to explain how the proposed ramps will comply with the *PDM*.

For example, the *PDM* requires that NYSDOT document the environmental acceptability of any new or modified access ramps by showing that:

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<sup>2</sup> NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, *Appendix 8, Freeway Access Modification Procedures*, in THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT MANUAL, available at <https://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/engineering/design/dqab/dqab-repository/pdmapp8.pdf>

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the network of crossroads and parallel roads in the traffic study area can satisfactorily accommodate design year demand traffic volumes induced by the proposed modification. The concept "satisfactorily accommodate design-year demand traffic volumes" is defined as not having a significant adverse impact on the safety and operation of the freeway.

(*PDM*, App. 8 at 8-16.) The relevant page of the *PDM* is attached as Exhibit F.

As the DGEIS makes clear, there is no doubt that the Proposed Project will have "a significant adverse impact on the safety and operation" of the Van Wyck Expressway. During the AM peak hour, northbound traffic will slow to 21 miles per hour, a reduction from an expected 40 mph if the Proposed Project is not built. During midday traffic will be even worse, slowing to 10.8 mph from an expected 36 mph. Traffic will remain bad through the PM peak hour, slowing to 17.6 mph from an expected 39 mph. Traffic will be bad on the ramps as well, slowing from an expected 29 mph to less than 2 mph (!). See, e.g., DGEIS p. 17-74. Accordingly, it is hard to see how the Proposed Project possibly could comply with this requirement of the *PDM*.

There are numerous other *PDM* requirements with which the Proposed Project fails to comply, including special geometries (the Proposed Project does not provide for all movements, see *PDM*, App. 8 at 8-15 (see Exhibit F)); safety considerations (the Proposed Project will require access from the left lane, see *PDM*, App. 8 at 8-16 (see Exhibit F)); and traffic considerations (the Proposed Project will devastate the regional traffic network, *id.*). The DGEIS fails to address any of these requirements.

We also note that the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' 2005 document *A Policy on Design Standards: Interstate System* states (at page 1) that "[e]ach section of interstate highway shall be designed to safely and efficiently accommodate the volumes of passenger vehicles, buses, trucks - including tractor-trailer and semi-trailer combinations, and corresponding military equipment estimated for the design year." The proposed ramps to and from the Van Wyck would violate this policy.

Unlike the City, the NYSDOT has been forthcoming in its responses to our FOIL requests. These responses reveal that NYSDOT -- in contrast to the EDC, which presented a rather rosy picture at the City Planning Commission's hearing on the DGEIS -- appears quite uncomfortable with all of the proposed interchange configurations, and is far from signing off on any of them. Portions of NYSDOT's responses are attached hereto at Exhibit A (see Exhibit 3 to the letter from Adler Consulting). Our FOIA requests further reveal that the FHWA has not been involved at all.

The existing highway system cannot accommodate the traffic from 9.4 million square feet of development. Simply bolting new on- and off-ramps onto the Van Wyck is no solution, as proven by the horrendous delays projected by the DGEIS traffic analysis. In preparation for the 1964 World's Fair and the opening the same year of Shea Stadium,

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new highway segments were built and what is now the Willets Point-Shea Stadium subway station was created. The current project requires no less of a radical reconfiguration of the transportation network there. (DGEIS p. 18-24 shows that the project will also cause severe congestion on the stairways of the subway station.) The DGEIS reveals that the City is severely shortchanging the transportation upgrades that are essential for a development of this magnitude, thus imposing massive costs on motorists in the form of delays that, upon completion of the development, they will find intolerable, leading inevitably to demands for highway upgrades. But those upgrades will be far more expensive after the Willets Point area has been redeveloped and its land rendered much more valuable. The needed highway upgrades would cost hundreds of millions, or billions, of dollars, and accounting for them (as the DGEIS fails to do) would fundamentally change the overall economics of this project and probably reverse the cost-benefit ratio. The costs of these inevitable highway upgrades should be built into the financial structure of the current project; anything else amounts to a massive subsidy of the developers.

4. The DGEIS Fails To Address The Permits  
Necessary To Construct Outfalls

The DGEIS admits that the existing stormwater outfalls “are insufficiently sized to accommodate the runoff being generated, resulting in uncontrolled and untreated runoff and street flooding during storm events.” (DGEIS at S-26) The DGEIS mentions in passing (p. 14-15) that a new stormwater outfall may be needed, but it fails to address the requirement for a NYSDEC permit under the State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System to construct the outfall, together with the applicable standards, procedures and time delays.

5. The DGEIS Fails To Address The Federal Safe  
Drinking Water Act

As discussed in the FPM Report (Exhibit C), the Willets Point area is hydraulically connected to the Brooklyn-Queens Aquifer, which is part of the Long Island Aquifer, a federally-designated Sole Source Aquifer under §1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act. The Freeway Access Modification Report that NYSDOT will have to submit to the FHWA must, according to NYSDOT’s guidance manual, be guided by the FHWA’s Technical Advisory T6640.8A.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, *Appendix 7, Groundwater Resources, Aquifers, and Reservoirs* in THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT MANUAL 7-4, § 4.4.7, attached hereto as Exhibit G, available at <https://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/engineering/design/dqab/dqab-repository/456D1D6117462024E0430A3DFC032024>.

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Technical Advisory T6640.8A<sup>4</sup> states that where an area has been designated as a principal or sole-source aquifer under SDWA §1424(e), the EPA must furnish information on whether any of the alternatives of a proposed project will affect the aquifer or any of the critical aquifer protection areas within the affected sole-source aquifer. If there are no impacts, the SDWA inquiry is complete. However, if the aquifer will be affected, the design must ensure, to the satisfaction of the EPA, that it will not contaminate the aquifer and that the EPA's concerns have been resolved.<sup>5</sup>

The FPM Report discusses the peril that the fill associated with the project will squeeze contaminants (alleged by the City to be present) into the Sole Source Aquifer, which is part of New York City's drinking water supply (through the wells formerly operated by the Jamaica Water Company and now operated by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection). This issue requires careful analysis in the GEIS and in the Freeway Access Modification Report. In fact, in our scoping comments we called for an analysis of how the proposed fill would surcharge the underlying areas. The City's Response to Comments (Comment 78, p. A-24) indicated that this issue would be discussed in the DGEIS chapter on construction impacts, but it was not.

## 6. The Office Of The Deputy Mayor Is Not A Proper Lead Agency

Under SEQRA, the Lead Agency must be an agency "that has jurisdiction by law to fund, approve or directly undertake an action." 6 N.Y.C.R.R. § 617.2(s). *See Coca-Cola Bottling Co. v. New York City Board of Estimate*, 74 N.Y.2d 601, 541 N.Y.S.2d 984 (1989). The Office of the Deputy Mayor has no jurisdiction to do any of these things. Consequently, the Office of the Deputy Mayor cannot be Lead Agency for the action.

### C. *The DGEIS Fails To Provide An Adequate Analysis Of The Municipal Services Alternative*

The Municipal Services Alternative is presented in the DGEIS as a way to allow the continuation of industrial uses in the area. The DGEIS should state that Municipal Services Alternative will materially improve the socioeconomic conditions and neighborhood character of Willets Point, and remove the indicia of urban blight that the Lead Agency has alleged may be present. The DGEIS also should state that the storm water and sewage services can be provided using pumps regardless of the elevation of the streets, and without razing and regrading the site. Furthermore, the DGEIS should state

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<sup>4</sup> UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, TECHNICAL ADVISORY T6640.8A, GUIDANCE FOR PREPARING AND PROCESSING ENVIRONMENTAL AND SECTION 4(F) DOCUMENTS, attached hereto as Exhibit H, *available at* <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/directives/techadv/t664008a.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> PROJECT DEVELOPMENT MANUAL, *see supra* n. 3 and Exhibit G, *citing* 40 C.F.R. part 149.

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The Lead Agency also implies that, even if measures to address climate change might be necessary (and they are), the Lead Agency is taking these measures: "it should be noted that one of the proposed Plan's program components includes the raising of the existing grade throughout the District to conform to flood plain requirements." (*Id.*)

Raising the existing grade is helpful as a precaution to address climate change only if the grade is raised enough to be effective. And raising the grade six feet manifestly is not enough. As Svante Scientific points out in Exhibit B, by 2050, the grade will have to be raised at least ten feet (and not the proposed six feet) in order to avoid the 100-year flood plain. The City has failed to address this or any other aspect of climate change.

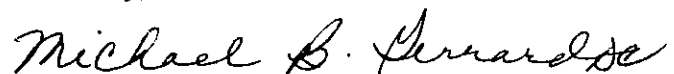
### III. CLOSING

In closing, the Proposed Project requires a major reworking of the roadway system, a hard look at how to cope with climate change and a reasoned evaluation of the impacts of raising the grade by ten feet or more. Otherwise, the area will be vulnerable to storms and sea level rise, will threaten local water supplies and will become a perpetual honking nightmare for people trying to get to a hospital, a fire, a flight or a game, or simply from one side of Queens to the other.

We respectfully submit that it is highly unlikely that the Proposed Project will ever secure the State and federal approvals necessary to proceed, and that it is time for the City to reject the Proposed Project and cut its losses. In the event that the City should decide (unwisely) to push forward, however, we reiterate that it would be unconscionable and unlawful for the City to start condemnation -- destroying, as a practical matter, the Willets Point businesses and their more than \$1 billion in annual revenues -- before securing all the needed State and Federal approvals.

Thank you for your attention to these comments.

Sincerely,



Michael B. Gerrard  
Nelson D. Johnson

Enclosures



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this alternative's effect on property values and hence on property tax revenues, as well as its effect on the economic benefits and revenues of the existing businesses (reported in an August 17, 2008 article in Crain's New York Business as exceeding \$1 billion annually).

*D. The DGEIS Fails To Address The Impacts Of Placing Fill In Willets Point*

The DGEIS indicates that the site will be raised above the FEMA 100-year floodplain level. The April 2008 draft of the Willets Point Development District Neighborhood Conditions Study ("Blight Study"), prepared for the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, indicates (at page C-82) that one of the greatest barriers to redevelopment of the area is that much of the land is below that floodplain level. As pointed out by Svante Scientific and FPM in the reports attached hereto as Exhibits B and C, respectively, it will take an enormous amount of fill to raise the project area above even the current 100-year flood plain, much less the flood plain expected within the Proposed Project lifetime. The DGEIS does not even estimate the quantities of this fill, much less where the fill will come from, how its cleanliness will be assured, the safety, environmental and energy impacts of the tens of thousands of truck trips required to haul the fill to Willets Point, the impacts of excavating the fill, and the impacts of the compression that the fill will both undergo and cause.

*E. The DGEIS Fails To Address The Impacts Of Climate Change*

Mayor Bloomberg has repeatedly, and correctly, warned that New York City faces serious consequences from sea level rise and other consequences of climate change. His "PlaNYC" discusses this in some detail.<sup>6</sup> A recent City report reaffirms that New York City faces serious consequences from sea level rise and extreme weather events as a result of climate change.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, the Lead Agency has expressly refused to address the impacts of climate change, though we requested such a discussion in our scoping comments. The Lead Agency's explanation for this refusal is that climate change impacts "are City-wide issues and are not addressed through CEQR on a project-specific level." (Final Scope of Work Att. A, Resp. to Cmt. 74 at A-23.) This explanation explains nothing, however, since the Lead Agency cannot sensibly ignore prudent mitigation measures at Willets Point simply because similar measures may be necessary elsewhere.

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<sup>6</sup> The City of New York, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, *PlaNYC: A Greener, Greater New York* (April 22, 2007), pages 130-141, available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/planyc2030/html/downloads/the-plan.shtml>. The cited pages are attached hereto as Exhibit I.

<sup>7</sup> New York City Department of Environmental Protection, Climate Change Program, *Assessment and Action Plan: A Report Based on the Ongoing Work of the DEP Climate Change Task Force, Report 1* (May 2008), pp. 23-27, [http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/pdf/climate/climate\\_complete.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/pdf/climate/climate_complete.pdf). The cited pages are attached hereto as Exhibit J.



**MASON TENDERS' DISTRICT COUNCIL  
OF GREATER NEW YORK  
POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE**

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**Statement of Michael J. McGuire  
Committee on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions  
Re: Willets Point Development Plan Project  
October 17, 2008**

Good afternoon. My name is Michael McGuire and I am the Director of the Mason Tenders' District Council Political Action Committee. The Mason Tenders' District Council is made up of more than 17,000 members in six local unions in the Eastern Region of the Laborers' International Union. Two of these locals are made up of laborers in the construction industry in New York City. Construction and General Building Laborers' Local 79 and Asbestos, Lead and Hazardous Waste Laborers' Local 78 represent some eleven thousand men and women working within the five boroughs as building construction laborers, mason tenders, demolition workers and asbestos and hazardous material abatement laborers.

The Willets Point area of Queens is ripe for development. It is in a prime location that is surrounded by growth, including downtown Flushing and the new home of the New York Mets, Citi Field. Unfortunately, Willets Point is just the opposite. I mean no offense to the businesses that are located there, but the history and condition of Willets Point render it a true blighted area. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Willets Point was a dump where thousands of tons of garbage were burned each year. After that, it housed a variety of industries that had a severe detrimental effect on the area for many years.

There has been a history of open petroleum spills and illegal dumping of hazardous materials and unidentified chemicals. The fact that the area has no sanitary sewers to carry toxins away (including human waste concentrated in area cesspools) means that this contamination mostly remains in the area to this day. I say mostly because some of the contamination does get moved: the area's high water table means that these poisons seep into the groundwater and get carried down the Flushing River and out into Flushing Bay.

There has also been a widespread history of building code and environmental violations that make the area a haven for criminal activity. The area has historically been a mix of legitimate auto shops and illegal chop shops coexisting throughout Willet Point's sixty acres. Of the approximately 250 businesses in Willets Point, roughly 90% are auto related. In this environment, even the most responsible business owner cannot help having some spills of oil, gasoline, transmission fluids and other carcinogenic materials. If businesses of this type remain in the area, the land can never be reclaimed to the point where it's safe for human occupation. Further, these auto related businesses, two-thirds of which are working out of rented spaces, have a history of paying depressed wages, less than 60% of the New York City average for workers in this industry.

As well as eliminating an extremely toxic and dangerous area, reclamation and redevelopment of Willets Point will create a vibrant, mixed-use community. The Willets Point Development Plan leverages the area's close proximity to the airports (particularly LaGuardia airport), Citi Field, the United States Tennis Association, and Flushing Meadows Park to create a new regional tourist destination. Further, the Plan will create housing designed to serve a mix of incomes and demographics, the very building blocks of a solid neighborhood.

Along with more than a million square feet of retail and entertainment space, the plan calls for a convention center and a 700 hundred room hotel, 5,500 units of mixed-

income housing, a half million square feet of office space, and a large amount of community space, open spaces and public squares. The economic impact of these improvements is massive. Permanent jobs will increase five to sixfold, following the approximately 20,000 construction jobs that will be created. This will result in more than \$1.5 billion in additional tax revenues for the City over the thirty year period commencing when the project is completed.

It is our belief, that, while a hardship on some of the businesses that the City will relocate from Willets Point, for the overall good of the community and New York City as a whole, the Willets Point Development Project is a winning plan.

This project has set a major precedent with the City. Agreements have been reached that will virtually guarantee that the development will be built to union-quality standards. These include both an agreement to pay prevailing wages and to participate in New York State certified apprenticeship programs. This coupled with the fact that 45% percent of the contracts will be set aside for minority-owned business enterprises, woman-owned business enterprises and locally-owned business enterprises, presents perhaps the best opportunity for opening the trades to communities that have traditionally not been able to gain entry into these professions. Further, the Willets Point labor agreement is meant to act as a template for all future major re-zonings. Tens of thousands of young people from our communities of color would not only be hired to work on these jobs, but would get full apprenticeship training. With these skills, they could go anywhere in the world and find work, yet they wouldn't need to, as they'd most likely be members of New York Building Trades unions. But if Willets Point doesn't happen, that precedent doesn't get set, and these opportunities never arise.

Clean up of a toxic, blighted site; the building of more than 5,000 units of housing; the creation of some 20,000 construction jobs and the conversion of 1,000 current permanent jobs into 6,000 future permanent jobs; and more than fifty million

dollars in additional revenue for the City every year. No one with the best interests of the community at heart could make the argument that this plan is not the best thing for Willets Point. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. McGuire

October 17, 2008

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WILLETS POINT 10/17/08

Good morning Chairman Garodnik and Committee Members

My name is Jack Kittle, and I represent the 10,000 members of District Council 9 of the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades.

In the interest of time, I don't think that we need to rehash everything that has already been said today, as I believe we all get the same talking points.

So, let me just say that District Council 9 strongly supports this project because of the jobs it will create. As you know, we are typically in favor of development, but this project raises it to a new level. The language regarding labor standards in this project could be the template for how these agreements are done going forward. This is the kind of development that will benefit New Yorkers for generations to come. It will promote training for young people to enter into careers – not just short term jobs.

In the current economic crisis, we do ourselves a disservice if we do not show a little vision as to the future of economic development. The economy will recover at some point. Will be ready to go forward from there?

Thank you for your time today.

Cyprian Truck & Auto Repair d/b/a  
Shea Truck & Auto Repair, Inc.  
127-48 Northern Blvd.  
Flushing, N.Y. 11368

Andros Charidemou  
Charalambos Georgiou  
Phone No.: 718-899-3305  
Fax No.: 718-899-3396

October 16, 2008

**Re: Willet's Point Redevelopment**

To the City of New York:

My name is Andros Charidemou, the owner of Cyprian Truck & Auto Repair d/b/a Shea Truck & Auto Repair. My location is at 127-48 Northern Blvd, Flushing. My partner, Charalambos Georgiou, and I have been a stabilized business for 29 years. Our business is a truck and car repair shop and a Sunoco Franchise. We build this land and created this business not to sell or to give to New York City Economic Development but to pass on to our children and our grandchildren. The New York City Economic Development Corporation is full of lies and empty promises and I have *physical* evidence to prove that.

They want to take our land and destroy our business. This is our only business that we have to put food on our table, pay our bills and our mortgages. We live in the greatest country of all. I believe in the Constitution, I believe in democracy, I believe the great words of John F. Kennedy "ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country". I became a good citizen, never fell into crime, I pay my taxes, I raised my family, I sent my three kids to college and I will do the same to my five grandchildren if you let me. Now is my award time. My own government opened my chest and allowed the vultures, the New York City Economic Development Corporation, to rip my heart. By doing so, I mean rip all my beliefs, my rights, my family rights, my freedom. They are going to rip my dream, the dream that every American citizen has, a piece of land, home and business. I watched the last presidential debate; the only thing Obama and McCain agreed on was to help the people not to lose their house and to help them support their dreams. It is fortunate to say that this American dream is what we have here right in the palm of our hands. We have our land, we have our homes and our businesses do not take this away from us.

Ladies and gentlemen of the council protect the Constitution, protect the democracy, protect the rights for your people and do not forget, we are the people.

Thank you for your time.



Andy Charidemou

# Wilets Point Redevelopment Business and Worker Assistance

The city's plan for the re-development of Willets Point is close to completing its public review process (ULURP). Thus far, the Community Board, Queens Borough President and the City Planning commission have approved the plan, which will clean up Willets Point and re-build it into a new mixed-use community that will provide 18,000 construction jobs and 5,300 permanent jobs.

## TENANT BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

Help to relocate tenant businesses is an important part of the Willets Point Plan. NYCEDC and its consultants, Howard/Stein Hudson (HSH) began outreach efforts to tenant business owners in February 2008. NYCEDC is now pleased to announce that it has retained Cornerstone Realty Group to provide business relocation and real estate assistance to impacted Willets Point businesses. If the Plan receives final approval, Cornerstone will assist with business relocation services, including but not limited to site searches, negotiation of leases and relocation agreements and providing logistical support. NYCEDC and its representatives will offer tenant relocation assistance at the completion of ULURP, which will occur in November.

## WORKER ASSISTANCE

The Willets Point Plan will also provide opportunities for the area's workers. NYCEDC and the New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS) have partnered with LaGuardia Community College (LAGCC) to create a Worker Training and Assistance Program for all Willets Point workers. This program would include job training and placement services, as well as English as a second language and other vocational training, immigration and social services.

We urge you take advantage of these offerings. For more information, please contact the appropriate representative:

### Wilets Point Redevelopment

[www.nycdc.com/wiletspoint](http://www.nycdc.com/wiletspoint)

Hotline: 212-618-5789

### Tenant Assistance

Christie Marcella (HSH)

917-339-0488

Cornerstone Realty Service

212-768-1435

### Workforce Training

Linda Barlow (LAGCC)

718-482-5337



# Redesarrollo de Willets Point

## Ayuda para los Negocios y Trabajadores

El plan de la Ciudad para el re-desarrollo de Willets Point está al punto de completarse el proceso de aprobación pública (ULURP). Hasta ahora, la Junta Comunitaria, la Presidenta del Condado, y la Comisión de Planificación Urbana han aprobado el plan, que va a renovar y reconstruir Willets Point en una comunidad nueva de uso mixto en que proveerá 18,000 trabajos de construcción y 5,300 trabajos permanentes.

### AYUDA PARA LOS NEGOCIOS DE INQUILINOS

Ayuda para negocios de inquilinos es una parte importante del Plan de Willets Point. NYCEDC y sus consultores, Howard/Stein-Hudson (HSH) empezaron esfuerzos de alcance en febrero 2008. NYCEDC tiene el placer de comunicarle que ha contratado Cornerstone Realty Group para dar ayuda de reubicación e inmobiliaria a los negocios afectados en Willets Point. Si el Plan recibe la aprobación final, Cornerstone ayudaría los negocios con servicios de reubicación, incluyendo pero no limitado a búsquedas de sitios, negociación de contratos de arrendamiento y acuerdos de reubicación y proveer apoyo logístico. NYCEDC y sus representantes ofrecerán ayuda de reubicación a los inquilinos a la finalización del proceso ULURP que ocurrirá en noviembre.

### AYUDA A LOS TRABAJADORES

El Plan de Willets Point también proveerá oportunidades para los trabajadores de la zona. NYCEDC y el Departamento de Servicios de Negocios Pequeños (SBS) se han asociado con LaGuardia Community College (LAGCC) para crear un Programa de Ayuda y Entrenamiento de Mano de Obra para todos trabajadores de Willets Point. Este programa incluiría entrenamiento de trabajo y servicios de colocación, Inglés como segunda idioma y otro entrenamiento profesional, y servicios sociales y de inmigración.

Instamos a usted aprovecharse de estas ofertas. Para más información, por favor contacte al representante apropiado:

#### Redesarrollo de Willets Point

[www.nycfedc.com/willetspoint](http://www.nycfedc.com/willetspoint)  
Hotline: 212-618-5789

New York City  
Economic Development  
Corporation

#### Ayuda de Negocios de Inquilinos

Christie Marcella (HSH)  
917-339-0488  
Cornerstone Realty Group  
212-768-1435 marca 0

#### Entrenamiento de Mano de Obra

Linda Barlow (LAGCC)  
718-482-5337

**TESTIMONY OF ALBERT F. PENNISI,  
PRESIDENT OF THE QUEENS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

The Queens Chamber of Commerce's number one priority has been to bring a Convention, Exhibit Center and Hotel to Queens County. The proposed redevelopment of Willets Point would allow for this vision to become a reality.

Willets Point is one of the last pieces of land of sixty plus acres, available for development in Queens and its development will promote economic growth, serve the markets need for a convention and exhibition center that is larger than Queens' hotels can currently provide. The overall plan for Willets Point should serve the needs of the Queens' business community and the City of New York.

A Convention and Exhibit Center would provide Queens County and the City of New York tremendous benefits, by hosting large tradeshows, consumer shows, cultural events and visitors from the City of New York and nearby cities in the United States.

This location borders on major highways, mass transit, is one mile from LaGuardia Airport, ten miles from JFK Airport and a two hour flight from most major cities.

The Convention and Exhibit Center must be supported by a premier hotel, on-site. The hotel would accommodate New York City and visiting guests from outside the region. A hotel is critical to the support of the Convention and Exhibit Center on-site.

This is an extremely important financial benefit to the business of Queens and the City of New York in these economic times.

Development at Willets Point is projected to create: 20,000 constructions jobs, 6,000 permanent jobs and generate over \$5 billion dollars over 30 years.

We do, however, recognize that this redevelopment must be pursued with an awareness that businesses currently operate at this location. The Economic Development Corporation must provide relocation, financial and technical assistance to ensure the shortest possible and least disruptive business relocations. New York City has selected LaGuardia College to work with displaced workers.

We applaud statements by Mayor Bloomberg and Queens Borough President Helen Marshall regarding the creation of a dedicated Business Relocation and Workforce Assistance Plans for the businesses currently located in the area. This relocation effort must be intensified by the Economic Development Corporation.

We are pleased that what began as a Queens Chamber of Commerce feasibility study has now grown to a point where there is a Master Plan and requests for proposals that includes our hotel and conference and exhibit center concept.

# Flushing Willets Point Corona LDC

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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Port Authority of NY & NJ

INFORMATION

Helen Marshall  
Queens Borough President

## **EX-OFFICIO**

John Liu  
Council Member, 20<sup>th</sup> District

Hiram Monserrate  
Council Member, 21<sup>st</sup> District

41-61 Kissena Boulevard, Suite B  
Flushing, NY 11354  
Tel: 718-670-1781 / 718-670-1776  
Email: ab@fweldc.org

## October 17, 2008 City Council Planning, Dispositions & Concessions Subcommittee Hearing

Good Afternoon. I would like to thank the City Council Planning, Dispositions & Concessions Subcommittee for this opportunity to share my views on the Willets Point redevelopment. I am Claire Shulman, president of the Flushing/Willets Point/Corona Local Development Corporation.

In the past few weeks, many New Yorkers have had their lives turned upside down by the current economic turmoil that we are all facing throughout the country.

With the economy in disorder, it is more crucial than ever that we move forward with the plan to develop Willets Point. In such turbulent economic times, we must do everything we can to promote initiatives that will spur job growth and new business. We've faced times like these before and we all know that the way to reenergize our economy is through projects such as this one.

For those of us who have represented New Yorkers who live outside Manhattan, we know that our boroughs are hit hardest during times of fiscal crisis. But thanks to a great deal of hard work over many years, Queens stands ready to serve as a catalyst for job growth and urban renewal not just for our borough, but for all of New York.

Urban renewal in this case is about more than economic development – it's about cleaning up one of the most contaminated areas in the region and turning it into New York City's first green neighborhood. The environmental benefit of this project – to our City and to the families in the surrounding neighborhoods – is undeniable.

We can all agree that we need to clean up Willets Point and the Flushing River and Bay. This project will revitalize the Flushing Waterfront and create a place where families can enjoy open space and recreation in what is now a blighted and polluted area.

We will clean up the contaminated site, but that is just the start. Willets Point will be a model of environmentally sustainable development. The creation of open space, parks, trees, a bicycle/pedestrian connection to Flushing Bay – will have a direct and profound impact on the daily lives of the people living in and around the area. This will be an enormous accomplishment and set a standard for others to follow throughout the city.

The economic benefits of this project are clear. Situated at the heart of so many cultural institutions and recreational facilities, in close proximity to mass transit and our airports, Willets Point right now is the epitome of unrealized potential. The development project will directly support 18,000 construction jobs and create more than 5,300 permanent jobs. A redeveloped Willets Point is projected to generate \$25 billion in economic activity over 30 years. In

addition, over 5,500 units of housing will be created – many of which will be affordable.

The development will connect Corona and Downtown Flushing – vibrant and otherwise thriving communities whose growth has been stifled by the blighted area currently dividing them. We will create a center of commerce that links these two communities while adding desperately needed convention space as well as a large hotel. **Now** is the time to make Queens a destination for business and commerce.

Having had the privilege of serving in a borough wide post for many years I can tell you that rarely has one plan encompassed so much hope for our future. And lest we forget, the Economic Development Corp. has worked hard not only to describe the project but to assist the businesses and workers in Willets Point to relocate and prosper. I commend the city for its efforts and for all their hard work.

The redevelopment of Willets Point comes at a critical time for our City's economy. This creation of New York City's next great neighborhood will help keep our economy moving – but we have to act **now**.

Willets Point is our future, and it is how we will turn our economy around-both in Queens and throughout New York City. When the economy is troubled, it is the time to plan. When the economy

reverses itself, and I am confident that it will, we will be ready to act.

The support for this project is vast and the coalition backing the Willets Point development proves just how widespread the benefits of this development will be. Citizens, community leaders, elected officials, merchants, environmentalists, urban planners, business leaders and union members all maintain the common goal of ensuring the long-term stability of the neighborhoods, environment, and economy in Queens and throughout the city.

For our economy, for our environment and for those seeking an affordable place to live this plan must go forward. For those reasons and many more I hope you will join in supporting what will become a true economic catalyst for the city.



# Community Board 7

Borough of Queens  
Bay Terrace, College Point, Beechhurst, Flushing,  
Malba, Queensborough Hill and Whitestone

133-32 41<sup>ST</sup> ROAD • 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR • FLUSHING, NY 11355  
(718) 359-2800  
Fax: (718) 463-3891

Helen Marshall  
*Borough President*

Eugene T. Kelty, Jr.  
*Chairperson*

Karen Koslowitz  
*Deputy Borough President/Community Boards*

Marilyn Bitterman  
*District Manager*

October 17, 2008

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL

ON

### WILLETS POINT REDEVELOPMENT

Good afternoon members of the City ~~Board~~<sup>COUNCIL</sup>, my name is Gene Kelty and I am the Chairperson of Community Board #7, Queens. I am here to present testimony before you regarding the Willets Point Redevelopment. On June 30, 2008, the Community Board had a public hearing regarding this issue. The meeting went on way into the night, where a presentation was conducted by the Economic Development Corporation, question and answer period with the bull Board members, and comments made by the general public.

By the early morning hour of 12:30 A.M., the Chairperson of the Committee, presented his committee report and the following motion was made:

TO APPROVE THE WILLETS POINT REDEVELOPMENT AS PRESENTED WITH THE FOLLOWING STIPULATIONS (THE FIRST TWO ARE MANDATORY):

- 1) Postpone disposition of property the city acquires at Willets Point until a final plan and a developer are chosen to allow CB #7 and the Queens Borough Board input and final approval.
- 2) The mitigation fund is extremely small compared to the billions needed to complete this project. CB #7 insists a mitigation fund equal to 10% of the development costs is established, excluding land acquisition costs.
- 3) The parking requirement for the residential units should be increased to 100%.
- 4) The 850-seat k-8 public school must be provided on-site and included in the urban renewal plan.
- 5) CB #7 does not approve use of eminent domain for this redevelopment, but realizes it is a component of the urban renewal plan.
- 6) CB #7Q insists NYC EDC diligently exhaust every means of negotiation and not abuse the method of property acquisition and issue advance notice with supporting documentation to CB #7 prior to any action of eminent domain.

NYC EDC must keep their promise

- 7) of unconditional effort for business relocation, worker relocation and job retraining.
- 8) The affordable housing component should be increased to a minimum of 30% income eligibility requirements should be less than \$45,000.00 per year.
- 9) Half of this component must be designated for senior affordable housing.



- 10) As per HPD regulations, half of the affordable housing component will be allocated to residents of community board #7Q. The remaining half should be allocated to residents of community board #3Q and #4Q, which are located directly adjacent to the Willets Point Redevelopment.
- 11) The overall site must conform to LEED-ND certification standards.

After the above motion was made and seconded, a Friendly Motion was made and accepted which stated:

THE REDEVELOPMENT OF WILLETS POINT WORKFORCE SHALL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIES:

- 1) Displaced Willets Point Workers,
- 2) Women and minority Businesses,
- 3) Queens Local Businesses, and
- 4) Union Labor

The Motion was re-read again with the addition of the Friendly Motion and a Roll Call Vote was taken:

21 Board Members voted to APPROVE.

15 Board Members voted in OPPOSITION

2 Board members ABSTAINED FOR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

It should be noted that there was extensive discussion on this item. Approximately 12 committee meetings were conducted over the year with 7 being in the last 2 months.

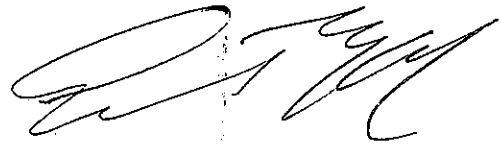
I would like to make sure that the members of the City ~~Council~~ understand that the Community Board voted IN FAVOR OF THIS PROJECT WITH

PAGE 4

12 CONDITIONS. Furthermore, in the early stages of our meeting and throughout, it was UNDERSTOOD THAT:

**NO BUSINESS FROM THE WILLETS POINT AREA WOULD BE  
RELOCATED INTO THE COLLEGE POINT AREA,  
SITE SHOULD NOT BE MITIGATED IN PHASES.**

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Kelty', written in a cursive style.

Eugene T. Kelty, Chairperson

## FOR THE RECORD

Op-Ed in support of Willets Point on behalf of the cultural institutions of Flushing Meadows Corona Park

FINAL  
8/7/08

As New York City contemplates the future of Willets Point, the cultural institutions of neighboring Flushing Meadows Corona Park see an unprecedented opportunity to develop northern Queens as a cultural destination. This revitalization will serve not only the millions of New Yorkers who already visit our institutions annually, but also tourists and convention-goers from beyond the region. The planned redevelopment, including a mid-sized convention center and hotel, will entice people to come to Queens and contribute their discretionary time and money to the benefit of our borough. Also, for the first time, New York City will compete nationally for the 2,000-5,000 registrant conferences that drive economic development in so many cities across the country.

Furthermore, the redevelopment of Willets Point will add to the resurgence already underway in Flushing Meadows Corona Park. All of the Park's cultural institutions are making dramatic improvements to our facilities and developing new opportunities to engage with our audiences:

- The Queens Botanical Garden's revolutionary Visitor & Administration Center is the first public building in New York City to achieve LEED Platinum certification, the highest national standard for sustainable building, as well as an AIA Council on the Environment Top Ten Building Award.
- Since its 2004 expansion, the New York Hall of Science has seen its audience more than double. The Hall welcomed 485,000 visitors last year—placing it in the top 5% of cultural institutions by attendance citywide—and provided teacher training to more than 3,500 City science teachers.
- An expansion of Queens Theatre in the Park is underway, and new performance and event spaces will allow the Theatre to become the borough's destination for local, national and international performing arts.
- By 2010, the Queens Museum of Art will double its size with new galleries and educational spaces, encouraging a forum for the community, artists and the Museum's diverse audience.
- The Mets' CitiField and the U.S. Tennis Association's new visitor center will enhance sports entertainment experiences for millions of fans.
- Flushing Meadows Corona Park Pool & Rink, in the midst of its inaugural season, is the largest recreation complex ever built in a City park.

Together, these projects represent hundreds of millions of dollars of investment—both public and private—providing services to millions of people each year. More importantly, these projects are an investment in the future of Queens, branding our borough as a destination for cultural tourism.

These exciting projects are occurring alongside the commercial and residential developments that are reinvigorating Flushing, Corona, and all of northern Queens. Forty-three residential developments are either planned or already in construction, and a redeveloped Willets Point will unify northern Queens as a focal point for tourism and recreation.

Today, there are many reasons to visit northern Queens—go to a ballgame or tennis match, visit a museum, enjoy a great meal—but these are all one-day activities. With a convention center and hotel, Willets Point will transform this area from a great place to spend a few hours to a great place to stay for a few days. A revitalized Willets Point will reconnect northern Queens to its waterfront and integrate several world-class facilities into a cultural tourism hub. Queens residents, of which more than one million visit our cultural institutions annually, will derive greater benefits from improved facilities, transit, and infrastructure, to name just a few. More importantly, an influx of tourism means more economic development, more investment in cultural institutions and more benefits for Queens.

To look at just one recent example: in July, more than 100,000 people came to Flushing Meadows for two Billy Joel concerts. They came from all over our region and beyond. They bought tickets, food and souvenirs. Then they got in their cars, or caught their trains, and left. If we provide people with an opportunity, they will come to Queens and contribute to our culture and our economy. And if we build a hotel and convention center at Willets Point—if we strengthen Queens as a world-class recreation and exposition venue—they will come more often and they will stay longer to see more of what we have to offer.

The redevelopment of Willets Point will undoubtedly create a vibrant corridor between bustling downtown Flushing, our expansive Park, and the rest of northern Queens. In supporting this redevelopment, we echo the concerns of Queens Borough President Helen Marshall and urge the City to work with the current property owners, to assist businesses with relocation, and to stand behind its commitment to provide job training to those workers displaced by the project. We trust that the City will live up to its obligations and look forward to seeing the Willets Point redevelopment move forward, creating a new destination for residents of Queens, the City, and tourists from beyond the five boroughs.

Tom Finkelparl  
Executive Director, Queens Museum of Art

Marilyn Hoyt  
President and CEO, New York Hall of Science

Susan Lacerte  
Executive Director, Queens Botanical Garden

Jeffrey Rosenstock  
Executive Director, Queens Theatre in the Park

THE QUEENS  
**COURIER**

**News > Opinion**

Thursday, October 16, 2008

Queens is a Cultural Destination

[Print Page](#)

Wednesday, October 15, 2008 5:15 PM EDT

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These exciting projects are occurring alongside the commercial and residential developments that are reinvigorating Flushing, Corona, and all of northern Queens. Forty-three residential developments are either planned or already in construction, and a redeveloped Willets Point will unify northern Queens as a focal point for tourism and recreation.

Today, there are many reasons to visit northern Queens - go to a ballgame or tennis match, visit a museum, enjoy a great meal - but these are all one-day activities. With a convention center and hotel, Willets Point will transform this area from a great place to spend a few hours to a great place to stay for a few days. A revitalized Willets Point will reconnect northern Queens to its waterfront and integrate several world-class facilities into a cultural tourism hub.

Queens residents, of which more than one million visit our cultural institutions annually, will derive greater benefits from improved facilities, transit, and infrastructure. More importantly, an influx of tourism means more economic development, more investment in cultural institutions and more benefits for Queens.

To look at just one recent example: in July, more than 100,000 people came to Flushing Meadows for two Billy Joel concerts. They came from all over our region and beyond. They bought tickets, food and souvenirs. Then they got in their cars, or caught their trains, and left. If we provide people with an opportunity, they will come to Queens and contribute to our culture and our economy. And if we build a hotel and convention center at Willets Point - if we strengthen Queens as a world-class recreation and exposition venue - they will come more often and they will stay longer to see more of what we have to offer.

The redevelopment of Willets Point will undoubtedly create a vibrant corridor between bustling downtown Flushing, our expansive park, and the rest of northern Queens. In supporting this redevelopment, we echo the concerns of Queens Borough President Helen Marshall and urge the city to work with the current property owners, to assist businesses with relocation, and to stand behind its commitment to provide job training to those workers displaced by the project. We trust that the city will live up to its obligations and look forward to seeing the Willets Point redevelopment move forward, creating a new destination for residents of Queens, the city, and tourists from beyond the five boroughs.

*Tom Finkelpearl, Executive Director, Queens Museum of Art*

*Marilyn Hoyt, President and CEO, New York Hall of Science*

*Susan Lacerte, Executive Director, Queens Botanical Garden*

*Jeffrey Rosenstock, Executive Director, Queens Theatre in the Park*

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The Queens Courier

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## FOR THE RECORD

Testimony to City Council Regarding Willets Point

Marilyn Hoyt, President and CEO, New York Hall of Science

October 17, 2008

Good afternoon, Chairman Garodnick and members of the Committee. I am Marilyn Hoyt, President and CEO of the New York Hall of Science. I am here to speak to the importance of the Willets Point redevelopment, particularly the proposed conference center, hotel, and supporting amenities this project will bring to northern Queens.

Located in Flushing Meadows Corona Park (adjacent to Willets Point,) the Hall is Queens' largest cultural institution. We have been integrally involved in promoting cultural activities and tourism in Queens for than two decades, and as one of Corona's largest employers we are committed to encouraging economic development to the betterment of our community. The Willets Point project has the potential to further both of these priorities.

With a conference center, hotel, restaurants and shops, Willets Point will become a destination for New Yorkers and tourists. Also, the proposed redevelopment of Willets Point holds great promise for more parkland and public spaces. And there is a chance to finally reconnect the people of Flushing, Willets Point, and Corona to their Flushing River waterfront.

Cleaning up Flushing River will further the revival of Flushing Meadows Corona Park. All of the Park's cultural institutions are making dramatic improvements to facilities and developing new opportunities to engage with audiences. The Hall of Science, Queens Botanical Garden, Queens Theatre in the Park, and Queens Museum of Art have all recently completed—or will soon complete—major capital improvements. Our audiences are soaring, and along with the New York Mets and U.S. Tennis Association expansions, and the new Flushing Meadows Pool & Rink, we are building a destination in northern Queens. Together, these projects represent billions of dollars of investment—both public and private—providing services to millions of people each year. A

conference center can only quicken the pace of resurgence and improve the quality of experience, bringing groups of families to the area for several days at a time, and fostering interest in our community's rich cultural diversity.

This development will occur alongside commercial and residential developments that are reinvigorating Flushing, Corona, and all of northern Queens. More than forty residential developments are either planned or already in construction, and a redeveloped Willets Point will unify northern Queens as a focal point for tourism and recreation.

If we strengthen Queens as a world-class recreation and exposition venue, more people will come more often and they will stay longer to see more of what we have to offer. The project will create a vibrant corridor between downtown Flushing, our expansive Park, and the rest of northern Queens.

In supporting the development of a conference center and supporting facilities in Willets Point, we echo the concerns of Queens Borough President Helen Marshall and urge the City to work with the current property owners, to assist businesses with relocation, and to stand behind its commitment to provide job training to those workers displaced by the project. We trust that the City will live up to its obligations and look forward to seeing the Willets Point redevelopment move forward, creating a new destination for residents of Queens, the City, and tourists from beyond the five boroughs.

We encourage the Council to approve this plan—with the conference center, hotel and amenities as proposed. This is an investment in the future of Queens.



FOR THE RECORD

10/17/08

I, BRUCE BENDALL, CEO OF THE MASON  
AUTOMOTIVE COMPANIES IN QUEENS, APOLOGIZE  
FOR HAVING TO LEAVE EARLY THIS AFTERNOON.

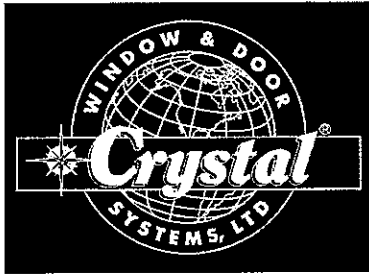
I JUST WANTED TO EXPRESS MY FULL SUPPORT FOR  
THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE FLEMING WILLETS POINT PROPOSAL.

NEXT TO HOMES, OUR AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY HAS AND  
CONTINUES TO FACE VERY TOUGH ECONOMIC CONDITIONS,  
LIMITED BANK FINANCING, AND REALIZE THAT MANY  
OF THE CURRENT WILLETS POINT PROPERTY OWNERS ARE  
IN THE SAME CONDITION. BASED ON THESE CONDITIONS,  
I PERSONALLY FEEL THAT THEY CAN NOW AND WILL BE  
ABLE TO IN THE FUTURE, RELOCATE WITHIN THE CITY AND  
THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT IS BENEFICIAL TO MANY MORE NYC  
RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES IN THE BOROUGH AND THE REST OF NYC.

THE CITY IS IN REAL NEED OF INCREASING CONSUMER CONFIDENCE  
IN ORDER TO STIMULATE OUR ECONOMY AND I FEEL THIS  
DEVELOPMENT IS A MAJOR STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION  
IN TODAY'S TIMES.

THANK YOU,

BRUCE BENDALL, CEO OF MASON AUTO COMP  
UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION CHAIRMAN,  
BOARD MEMBER OF QUEEN COLLEGE FOUNDATION  
TRUSTEE OF N.Y. HOSPITAL QUEENS



## FOR THE RECORD

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### **Building Relationships™**

October 17, 2008

The Honorable Daniel Garodnick  
New York City Council Member  
250 Broadway  
Room 1841  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Council Member Garodnick:

My name is Thomas Chen and I am the president and founder of Crystal Window & Door Systems. Unfortunately, my business schedule precludes me from attending today's proceedings in person, but I have prepared this letter to communicate my feelings and those of many others in Queens.

My firm is headquartered and has its main production facility in the Queens College Point Corporate Park, which is within one-half mile of Willets Point. My firm has grown rapidly since its very modest startup in 1990 to now be one of the largest window companies in North America, with distribution in over 33 states. We employ over 300 persons at our Queens facility. I am also a Queens resident.

As a Queens business owner and a leader in the Asian American business community of New York, I am strongly in support of the proposed Willets Point development effort. I urge the City Council to approve the plan.

Since coming to New York from Taiwan in 1982, I have only known Willets Point as a blighted, possibly polluted, and definitely underutilized area. In the 25 years since, as the rest of New York and Queens has revitalized and prospered, the Willets Point area has remained stuck in the past and become even more of an eyesore. The Council's support of the redevelopment effort would bring Willets Point into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The Willets Point project would create a beautiful, sustainable community. It represents a huge economic development opportunity for Queens and the entire City. It would create more than 18,000 construction-related jobs and over 5,000 permanent full-time ones. It would create housing, a hotel, and a convention center, all of which would be beneficial to Queens business owners and their employees. At a time when New York City is losing thousands of jobs due to



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## **Building Relationships™**

Page 2

the financial crisis on Wall Street, this job creation and economic improvement opportunity must be given every consideration.

The Willets Point development would incorporate new green spaces and access to a rediscovered and revitalized waterfront, as well as create a vibrant neighborhood surrounding our Borough's major sports complexes – the U.S. Tennis Center and the new CitiField. These improvements will be of great benefit to the residents of adjoining communities such as Corona and Flushing, where many of my employees live.

For the job creation, quality of life improvement, and economic boost it would bring to Willets Point and neighboring areas, I urge the members of this committee and the City Council to support the Willets Point project. It is clearly a benefit to the businesses of Queens, the citizens of the Borough, the residents of the adjoining minority communities of Corona and Flushing, and the City of New York.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas Chen', is written over a horizontal line.

Thomas Chen  
President



**Testimony of the Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center  
to the Council of the City of New York  
Sub-Committee on Planning, Dispositions & Concessions  
October 17, 2008**

Good morning,

My name is Ejim Dike and I am the Director of the Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center. I am here to testify against the City's plans to redevelop Willets Point.

The Willets Point Development Plan proposed by the Bloomberg administration does not meet a compelling or overriding public interest. In fact, we would argue that New York City does not need another large-scale development project complete with luxury hotel and condominiums.

In contrast, the current Willets Point Triangle is an active business district that has served the interests of regular New Yorkers for over three decades. It employs over 1400 people—primarily new immigrants who are hardworking New Yorkers attempting to live the American dream. The workers and entrepreneurs of Willets Point have contributed to the revenue of the City including through taxes, and have advanced the City's environmental interests by recycling auto parts. Despite the contributions of Willets Point, the City has never installed basic facilities including sewer, water, sidewalks or heat. Sanitation services have never been extended to the area, nor have snow collection services. In a final blow, the City now proposes a plan that will displace the workers and business owners of Willets Point thus robbing them of skilled and well-paid work, and has offered nothing in return but classes at LaGuardia Community College.

The potential displacement of workers and small business owners without meaningful compensation is in clear violation of universally accepted human rights standards codified in international law that the United States is bound to. These laws recognize that forced evictions resulting from development plans consistently have a negative effect on the most politically and economically vulnerable groups in society.

In the case of Willets Point, most of the workers who would be displaced by the plan are immigrants of color from Latin America. This violates the International Convention

on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination which prohibits policies or practices that have a disproportionate negative impact on people of color.

The City's refusal to negotiate with the workers of Willets Point thus far is also in violation of their universally recognized right to active, free, and meaningful participation by of all affected individuals in development.

The most troubling aspect of the plan is that the resulting displacement would rob the workers of Willets Point of their right to a livelihood. We have an obligation to respect the rights of all New Yorkers to earn a decent living for themselves and their families. This is more than a legal obligation. It is a moral obligation to respect, protect and realize human rights in good faith.

Development is an important and necessary aspect of a progressive society, but it should always be designed to benefit all of the residents of areas designated for development projects, and should never be invoked to justify the abridgement of our human rights.



## Asian Americans for Equality

133-04 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue • Flushing, NY 11354

Tel: (718) 961-0888 • Fax: (212) 961-0988 • www.AAFE.org

### **New York City Council Public Hearing on Willets Point Development Proposal**

Friday October 17, 2008

Good Afternoon. My name is Richard Lee and I am the Advocacy Associate for Asian Americans for Equality (AAFE), a founding member of the Queens for Affordable Housing Coalition. I would like to thank the City Council for giving us the opportunity to express our concern with the EDC's proposal to develop Willets Point.

Queens is amidst an affordable housing crisis, especially in the communities of Flushing, Corona, Elmhurst, Jackson Heights and Woodside. A report by the NYU Furman Center stated that the most populous community in the city is Flushing, while the first, second and third most overcrowded communities are Corona/Elmhurst, Jackson Heights and Woodside/Sunnyside, respectively. This is troubling considering that out of the 51,977 low- and moderate- income housing units funded by the city in 2007, only 2,248 of these were in Queens, which equates to less than 5% of the housing slated to be built. While the EDC claims to be allocating affordable housing, the development plans units only for households making greater than \$55,000 a year (for a household of four). 35% of Queens' residents earn less than \$35,000 a year; in the surrounding communities, this percentage is much higher. The community needs real affordable housing and the Willets Point plan is a unique opportunity for Queens to receive a fair share of the City's affordable housing stock.

Community Board 7 has taken a major step in its recommendation of providing at least 30% of the total planned units for families earning less than \$45,000 a year. We are asking that the City Council take into consideration the Community Board's recommendation, and build upon that to ensure that:

- At least 1/3 of the planned units be dedicated to families earning less than \$25,000
- At least 1/3 of the planned units be dedicated to low-moderate and middle income families
- That these units remain permanently affordable
- And that the businesses and workers receive fair compensation and relocation

Established in 1974, AAFE is a non-profit community-based development and empowerment organization. AAFE serves thousands of seniors, low-income and working individuals and families each year, offering an array of programs that encompass the organization's comprehensive approach to community development. One area we are able to readily demonstrate our commitment to create stronger communities is through the area of affordable housing. For years, AAFE has been a vocal advocate for the creation and preservation of affordable housing, which we have turned into action by creating and preserving over 600 units of affordable housing in New York City.

**Hannah Weinstock**  
**Queens Community House**  
**Testimony before City Council on Willetts Point**

It's not news to anyone that we are living in very difficult times. That is true especially here in New York City, where economic stagnation seems not to have even dampened the rapid acceleration of rents, food prices, electricity and others, and at the same time the job losses and salary stagnation here are even greater than other parts of the country. This is related to the economic crisis of the past few years, but it's also not new. Three years ago I was talking about how the last three decades had seen incomes rise 3% while rents rose 33% here in New York City. And recent events only make things worse.

I work at a community center in Jackson Heights, serving all of Northwest Queens through ESL classes, youth programs, and senior programs. The majority of the people I speak with on a daily basis are living on family incomes of less than \$25,000/year. I ask you to look at a few of their stories, which we have included in a packet for you all. It is not uncommon for me to hear of 20 single people living together in a basement, in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions because of the need to pay the rent. Or multiple families in a single apartment – the norm has become not one room for one person, but one room for one family. Of people who pay 90% of their income on rent, or even those whose rent exceeds their income and live off the charity of their friends and family who help them to survive each month. And these are not Manhattan rents, these are Queens rents. 1800 for a three bedroom, 1600 for a two bedroom, 800 for a one bedroom, 500 for a room. There are others who may not have the family support to be so lucky as to live in an overcrowded apartment; these are the people being forced into homelessness.

Would you, our representatives, rather build more homeless shelters, or more affordable housing? Would you rather see more people freeze to death in the streets next to empty luxury condos, or use these huge developments to invest in the future of working families and health of our City's workforce? The fact that the Bloomberg administration has not included substantial affordable housing for low-income and moderate-income families (those making less than \$60,000 and even less than \$25,000) in its two major developments in Queens, Willetts Point and Hunters Point South, despite each of them involving public resources in some way, shows just how far removed the Mayor is from the reality of working New York.

We are demanding that 2/3 of the apartments be affordable, with 1/3 of those being dedicated to families earning \$25,000 and less.

Furthermore, the workers who have made their livings out of the businesses of Willetts Point MUST be treated with respect. This is not a time to be encouraging more job losses. Many of these workers may not be able to get another job, even with extra job training. The businesses and workers should be relocated or given a spot within the new Willetts Point development, and should be fairly compensated.

Development can be a good thing, but only if it actually benefits the local community. Without worker compensation and relocation, and a commitment to a majority of the housing being dedicated to the people who live in Corona and Flushing, who are low and moderate income people, this project is not acceptable. I urge you to do right by your constituents.

# THE REALITY FOR IMMIGRANT FAMILIES IN QUEENS

*A few stories from the volunteers of Queens Community House Action Group*

## **Meet Quazi Raihan:**

Hi everyone. I'm Raihan. I am a volunteer with Queens Community House and Queens for Affordable Housing. I live in Woodside Queens. This area's rents keep going higher and higher. My husband, myself and our 5 year old son have to live in the same room and share an apartment with another family of three. My son can't walk properly, and he needs space for his physical therapy exercises, but we have no space for him. In the morning, we all need to use the bathroom and the kitchen at the same time, which causes a lot of tension. My husband works in a store and our family income is only \$900/month and we have to pay \$800/month in rent. It's very complicated to live in Queens today. There are many families like me in Queens.

## **Meet Alicia Vizueta:**

I live together with my husband, who is disabled because of an open heart operation and arthritis of the spine. (I have to stay home and help him with hospital visits and other things.) He receives \$650 a month. We pay \$400 a month on rent. Actually we are facing a desperate situation because the landlord wants us to leave, and we cannot find any other room for this price. We have applied for City Housing, but we have to wait many more years, and what will we do in the meantime?

## **Meet Jesus Borrientos:**

Hi. I am working from 10am in the morning until midnight as a maintenance worker. I make \$24,000 a year to support my family. I am paying \$850/month for an old and run-down one-bedroom apartment for myself, my wife, my 16 year old daughter and my 14 year old son. My children, now teenagers, don't like sharing a room with their mom and dad. They want privacy, especially at their age. They always ask me to get another apartment that is larger, but we can't afford it. I pay taxes, and I hope that these new projects can help us in some way.

## **Meet Maria Esther Romero:**

I am retired. My social security check is \$718/month. My rent is \$853.70, and then you have to add utilities, food, medicine, transportation, and other expenses. My daughter helps me when she can, but it's very difficult for her because she has her own family and children to support and it's not easy. I worked all my life, 36 years, as an administrative assistant, baby-sitting, in accounting, at Emhurst Hospital and more. Then in 2001, I got sick. I had six heart attacks in four hours, and it is a miracle I lived. After that, I could not work. Now I am 70, and the checks I get are not enough. I live in Jackson Heights for 38 years, in the same place. How can I move now? Where can I move to? In order to eat, I have to go to the senior center for the \$1 lunch. My friends help me also to eat.



Every day I am thinking how I will make it tomorrow. I am looking for part-time work, so that I can pay my bills, but I can't find anything.

**Meet Yuri Ruiz:**

Unfortunately my father and mother passed away last July. Now it is only myself and my two sisters living together, which makes it even more difficult to pay the rent. We pay 1 800 a month for our apartment, plus phone bills, gas, electric, you can imagine. I am not able to work because of a disability. I am in treatment, and I receive SSI, but only \$660/month. My sister works in maintenance at the YMCA, but still it is so hard for us to pay rent, together with the other bills. And every year, the rent goes up, but our income does not. Every year it gets even tighter.

**Meet Marlene Lopez:**

Hi. In my case, we are living six people in a two-bedroom apartment, paying \$1600/month. That doesn't include electricity, gas, phone, and more. My three daughters are working – one works in a factory, the other in cleaning, and the third can't find steady work, but does odd jobs when she can. They support me as well as their children. We would like not to be so crowded together, but as you can imagine, there isn't enough money.

**Meet Dolly Velasquez:**

I am Dolly Velasquez, and I was a home attendant for 25 years. My clients loved me, but one day I lost my job without any reason. I worked 96 hours/week, and paid taxes on 96 hours/week, but am only receiving social security payments for 40 hours/week. I am lucky that I own my apartment, but just the maintenance is \$600/month, and I get less than \$800/month in social security. With transportation, water, electricity, food and more, how can I live? Only by borrowing money. I invested some money in a company that claimed they would give 14% interest, but then they closed and disappeared and I lost all my money. I eat now at the senior center for \$1. I feel very desperate and very worried. I hope I don't have a heart attack. I am 72 years old, and I want to work again, but I feel very disillusioned.

**Meet Jorge Galius**

I have a good job. I work as a painter and I earn about \$40,000/year. However, even with a decent salary, the rent still makes life difficult. I live with my wife and my two sons, 24 and 20 years old. They haven't been able to find steady work, so I am paying the rent, \$1600, for a two bedroom. It's a shame that they have to share a room, but that is our situation for now. Of course everything is going up, electricity, food, rent. One feels sick sometimes worrying about the future. I am not so worried for myself, but for my sons, trying to make a decent living in this environment.



## **Pratt Center** for Community Development

### **Testimony to the New York City Council by Brad Lander Regarding the Willets Point Redevelopment Plan October 17, 2008**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the proposed Willets Point Redevelopment Plan. I am Brad Lander, director of the Pratt Center for Community Development, an university-based non-profit organization that aims to create a more just, equitable and sustainable New York City, by assisting low and moderate income communities in planning for and realizing their futures. We are a member organization of and provide support to Queens for Affordable Housing, a coalition of more than a dozen Queens-based community groups that is working to ensure that new residential development in the borough creates housing that is truly affordable to a diverse mix of Queens residents.

We have come before on many major rezoning and development plans in recent years, when we believed that the interests of low and moderate income people – their need for good jobs, affordable housing, more open space and schools and community centers – and the overall planning needs of the city, were being ignored in pursuit of the mayor's goals of high-rise luxury condos and new office buildings. And in many cases, you have succeeded in making those projects better, or at least a bit less wantonly serving the interests of developers.

But Willets Point is a special case. First, because the project begins with a more fundamental harm – the proposed displacement of 1,700 blue-collar jobs, at a moment in our city's economic history when we need jobs for working people, that are not dependent on Wall Street, more than we need new condos. Second, because the original plan here was especially ill-conceived. Third, because the project sits between several working-class immigrant neighborhoods, which it has thus far essentially ignored. And finally, because it is very difficult to believe, given the state of the credit markets, that anyone would finance, build, buy or rent the market-rate condos, office space, or convention center being proposed, for many years to come.

We therefore urge you to reject this project, unless it is profoundly altered:

- **to do right by existing workers and businesses**, including not only dramatically better relocation, training, and placement efforts, but also a commitment that those businesses who choose to can remain as tenants on the site until the developer that would displace them is designated, has full financing and approvals in place, and is truly ready to build;
- **to make most of the housing affordable to a range of low, moderate, and middle income families**, in light of the Bloomberg Administration's well-documented shortchanging of low-income housing in Queens (the borough has nearly 24% of all households in the city earning less than \$50,000 per year, it has received less than 4% of the subsidized housing units that those families can afford); and
- **to create good jobs, targeted to local workers, with a far better first-source hiring plan for community residents for the permanent jobs that would be created on the site.**

In the spring and summer of 2007, Queens for Affordable Housing, along with ACORN, sponsored a community-based planning process that engaged community members, business owners and workers, and union members in a process to evaluate the plan proposed by the Economic Development Corporation and to define the necessary principles of what responsible development at Willets Point would look like. These recommendations are described extensively in the report, *Making Willets Point Work: A Plan for Neighborhood Success*, published in February 2008.

The top priority that emerged from this process was the great need for substantial percentages of housing at the development that would be truly affordable to Queens residents at a range of incomes, including the average Queens household as well as the most vulnerable among the borough. Additionally, participants were unanimous in their analysis that any redevelopment at Willets Point must treat fairly the workers and small businesses that currently occupy the site, with strong guarantees for the relocation of interdependent businesses in clusters and compensation packages.

Specifically, the community came to the conclusion that the Willets Point redevelopment should not proceed unless it is dramatically altered to meet the following goals:

**Requirement #1: Do right by existing businesses and workers.**

- Businesses that depend on their relationships with neighboring business in Willet Point should be relocated together in clusters to a permanent home. If coordinated relocation is not possible, then some area should be reserved for existing businesses within the plans for Willets Point. Special attention needs to be paid to those businesses who rent their space. While businesses who own the land they occupy have at least some leverage in eminent domain proceedings, the majority of businesses who rent their spaces – and the workers they employ – have been treated very badly by the Bloomberg Administration, which has denigrated them, refused to reach out to them, and done nothing to help them.
- Existing workers should be able to choose among a range of good options: such as (1) relocating with their existing employers (with relocation assistance), (2) City-funded job training and placement, in fields of their choosing, and (3) first priority placement in new jobs at Willets Point, in construction and permanent positions. Additional efforts should be made to ensure that the most vulnerable workers have the choices described above
- One critical new idea: We urge you not to approve this rezoning unless a commitment is made that those businesses who choose to can remain on the site as tenants, until the developer who would displace them is not only designated, but has all of their financing and approvals in place, and is truly ready to build.

We are very concerned, given the state of the credit markets, that even if approved this project will not proceed for many years, and perhaps not at all. It is very difficult to believe, given the state of the credit markets, that anyone would finance, build, buy or rent the market-rate condos, office space, or convention center being proposed, for many years to come. There is a real danger, therefore, that the existing 250 business and 1700 workers will be displaced, the site clear, but nothing new will rise, and in the name of

earning \$61,450. Yet the median annual household income in Queens is \$10,000 below that, the median incomes of Queens Community Boards 7, and 3 are below the *Queens* median income, and in Board 4, the *median* income of families is \$20,000 below the income limits in the few subsidized units being proposed. The current plan for “affordable housing” at Willets Point equates to 0% affordable for the surrounding communities, which are in dire need of additional housing.

Over half of Queens households (51.5%) pay more than 30% of their income for rent (the federal affordability standard). Almost 9 percent of all occupied housing units in Queens were classified as severely overcrowded, with the neighborhoods of Corona, Elmhurst and Jackson Heights suffering the highest rates of severe overcrowding at 17.5%. Senior citizens, Latino, African-American, and Asian residents carry the highest rent burdens in Queens.

**Recommendation #3: Create good jobs targeted to local residents and workers.**

- Require that developers and employers, for both the construction and permanent phases of the project, pay prevailing wage and benefits packages for all jobs
- Ensure that both displaced workers and local residents are able to connect to the newly created jobs, and advance along career paths, by requiring developers, contractors, and employers to hire locally, and by investing in job placement and training programs.

Currently, the first part of this recommendation has been met, and we credit the City for its efforts to reach an agreement with labor that requires prevailing wages and benefits.

However, there are no firm goals or guarantees for hiring within the local community. To be honest, the workforce plan announced by the Queens Borough President and Deputy Mayor Lieber is a joke, and they should be embarrassed by it. It contains absolutely nothing about the priority for local residents to get permanent jobs on the site, or training for those jobs.

*Making Willets Point Work* goes on to describe additional recommendations for the creation of physical and social infrastructure at the site and well as ways to respect and connect to the surrounding neighborhoods, some of which EDC has included in their plans for the site, and some of which remain unsatisfactorily addressed at this time.

Taken in sum, EDC’s plan for Willets Point fails the community standard for responsible and accountable development for the site, and given the extraordinary proposed expenditure of public dollars, and the pain and displacement slated for the more than 250 businesses and 1,700 workers, it cannot be justified in its current form. We urge the City Council to reject this plan, unless these requirements are met.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

blight we will have traded jobs for nothing at all.

To address this very real concern, the Economic Development Corporation should commit in writing that businesses that wish to remain on the site can do so, until the development of the phase of the project that would displace them is truly ready to go. As we are seeing at Atlantic Yards and elsewhere, that may be a very long time. There are many precedents for this type of action -- at Harborside in Sunset Park, in the Downtown Brooklyn Rezoning, and the Red Hook Stores building, and many other places. It can be done in a way which would not impede development, if and when a developer has been designated, full financing is in place, the necessary approvals have been given, and demolition, remediation, and construction are truly ready to proceed.

Currently, despite a few high-profile deals, the futures of the businesses and the more than 1,700 workers that they employ are no clearer or more secure than they were when the planning effort was undertaken.

**Recommendation #2: Make most of the housing affordable to wide range of low, moderate, and middle-income families.**

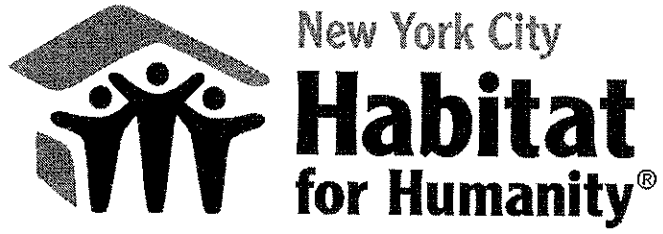
The Independent Budget Office recently released a report which makes plain what community-groups in Queens have known for a while: the Bloomberg Administration's New Housing Marketplace has dramatically shortchanged low-income families in Queens. While the borough has nearly 24% of all households in the city earning less than \$50,000 per year, it has received less than 4% of the subsidized housing units that those families can afford. This inequity is so profound that it probably cannot be fully addressed.

Willets Point represents one of the few opportunities for you to right this injustice. We therefore believe that the project should not be approved unless most of the units are affordable. You have heard from some that it is simply too expensive in this climate to make the units affordable. But if the plan is to use eminent domain, displace 1700 jobs, and spend hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars on the project to create mostly luxury housing, then we simply should not do it.

The Queens for Affordable Housing affordability plan is as follows:

- At least one-third of the units should be affordable to genuinely low-income families -- a households earning less than \$25,000 a year.
- At least one-third of the units should be affordable to low- to moderate- and middle income families, using multiple income tiers to ensure affordable to low-to moderate- and middle income families, using multiple income tiers to ensure affordability at a range of incomes.
- Additionally, the project should guarantee that the housing created is genuinely accessible to immigrant families, include a dedicated senior housing component, and be permanently affordable.

Currently, EDC has indicated that 80% of the units on the site will be market-rate housing, and that 20% of the units will be subsidized at a level that will be affordable for a family of four



**Testimony of Habitat for Humanity – New York City  
to the New York City Council**

**October 17th, 2008**

**Testimony respectfully submitted by:  
Jonathan Furlong  
Habitat for Humanity – New York City**

## Introduction

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Jonathan Furlong, and I am the Community Relations Associate at Habitat for Humanity - New York City. Habitat-NYC is a proud member of Queens for Affordable Housing, which is a coalition of community-based organizations that was formed to ensure that new residential development in the borough creates housing that is truly affordable to a diverse mix of Queens residents.

**As an affordable housing developer and advocate, Habitat for Humanity – New York City urges the City to make two-thirds of the housing units included in the Willets Point development affordable to working families in Queens, with special a focus on affordability for residents with the greatest need.**

Habitat-NYC was founded in 1984 as an independent affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, and we build affordable housing in all five boroughs. Our homes are built with the “sweat equity” of our family partner homeowners, who work side-by-side with volunteers.

In addition to building homes, Habitat–NYC is a leading advocate for affordable housing, with the goal of ensuring that every New Yorker has a decent, affordable home. We work to achieve this by creating a social movement to end the housing crisis plaguing New York City and by calling on elected officials to make affordable housing a priority. Today, we are urging you to create the same kind of affordable housing opportunities at Willets Point.

## The Need for Affordable Housing in Queens

The need for more affordable housing in the Borough of Queens is tremendous. Between 1990 and 2000, Queens experienced the largest population growth of any other borough, with its total population increasing 14.2%. Over the next 20 years, the Borough of Queens is expected to absorb the largest share of growth in the New York metropolitan region—making the housing shortage even more acute. As the borough has grown, real incomes have fallen, while rents have skyrocketed:

- In 2006 the median monthly rent in Queens was \$983, the second highest of all the boroughs<sup>1</sup>.
- Queens registered the second highest increase in the percentage of residents spending 50 percent of their income for housing – a 27.4 percent increase from 1999 to 2006.
- Queens has the highest rate of severe crowding in the five boroughs.<sup>2</sup>
- The neighborhoods and communities of Elmhurst and Corona have the highest percentage of severe crowding in renter households.<sup>3</sup>

The communities of Ridgewood and Maspeth experienced a 500% increase in housing starts from 2003 to 2005, with Astoria (300%) Flushing, Woodside and Jackson Heights (200%) also seeing significant increases in this category. In 2006, Queens had the second highest number of housing starts in any borough, at 7,792.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, very little of this new development includes affordable units. Of the 18,000 new units slated for construction starting in 2006, the overwhelming majority (17,000) were market-rate. Of the new units created by the Mayor's New Housing Marketplace plan, only 3.7% have been built in Queens.<sup>5</sup> Habitat for Humanity—New York City estimates that it will take 250,000 new housing units to meet the need. With the current fiscal health of the

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<sup>1</sup> The Furman Center, State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> The Furman Center, State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods, 2007

<sup>3</sup> The Furman Center, State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods, 2007

<sup>4</sup> The Furman Center, State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods, 2007.

<sup>5</sup> The Pratt Center for Community Development



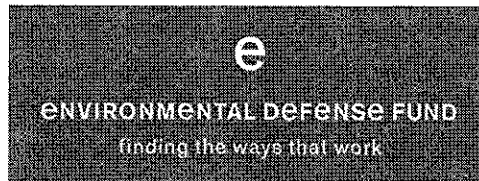
city in question, it is imperative that resources be dedicated to help those families that need it the most. To that end, Willets Point represents a tremendous opportunity to build affordable units for families that need them the most. Willets Point will create 4,400 units of market rate housing in neighborhoods where the median income is \$41,000 a year, 28% of families pay more than half their income in rent and there is the highest rate of overcrowding in the City. The income limits for the subsidized units as part of this development are simply not affordable to families living in the immediate area.

### **Recommendations**

The city is proposing to create 5,500 new residential units at Willets Point, but it **must be affordable to residents of the surrounding neighborhoods**. If an agreement is reached to redevelop the 61 acres of land, we would like the city to utilize a tiered approach that genuinely serves very low-income families. Any housing that is created should be accessible to legal immigrants and also include a dedicated senior housing component. We recommend that:

- **At least one third of the units should be affordable to very low-income families**—households earning less than \$25,000 a year.
- **At least one-third of the units should be affordable to low-, moderate- and middle-income families**
- **Most of the units should be affordable to residents of the surrounding neighborhoods, at a range of low-, moderate- and middle-incomes**. As a model, we point to an EDC development on East 125<sup>th</sup> Street in East Harlem, where roughly one-third of the units are middle-income, one-third are moderate-income and one-third are low-income.
- **The affordable housing units created should be affordable** for as long as possible. This will prevent the crisis of expiring affordable units that exists in many programs.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the majority of City Council members who have spoken about the lack of equality regarding this plan and its proposal to create housing that excludes the majority of Queens and NYC residents. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.



Statement of Environmental Defense Fund  
before New York City Council  
Committee on Planning, Dispositions & Concessions  
17 October 2008

My name is Mary Barber and I'm with the Environmental Defense Fund. As an environmental organization whose expertise and focus is on developing a clean and sustainable City, Environmental Defense Fund is generally supportive of the current Willets Point plan in order to accomplish a thorough clean-up of the highly contaminated lands that are the result of years of neglect. Additionally, the Willets Point cleanup will directly benefit the Flushing River and Flushing Bay, further restoring New York's waterways. Given the current economic situation, we recognize that some changes to the plan may have to be made. However, we strongly urge the City Council to ensure that these clean-up commitments are fulfilled.

This plan represents an exciting opportunity to develop an urban, sustainable community from the ground up. It is appropriate that the plan emphasizes green building, open space and pedestrian friendliness. Moreover, at a time of such economic turmoil and fluctuating gas prices, new developments must offer residents alternatives to driving. To that avail, it is critical that Willets Point does not become another car-dominated community. The New York City region has the dirtiest air in the nation after Los Angeles. Adding more vehicles on the road will only worsen the problem.

The Willets Point Environmental Impact Statement predicts a significant increase in automobile traffic surrounding the development. The City must think creatively about how Willets Point can mitigate that traffic burden by becoming a less car-dependent community. This could mean creating easy mass transit access by making sure the MTA opens up the nearby LIRR stop not just on game days, or working with the MTA to add inter- and intra-borough bus lines, depending on where people in Willets Point are actually working. If the City can determine where its residents are working, it would be possible to determine where improved transit options would allow more residents to switch from car to transit. The City has begun to develop a car-sharing program for Willets Point. Programs like these have the potential to greatly reduce the number of cars per person in Willets Point. Generally, 1 shared car can replace between 7 and 10 privately owned cars. Car-sharing programs, such as Zip-Car, offer a cheaper alternative to driving for those who need a car only infrequently or only on weekends. We call on the city to make sure Willets Point has desirable mass transit options for its residents.

In order to discourage the use of cars and encourage mass transit use, Environmental Defense Fund does not want to see any increases in the number of planned parking spaces within the Willets Point development. We realize the number of parking spots has been reduced from the original plan. We fully understand that at the end of the day, residents have to get to work. But if Willets Point residents were to be given desirable mass transit options, they may choose to leave their cars at home.

Finally, and most importantly, it is essential to ensure there is a complete clean up of the contaminated land in Willets Point and that there is minimal runoff into the nearby waterways. EDF remains committed to working with the City Council to ensure that a thorough cleanup of the site that also includes green buildings, waterway protection, and public transportation options tailored to the community. Thank you for your time this afternoon.



**Testimony of Marcia Bystryn  
President  
New York League of Conservation Voters**

**New York City Council  
Subcommittee on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions  
Hearing on Willets Point Redevelopment Plan**

**Oct. 17, 2008**

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Marcia H. Bystryn

Good afternoon. My name is Marcia Bystryn, and I president of the New York League of Conservation Voters, a statewide organization that works to make the environment a top priority for our elected officials and the public. I'd like to thank the members of the Subcommittee and Chairman Garodnick for the opportunity to address you today.

On behalf of the more than 12,000 members of the League throughout New York City, I would like to voice our support for the transformation of Willets Point and I'd like to explain why.

First is waterfront access. Willets Point is located on Flushing Creek and Flushing Bay – two bodies of water that have tremendous potential for recreation and enjoyment. But there is currently no waterfront access for the public. The redevelopment plan would welcome the public back into the neighborhood and grow a new constituency that will become advocates for these neglected natural resources.

Second, Willets Point is a vast brownfield site that should have been cleaned up years ago. We all know about the lack of sewers, which is a concern because of the pollution and smells in this area from the combined sewer overflows. More importantly, there is widespread petroleum contamination, with additional potential contamination from paints, cleaning solvents and automotive fluids. We still haven't undertaken a full environmental study of all the properties on Willets Point, but the simple fact of the matter is that everyday that contamination is allowed to sit in the soil and groundwater is another day that Flushing Creek and Flushing Bay are made worse.

Third and finally, the proposal for Willets Point reflects a new way of thinking about urban planning and smart growth. The neighborhood is close to the Number 7 Train, so residents can rely on mass transit rather than their cars to get to work. If they do need to drive, there is quick access onto the expressway – so people can get in and out quickly without

straining traffic in downtown Flushing. Finally, there are the many environmentally friendly practices – like green buildings and energy conservation measures – that you have already heard about.

If we bring all of these advantages together into a single project, we can recast the Iron Triangle as the Green Triangle -- and a 21<sup>st</sup> century model for good design and sustainability.

Thank you.

## ACORN Testimony

for NYC Council Hearing on Willets Point – Oct. 17, 2008

**My name is Marilyn Mays, a resident of Hollis Court Queens.** I am speaking on behalf of ACORN members in Queens and throughout New York City.

The Willets Point Plan is a slap in the face to Queens residents.

It is wrong for the Bloomberg Administration to push ahead with a plan that gives away so many City resources when New Yorkers are getting so little in return.

That is why – without true commitments to affordable housing and protections for workers – we are proud of the City Council members who have stood up and called this plan Dead on Arrival.

ACORN members and Queens For Affordable Housing members will NOT allow this plan to go through until the City guarantees desperately needed housing that is truly affordable to low- and middle-income New Yorkers, and provides for a real plan to keep the workers at Willets Point employed.

Workers support their families & provide an important service. They have suffered for years under terrible conditions at Willets. And Now? They are being thrown out with NO guarantees of compensation for lost business, moving expenses or relocation.

**Is that Justice?**

**Is that the way New York should treat hard working people?**

**We say NO!!**

And too many families live in overcrowded conditions in Queens. Too many hard working people need affordable housing. And none of the housing in this plan will actually meet the needs of Queens residents.

**Is that Justice?**

**Is that the way we treat hardworking families?**

**We say NO!**

**There are major changes needed in this plan.**

We're not against development if there is a real benefit for the community. But, right now, there is no guarantee that any housing will be built that the majority of Queens families will be able to afford and workers are not guaranteed fair treatment.

We will not allow the City to set this dangerous precedent and give away so much for so little.

It's time for the City to come back to the table and work out a new plan that is much more beneficial for everybody!

**The Willets Point Plan?**

**Is it Justice?**

**Is it good for New York City?**

**WE SAY NO!**





# *Queens For Affordable Housing*

**WILLETS POINT REDEVELOPMENT PLAN  
Testimony before the New York City Council  
Queens for Affordable Housing Coalition  
October 17, 2008**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Elena Conte and I offer this testimony on behalf of the Queens for Affordable Housing Coalition (QFAH). QFAH is a coalition of more than a dozen Queens community-based organizations and citywide housing advocacy organizations that was formed in 2005 to ensure that new residential development in the borough creates housing that is truly affordable to a diverse mix of Queens residents. Our members include Queens Congregations United for Action, Asian Americans for Equality, Catholic Charities of Brooklyn and Queens, Queens Community House, the New York Immigration Coalition, Habitat for Humanity-NYC, Centro Hispano Cuzcatlán, and the Pratt Center for Community Development.

Our membership and organizations have been working on the Willets Point project for more than two years. We have hundreds of members who are residents in the surrounding communities of Corona and Flushing, and hundreds more in the neighboring communities of East Elmhurst and Jackson Heights, as well as throughout Queens. We have called for a plan that treats fairly and embraces the most vulnerable in our communities and that creates pathways for them to realize their aspirations. We conducted an inclusive planning process that culminated in the report "Making Willets Point Work: A Plan for Neighborhood Success." We have participated at every level of review—at every hearing, and outside of "official" reviews, in protests and rallies as well as in small meetings in communities and with elected stakeholders. There doesn't exist a set of stakeholders that wants to see a responsible treatment of Willets Point that meets community needs more than us.

And yet the plan before you today fails dramatically across the board--on the grounds of fair treatment, responsible use of public dollars and in the creation of affordable housing. This plan before you today is virtually identical to the one that was proposed more than a year ago. It is a plan that has been directed by private developers' vision of a profitable mix of uses, and not one directed by needs articulated by the community or planners that place public needs first. And its architects have refused to incorporate changes into the plan despite clear, reasonable calls to do so—from the general public, from impacted parties and from the Council Members within this very body.

A project that would wreak havoc on 1700 lives and that requires this level of public investment—at least \$400 million in taxpayer money, a price-tag that everyone knows will balloon in implementation, and by implementation, (which given the current economic climate, is a long, long way off) —must meet basic standards of decency. We are calling for 2 things: fair treatment for the existing workers at the site and substantial percentages of housing that is actually affordable to the residents in the surrounding community and to residents of New York City.

This project is going to create 4,400 units of market rate housing in a largely immigrant community where the median income is \$41,000 a year, 28% of families pay more than half their income in rent and there is the highest rate of overcrowding in the City. The income limits for the few subsidized units that the City is proposing to create exclude the majority of families in the surrounding area. There are no local hiring agreements as part of this plan. Housing is the one real benefit that families of the area could see from this project. But none of it is for them. In all of Mayor Bloomberg's New Housing Marketplace Plan, Queens has received just 3.7% of units that serve those earning less than \$50,000 a

year, despite that a quarter of the City's population in need of those units live there. And now, yet again, the Administration proposes to use public dollars to call something affordable housing that is completely out of reach for the average local family. QFAH calls on you to reject a plan that does not include 66% affordable housing, with half of the affordable units for families earning less than \$25,000 a year.

The workers at Willets Point ought not to be cast aside or forgotten while we are distracted by attractive renderings of what will be in their place once their gone. The Administration should provide a substantive plan that shows how relocation of businesses will be accomplished and provides guarantees for doing so in clusters before ULURP is complete. The Administration should set up a mechanism that allows tenant businesses to stay on site in the event of delays. Month-to-month leases or a delay of condemnation procedures could accomplish this.

We thank the majority of City Council members who have made public on repeated occasions their opposition to this plan because of its failure to treat existing workers fairly and its proposal to create housing that excludes the majority of Queens and NYC residents. We are here to say clearly today that it still fails the mark, and we call on you to vote this plan down-- to vote no-- unless it dramatically transforms in the next three weeks.

This is not a lot to ask. It's a bare bones standard of decency and public accountability that the project does not meet. Vote no. Thank you.



# **Pratt Center**

**for Community Development**

## *Issue Brief*

# **Shortchanging Working Families in Queens**

## **Bloomberg Administration Affordable Housing Program Leaves Low-Income Queens Households Out in the Cold**

A new analysis by the New York City Independent Budget Office reveals that the Bloomberg Administration's affordable housing development program, the New Housing Marketplace, consistently shortchanges low-income families and communities in the borough of Queens. While Queens has 23.7 percent of the city's households who earn less than \$50,000 per year,<sup>1</sup> and are thus eligible for a range of affordable programs targeting low-income families, the borough has received only 3.7 percent of the units affordable to these families under the Bloomberg Administration's programs.

This vast gap effectively locks Queens residents out of affordable housing opportunities. Most New Housing Marketplace programs set aside 50 percent of units for residents of surrounding neighborhoods. By locating so little affordable housing in Queens, City policies are forgoing precious opportunities to create affordable housing as New York City's geographically largest borough goes through a major growth spurt — a boom promoted in part through the City's own actions.

The Pratt Center for Community Development and the Queens for Affordable Housing coalition urge the Bloomberg Administration to invest its affordable housing resources to make sure that the full range of Queens residents have every opportunity to live in below-market-rate housing.

The Administration is currently missing two critical opportunities to improve affordable housing production in Queens. The Willets Point and Queens West (a.k.a. Hunters Point South) developments are projected to create more than 10,000 new units of housing. But the Administration is refusing to provide desperately needed housing for working-class and low-income Queens families on these sites.

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<sup>1</sup> The IBO, and the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development, follow the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in defining low-income households as those earning up to 80 percent of the "area median income." For New York City in 2007, this was \$56,700 for a family of four; it is lower for smaller families (and the average NYC household is closer to 3 people). Because the United States Census reports income in \$10,000 increments, a \$50,000 annual salary is the best Census proxy for estimating how many households count as low-income for affordable housing purposes.

## Shortchanged in the New Housing Marketplace

While the Bloomberg Administration has aggressively promoted its “New Housing Marketplace” plan to create and preserve 165,000 units of affordable housing in New York City, very little of the affordable housing – and even fewer of the low-income units – have been in Queens. The Bloomberg Administration’s affordable housing program, the New Housing Marketplace, has dramatically shortchanged working families, and especially low-income families, in Queens:

- While Queens has 25.7% of the city’s population, it has received only 6.7% of all affordable housing units in the Bloomberg Administration’s housing plan.
- While Queens has 23.7% of all NYC households earning less than \$50,000 per year, it has received only 3.7% of the low-income units affordable to these families.

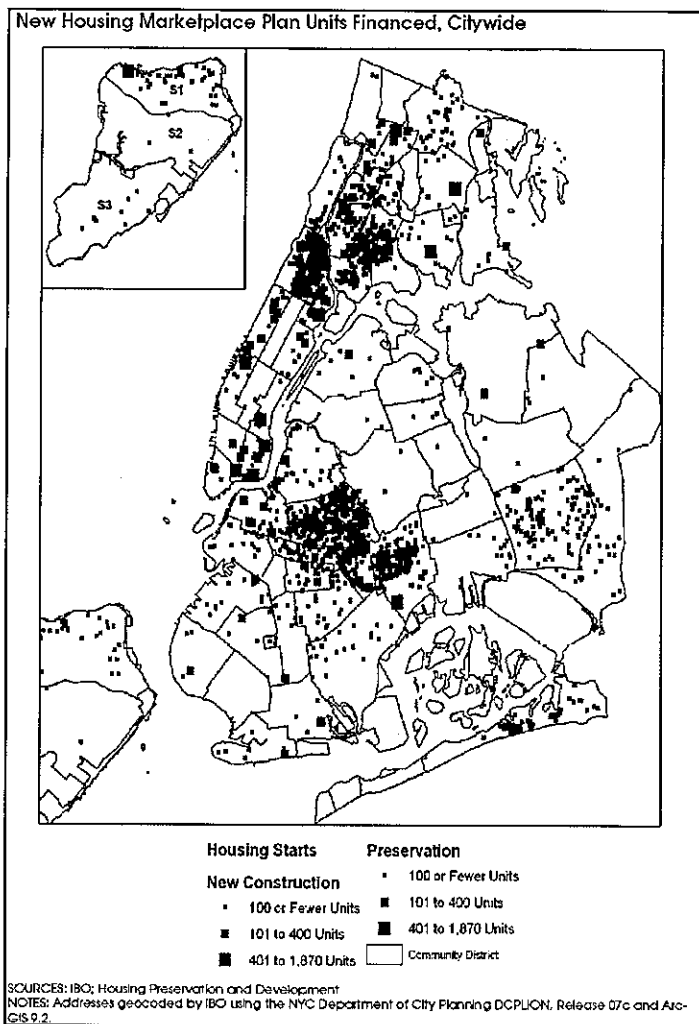
<b>New Housing Marketplace Units By Borough and Affordability, Compared to Population</b>								
	<b>Total house- holds, 2006</b>	<b>Share of house- holds</b>	<b>New Housing Market- place Units</b>	<b>Share of afford- able housing starts</b>	<b>House- holds &lt; \$50k income, 2006</b>	<b>Share of NYC house- holds &lt; \$50k income</b>	<b>NHMP Low- Income Units</b>	<b>Share of NYC NHMP Low- In- come Units</b>
<b>Man.</b>	735,638	24.4%	23,734	37.1%	321,232	20.2%	16,073	34.5%
<b>BX</b>	470,839	15.6%	20,442	32.0%	324,924	20.4%	17,037	36.6%
<b>Bklyn</b>	872,186	28.9%	14,560	22.8%	506,834	31.8%	11,096	23.8%
<b>Queens</b>	775,120	<b>25.7%</b>	4,305	<b>6.7%</b>	377,645	<b>23.7%</b>	1,709	<b>3.7%</b>
<b>Staten Island</b>	166,501	5.5%	866	1.4%	61,586	3.9%	679	1.5%
<b>NYC</b>	3,020,284	100%	63,907	100%	1,592,221	100%	46,594	100%

Population data from the 2006 American Community Survey

Affordable housing data from the NYC Independent Budget Office & Dept of Housing Preservation and Development

The near-omission of Queens from the Bloomberg Administration's housing programs is not simply the result of a lack of sites for affordable housing, but results in part from its own actions. For example, in the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development's most recent large request for proposals (RFP), in 2005, for "Cornerstone" and "New Foundations" projects at scores of sites around the city, only one site was in Queens: the Arverne East Urban Renewal Area in Far Rockaway. For all of the other sites in this round of RFPs, at least 20 percent of the units were required to be affordable to low-income households, and developers were encouraged to create additional affordable units as a competitive criterion for winning the site.

At Arverne East, however, low-income units were not required in the RFP. As a result, of the 1,099 units in that project, 1,014 will be for middle-income families (i.e. households making more than \$85,080 per year for a family of four), 85 will be for moderate income families (i.e. households earning from \$56,700 to \$85,080 for a family of four). Not one single unit will be for households earning less than \$56,700 per year ... despite the fact that the majority of Queens households earn less than this threshold.



### **Will the Administration Make Matters Worse?**

The Bloomberg Administration is currently working on two major projects in Queens: Willets Point, and Queens West (a.k.a Hunters Point South). Both of these projects are being marketed as "affordable housing" projects. Together, they are projected to create over 10,000 units. The Administration has made no meaningful commitment to low-income units in either of these two projects.

### **Queens West/Hunters Point South**

In 2006, the City of New York announced that it was buying the 24 acre "Queens West" site in Long Island City from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, to develop 5,000 units of affordable housing in a mixed-income community (since re-branded as "Hunters Point South" by the NYC Economic Development Corporation). Queens West is one of the largest parcels of public land available for development in New York City with breathtaking views of the Manhattan skyline across the East River.

In the intervening 18 months, however, it has become clear that the promise of affordable units is not being met. In 2007, the Administration clarified that only 3,000 of the units will be affordable, and that 2,000 will be market-rate. In addition, all of the "affordable" units are proposed to be reserved for families earning more than \$56,700 for a family of four (up to as much as \$145,000).

Moreover, analysis by the Pratt Center for Community Development reveals that **all of the proposed affordable housing units would be priced out of range for most Queens residents. More than 60% of Queens households (477,934 out of a total of 782,523) earn less than the proposed minimum income.**<sup>2</sup> Not one of the units would be affordable at the median salary for a police officer, teacher, school nurse, or firefighter. And the units are priced far beyond the reach of the vast majority of immigrant families in Queens working in retail, education, food, and health services. The 2005 median income for Queens is \$45,000, \$15,000 less than the threshold to afford one of the “affordable” units.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the Bloomberg Administration is going out of its way to create a new middle-income housing financing model, that would work around the normal requirement that projects financed by tax-exempt bonds include at least 20 percent low-income units.

**Median Salaries in Queens**

<b>Income required for proposed Queens West affordable units</b>	<b>\$60,000 - \$145,000</b>
<b>Public School Teacher</b>	<b>\$55,378</b>
<b>Police Patrol Officer</b>	<b>\$52,957</b>
<b>School Nurse</b>	<b>\$46,524</b>
<b>Firefighter</b>	<b>\$43,732</b>
<b>Cook</b>	<b>\$39,512</b>
<b>Teacher’s Aide</b>	<b>\$24,220</b>
<b>Cashier</b>	<b>\$22,773</b>
Source: Salary.com New York Queens	

**This data makes it clear that the City’s Plan for Queens West does not meet the needs of average Queens residents.** In addition, the plan has nothing at all for the hundreds of thousands of lower income working families, especially immigrant families, who are making Queens thrive. According to most recent US Census figures, foreign-born households earn on average \$10,000 less than other Queens households -- with median incomes of \$28,856 for male workers and \$26,402 for female workers primarily employed in retail, educational and food services. In addition, over 80 percent of foreign-born households make under \$50,000; almost 60 percent of these households pay more than 30 percent of their income on rent.<sup>4</sup>

**Willetts Point**

The NYC Economic Development Corporation has proposed a sweeping plan to acquire and redevelop

Willetts Point, an industrial area nestled between Corona and Flushing. The City intends to acquire or condemn (through eminent domain) 61 acres of privately owned industrial businesses, including auto salvage shops and warehouse distributors - hundreds of businesses in all, employing more than 1,300 workers. EDC would arrange for a single developer to build 5,500 units of housing, 1.7 million square feet of retail, commercial and entertainment space (including a 2,700-seat movie theater), a hotel and convention center, and a 650-seat K-8 school.

While EDC has talked vaguely about “mixed-income housing,” it has made no specific commitments to percentage or ranges of affordability, leaving area stakeholders to doubt about whether their communities’ severe need for low-income housing will even be considered, much less met, at Willetts Point. This is despite facts that show a dramatically rising need for decent, affordable housing in the neighborhoods surrounding the site.

The Pratt Center, working with Queens for Affordable Housing, ACORN, community organizations, and New York City Councilmember Hiram Monserrate recently prepared a report on the broader plan for Willetts Point, which concludes that if the plan cannot be dramatically improved to create affordable housing, guarantee good jobs, and provide benefits for the surrounding neighborhoods, then the City should not move forward with eminent domain and redevelopment.

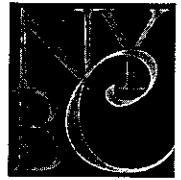
<sup>2</sup> 2005 American Community Survey, US Census

<sup>3</sup> NYU Furman Center “State of New York City’s Housing & Neighborhoods 2005

<sup>4</sup> 2005 American Community Survey, US Census

**FOR THE RECORD**

**Testimony  
of  
Richard T. Anderson, President of the  
New York Building Congress  
Before the  
New York City Council  
Planning, Dispositions and Concessions Committee  
on the  
Willets Point Redevelopment Plan**



**NEW YORK  
BUILDING  
CONGRESS**

**Public Hearing  
October 17, 2008**

The New York Building Congress, New York City's largest and most diverse coalition serving the design, construction and real estate industry, appreciates this opportunity to endorse the Willets Point Redevelopment Plan.

Over the past seven years, the Building Congress has applauded the Bloomberg Administration for its extensive master planning and rezoning efforts, including its commitment to transit-oriented development and collaboration with communities and New York City agencies to revitalize neighborhoods and stimulate economic activity in each of the five boroughs. The Building Congress has supported this strategic plan by endorsing comprehensive - sometimes controversial - rezoning initiatives undertaken by the City, including those for Jamaica, Queens, Greenpoint-Williamsburg, Brooklyn, and the 125<sup>th</sup> Street corridor in Manhattan, all of which have secured City Council approval.

Though it has its share of challenges, the Willets Point Redevelopment Plan likewise presents a holistic approach to improving economic conditions and the quality of life for New Yorkers. It also holds significant promise for advancing the

Bloomberg Administration's PlaNYC 2030 initiative to address New York's projected growth rate and long-term future.

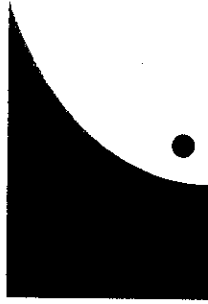
For example, among the strategies for accommodating New York's extensive housing needs, PlaNYC acknowledges the City's fixed land supply and stresses the importance of using space more efficiently. The Willets Point Redevelopment Plan would heed that call by making efficient use of space through the remediation of a 60-acre brownfield and the transformation of a largely underutilized area into a vibrant, mixed-use community that includes up to 5,500 units of housing, a substantial portion of which will be affordable. This transformation will be especially dramatic given the designation of Willets Point as a LEED-ND pilot project by the United States Green Building Council, based on the City's commitment to create an environmentally-friendly neighborhood and protect the surrounding waterways.

With its proximity to mass transit, major arterial highways and airports, the Willets Point District is well-situated for supporting residential, retail, commercial and cultural development, and its potential for economic growth is further enhanced by nearby attractions like the new Mets ballpark, the USTA Tennis Center and Downtown Flushing. The plan will unlock that potential, creating more than 5,300 permanent jobs and 18,000 construction jobs and generating \$25 billion in economic activity and \$1.3 billion in benefits to the City over 30 years. The enormous value of proceeding with the Willets Point Redevelopment Plan is clear.

The Building Congress urges the Planning, Dispositions and Concessions Committee to recommend the plan for approval by the full City Council. We are mindful, however, of the construction and other viable companies that would be



forced to relocate or close their businesses and the effect these scenarios would have on the local economy and construction costs in New York City, which are already rising by one percent a month. The progress the City has made in its negotiations with a few of the affected businesses over the past year is a good sign. We encourage the City to continue to work collaboratively with the community and other interested parties in developing commercially reasonable solutions to care for those businesses that would be impacted by the project.



WOMEN BUILDERS COUNCIL, INC.  
OPENING NEW DOORS

Statement by Sandra Wilkin  
President, Women Builders Council

Contact: Walter McCaffrey  
718 683-1500

Good afternoon Chairperson Garodnick and Members of the Council.

I am Sandra Wilkin, President of the Women Builders Council. Women Builders Council is a leading organization advocating for expanded opportunities for women in the construction and building fields.

I ask that the Council *approve* the proposal to re-develop Willets Point.

This plan will serve as a major economic shot in the arm for New York City.

The benefits are numerous.

The project will provide for nearly 6,000 good paying construction jobs.

It will result in the creation of hundreds of permanent jobs in its retail sector, the new hotel and convention space and on-site services. These will be good paying employment opportunities for residents of New York City and particularly Queens.

The plan includes important job re-training opportunities as well. Desperately needed affordable housing will be provided at Willets Point.

The Women Builders Council is *particularly* pleased by the inclusion of new employment for women and minorities in its construction.

For the first time, the Economic Development Corporation has included an aggressive component to include women and minority business enterprises in a major economic development project.

Borough President Helen Marshall and Deputy Mayor Robert Lieber have organized a W/MBE Task Force that has developed a comprehensive package of measures to involve W/MBEs in every phase of the project's development. WBC was pleased to have played a prominent role in those deliberations.

The result of the work of the Borough President and Deputy Mayor and that of the task force has been most impressive.

The plan breaks new grounds in transparency and accountability. It includes very significant goals for W/MBE participation which the administration will pursue.

For years, it has been the City Council that has been the most steadfast advocate for W/MBEs. Continue that faith and dedication to aiding us.

Women Builders Council believes that improving opportunities for W/MBEs will result in a strengthened city economy for years to come.

And in these very difficult economic times, the City Council needs to show it has confidence in our city's future.

WBC enthusiastically urges your passage of this plan.

It will be good for New York City and good for Queens!

**Nontraditional Employment for Women  
New York City Council Testimony  
Kathleen Culhane, Vice President, Programs  
October 17, 2008**

Founded in 1978, Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW) prepares women for careers in the construction, facilities maintenance, transportation, and energy industries. NEW successfully places women in jobs conventionally held by men. NEW focuses on skilled, unionized jobs in the blue-collar trades with starting wages averaging \$15 per hour, benefits, and a path to higher-wage employment. This year NEW is training 500 women.

Over the last thirty years, NEW graduates have proven that they can compete and be successful in these jobs. These women have paved the way for the next generation of women. Building on their success, NEW's goal is to increase the percentage of women in these careers from less than three percent to the seven percent goal that was set by the Federal government in 1978, the year NEW was founded. NEW is partnering directly with unions and employers to make this happen.

NEW puts women on a career path that provides a real opportunity for women to move into the middle class and support their families. Eighty-five percent of the women NEW serves identify themselves as minorities. NEW serves women on public assistance and unemployment, women with housing issues, single heads of households, and women living in poverty. There are limited opportunities for poor and minority women to obtain secure jobs that provide a living wage and essential benefits, such as health insurance.

Entry level wages in the unionized construction trades average \$15 per hour. This wage is significantly higher than the starting wage for child care workers or home health aides, positions traditionally held by women. Yet, less than three percent of all construction workers in New York City are women. (Statistic provided by the Fiscal Policy Institute, April 2006.) These positions and similar blue-collar unionized positions in the transportation and energy industries provide living wages, but women have been effectively shut out of these opportunities. NEW's mission is to ensure that women have access to these opportunities and have the tools to succeed.

The Willets Point Redevelopment Project provides this opportunity. Led by Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, the Willets Point M/WBE and Local Hiring Task Force recommends a

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Women Workforce Participation Goal requiring not less than 10% of the work hours to be awarded to women construction workers of which 35% shall have the status of journey level worker. These are crucial goals enabling women to have a real opportunity to be successful in the construction industry. NEW encourages the New York City Economic Development Corporation to ensure the goals established by the Task Force are met by the selected Developer.

NEW serves women from all five boroughs in New York City and the surrounding counties. NEW students range from age 18 to over 50. Fifty percent are women in their 20s, 27 percent are in their 30s, and 24 percent are 40 and older.

NEW recruits women that are 18 years of age or older, have a high school diploma or GED, and are interested in pursuing a nontraditional career. NEW recruits women through referrals from graduates; job fairs; partnerships with elected officials; partnerships with community organizations; advertisement campaigns; direct referrals from social service agencies; and referrals from employers. As part of the Willets Point Redevelopment Project, NEW will recruit women from Queens and the local community for NEW's pre-apprenticeship program. NEW's successful track record of placing graduates in the construction union apprenticeship programs will ensure that these women will be able to enter the building and construction trades and be available to participate in the redevelopment of Willets Point. The Task Force established specific mechanisms for the Developer to conduct outreach to ensure it meets the workforce participation goals established. NEW will continue to work with the Task Force to ensure the outreach is conducted. This outreach and the workforce participation goals set by the Task Force will ensure that there will be opportunities for these women to work on this project.

NEW offers a six-week full-time day program and a six-week part-time evening program, both of which combine skills training and job readiness instruction. The evening program provides a viable training option for women who work during the day, often at jobs paying the minimum wage. These women attend training sessions three nights a week and all day on Saturdays.

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NEW conducts training cycles continually throughout the year in order to meet the recruitment demands of employers and union apprenticeship programs. NEW's comprehensive, innovative curriculum, developed in collaboration with union apprenticeship directors, includes an industry overview, job readiness, trades math, hands-on shop classes, health and safety, and fitness. NEW's program includes workshops focusing on life skills including personal safety on the job, dealing with domestic violence, housing issues, and financial management.

NEW works directly with apprentice directors in the building and construction trades to place women in apprenticeship positions. In 2006, the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York committed to filling ten percent of first-year apprenticeship slots with women. The New York State Department of Labor approved direct entry into apprenticeship training programs for NEW graduates. As a result, since this commitment, NEW has placed 400 women in the building and construction trades unions.

The Willets Point Redevelopment Project estimates an average of 1,036 workers and a peak of 2,775. With a workforce participation goal of 10 percent women, this project will provide employment opportunities for hundreds of tradeswomen.

September Dixon is one of these women. September, a resident of Astoria, graduated from NEW in December 2007. As a mother of three, September knew she wanted to work in the trades to become self-sufficient. She came to NEW in order to join the trades and find a career in the field she had been pursuing for years. Throughout the program she earned the praise of her instructors for her dedication in the shop and in the classroom. September knew she wanted to pursue Local 3 at the start of training and began attending night and weekend test prep classes late November. On many days she would arrive at 7:30am for class and not leave until 9:00pm. September passed the Electricians exam on January 5, 2008 and began working and attending apprenticeship classes soon after. She has been working steadily as a 1<sup>st</sup> year apprentice with the Electricians. She continues to visit NEW to report on her success and the new skills she is learning.

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There are many more women like her coming through NEW's doors everyday. NEW looks forward to our partnership with the Willets Point Redevelopment Project providing opportunities for women for years to come. We encourage women from the community to reach out to NEW and learn more about our programs.

# **WILLETS POINT RE-DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

## **M/WBE and Local Hiring Task Force**

### **Minority/Women Business Enterprise and Local Hiring Initiative**

The Willets Point M/WBE and Local Hiring Task Force (Task Force) calls for the creation of a Minority/Women Business Enterprise Contracting Program (Program) to be implemented by the Developer for all contracting activities related to Willets Point Redevelopment Project (Project).

The Taskforce also recommends a workforce participation program that will ensure training, hiring and referral programs for pre-construction, construction and post-construction phases of the project. The goals set by this program will address local, minority and women residents as well as low to moderate income individuals. The program shall provide workforce development services for unemployed persons including, but not limited to, job readiness, skills development and worker training.

The Taskforce calls upon the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to take all necessary steps to ensure that the goals and commitments reflected in this Program are incorporated into all relevant solicitations and agreements to which the EDC is a party, to the maximum extent permitted by law. EDC shall also require, as a provision in all solicitations and agreements relating to the Project to which EDC is a party, that the Developer(s) selected for the Project, and its/their consultants and agents, meet at least on a quarterly basis with the Task Force and present to the Task Force a detailed plan for addressing the goals of the Program.

### **Participation Goals**

#### **Contracting**

The Task Force recommends the following minimum participation goals to ensure a meaningful participation by Minority and Women Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) in the Project. To maximize opportunities for qualified M/WBEs, the Developer(s) selected for the Project should seek strategies such as carve-outs, contract unbundling and joint venturing.

#### ***Pre-Construction – Professional Services***

The utilization of professional services, which include but not limited to architectural, engineering, legal, planning, transportation/traffic analysis, financial, marketing and other consulting services, during the pre-construction phase of the Project, have the following minimum goals.

- **Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)** – minimum award of five percent (5%) of the total dollar value of pre-construction service contracts to Minority owned professional service firms.



- Women Business Enterprise (WBE) – minimum award of three percent (3%) of the total dollar value of pre-construction service contracts to Women owned professional service firms.
- Queens based Business Enterprise (QBE) – minimum award of five percent (5%) of the total dollar value of the pre-construction service contracts to professional service located in Borough of Queens.

***Construction***

All construction trades including related suppliers and general conditions providers utilized during the construction phase of the Projects are subject to minimum goals. The goals encompass all levels of contracting including subcontracts and sub-sub contracts.

- Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) – minimum award of twenty percent (20%) of the total dollar value of the construction contracts to Minority owned construction and construction related firms.
- Women Business Enterprise (WBE) – minimum award of five percent (5%) of the total dollar value of the construction contracts to Women owned construction and construction related firms.
- Queens Based Business Enterprise (QBE) – minimum award of twenty five percent (25%) of the total dollar value of the construction contracts to Queens based construction and construction related firms.

***Post Construction***

Post construction services that support the on-going operation and maintenance of the finished Project, including but not limited to security, landscaping, supply, and custodial services contracts have following minimum goals.

- Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) – minimum award of fifteen percent (15%) of the total dollar value of the post construction purchasing and service contracts to Minority owned firms.
- Women Business Enterprise (WBE) – minimum award of ten percent (10%) of the total dollar value of the post construction purchasing and services contracts to Women owned construction firms.
- Queens based Business Enterprise (QBE) – minimum award of fifteen percent (15%) of the total dollar value of the post construction purchasing and services contracts to Queens based firms.

***EDC Adoption of Participation Goals***

EDC will encourage participation goals set by the Task Force. However, EDC will maximize allowable MBE and WBE participation goals in its solicitations and agreements relating to the Project, to the extent feasible and consistent with applicable federal, state and local laws and policies. EDC should further, to the maximum feasible extent consistent with costs and other factors, structure any such solicitations so as to

encourage developers to include MBE and/or WBE joint venture partners and/or to operate with a significant level of subcontracting opportunities, particularly at dollar value levels that are likely to ensure that MBE and WBE vendors are able to perform such subcontracts. In addition, if at any time during the development of the Project, the City has certified a sufficient number of Emerging Business Enterprises (EBE) to support the establishment of additional participation goals for EBEs, EDC shall also include such goals in relevant EDC solicitations and agreements to which the EDC is a party. EDC's solicitations and agreements shall include prime contract participation goals for all of the above-described types of services, and shall include subcontract participation goals for professional services and construction. As further described below (under Capacity Building and Outreach), EDC shall require the Developer(s) selected for the Project to make maximum efforts to ensure that Queens-based businesses are made aware of and offered an opportunity to participate in the contracts and subcontracts for the Project.

### **Workforce**

The primary geographic area established for workforce recruitment is the Borough of Queens with the secondary target including the New York City region. The Developer(s) selected for the Project shall make good faith efforts to meet the overall goals during all phases of the project.

- Minority Workforce Participation – not less than 35% of the work hours shall be awarded to minority construction workers of which 35% shall have the status of journey level worker.
- Women Workforce Participation – not less than 10% of the work hours shall be awarded to women construction workers of which 35% shall have the status of journey level worker.
- Each goal shall be achieved separate and apart from each other.
- Hiring goals shall include specific commitments to communities directly impacted by the project (ie Corona, Flushing, East Elmhurst).
- Hiring goals shall include specific commitments to hiring individuals who can demonstrate prior or current employment in the Willets Point neighborhood.

The Developer(s) selected for the Project shall also work with EDC and the Department of Small Business Services to set projected hiring targets for newly created permanent jobs through the project. The target population is defined by the communities mentioned above with high concentrations of poverty.

EDC will encourage participation goals set by the Task Force. However, EDC will maximize the minority and women workforce participation goals in all of its City's solicitations and agreements relating to the Project, to the extent feasible and consistent with applicable federal, state and local laws and policies. As further described below (under Capacity Building and Outreach), EDC shall require the Developer(s) selected for the Project to make maximum efforts to ensure that Queens residents, particularly those from the communities most directly impacted by the Project, are made aware of and offered an opportunity to participate in the workforce opportunities offered for the Project.

## **Capacity Building**

### **Contracting**

The Developer(s) selected for the Project, in order to encourage successful participation by M/WBE firms, EBE firms and QBE firms in the Project, is encouraged to establish or incorporate existing capacity building programs and one-on-one consulting services to the Program. EDC should include in all relevant solicitations and agreements for the Project the requirements described below as the capacity building element of the Program, including but not limited to, the following components to increase the technical knowledge of M/WBE, EBE and QBE firms.

### ***Business Assistance Programs***

- Assist business to improve their basic business skills including but not limited to financial management, marketing, organizational structure, bonding and credit readiness and other business administration skills.
- Advance level assistance for established firms to encourage growth and expansion.
- Certification assistance to qualifying Minority/women owned firms and emerging businesses in obtaining certified status with New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS).

### ***Technical Assistance Program***

- Construction related courses such as cost estimating, contract management, project management, blue printing reading, safety, scheduling, bid and proposal preparation and etc.
- Advance level assistance for established firms to encourage growth and expansion.

### ***Financial Assistance Programs***

- Bridge or revolving loan programs providing working capital and easing the entry for qualified firms with cash flow issues.
- Advance and quick payment processes for M/WBE, EBE and QBE firms on the project to ensure steady cash flow.

### **Workforce**

The Task Force sets the following minimum workforce standards:

- The Project will focus on equal opportunities for minorities and women in the workforce and will make every effort to comply in good faith with all participation goals instituted by the Program.
- All contractors employed on the project shall be required to aggressively seek to comply with on-site equal employment opportunity and take workforce affirmative action steps for all minority groups and all women both minority and non-minority.
- Employment must be substantially uniform throughout the length of the contract in each trade.
- There must be transparency in the hiring process.
- The Task Force calls for a Project Labor Agreement for the project to promote uniformed wages and benefits and to promote employment for Queens residents.

- The Developer(s) selected for the Project shall require that all professional service firms adopt and make good faith efforts to achieve the workforce participation goals and work with firms that foster the hiring of qualified Minority and women professional employees.
- The Developer(s) selected for the Project shall give preference to those professional service firms that have demonstrated a commitment to the goals of hiring and promoting qualified Minority and Women professionals.
- The Developer(s) selected for the Project shall sponsor a job “training program” to train Queens residents for construction jobs within the project including assisting with GED certificates when necessary.
- The Developer(s) selected for the Project shall require all construction contractors working on the Project to make good faith efforts to hire a portion of their workforce(s) through the “training program”.
- The Developer(s) selected for the Project shall work with local High Schools that focus on the construction trades for internship opportunities, speaking engaging and out reach to high school students interested in all areas of construction.

## **Outreach**

### **Contracting**

The Developer(s) selected for the Project will establish standards, tools and resources to market and promote opportunities available to the community and recruit qualified firms and individuals for the Project.

- Promote the opportunities available in the Project and about the Program to M/WBE, EBE and QBE firms through direct mail, advertisements, web site, newsletters and etc., including, but not limited to, publications serving Queens, particularly the communities most directly impacted by the Project, as well as publications serving the M/WBE and/or EBE communities, as identified by the Task Force and SBS.
- Host and participate in trade fairs, networking events, conferences and etc to promote available opportunities and to reach out to M/WBE, EBE and QBE business community.
- Host pre-bid and pre-construction meetings with bidders and potential bidders.
- Produce “Construction Forecast” tools to identify and inform potential bidders of Project timeline and upcoming bidding opportunities.

### **Workforce**

- Contractor(s) shall be required to make written requests to the Trade Unions for referrals of minority and female employees and unemployed Queens Union members.
- All contractors, prime and subs, must attend all events recommended by the Task Force to identify minority and women workers who may be eligible for workforce programs who are interested in participated in the Project.
- The Task Force shall provide the Developer(s) selected for the Project with a list of recruitment sources to be used. The Developer’s recruitment activities shall include

such sources, and such Developer(s) shall provide written notification to such sources when the Contractor(s) or its unions have employment opportunities available, and maintain a record of the organizations responses.

- The Developer(s) selected for the Project shall work with community based organizations and trade associations to compile a list of unemployed union members who are Queens residents.
- The Task Force shall provide the Developer(s) selected for the Project with a list of pre-apprentice training programs to be used. The Developer(s) shall require contractors to use such list as a source for recruitment and provide written notification to such programs when the contractor or its unions have employment opportunities available, and maintain a record of the organizations responses.

### **Administration and Oversight**

The Developer(s) selected for the Project will establish written program and policy document in cooperation with the Task Force to administer the Program in order to ensure proper oversight and enforcement of the participation goals of the Project. EDC will include enforcement and oversight provisions in its solicitations and agreements relating to the Project, consistent with applicable federal, state and local laws and policies.

In addition to any EDC enforcement and oversight provisions, the Task Force calls for the establishment of a binding agreement between the Task Force and the Developer(s) selected for the Project, following such selection (the Task Force Agreement). The Task Force Agreement, to which EDC will not be a party, may include provisions such as:

- Pursuant to such Task Force Agreement, the Developer(s) will adhere to the provisions of the M/WBE Program Compliance Manual (Manual). The Manual, to be created by the Task Force, will establish monitoring and compliance guidelines and procedures including good faith efforts standards. Non-compliance sanctions and procedures (separate from any measures to be enforced by EDC) will also be identified in the Manual.
- If determined at the end of each development phase that the Developer(s) have not fulfilled its obligations regarding outreach, capacity building, reporting, and good faith efforts to achieve the MWBE and workforce participation goals, such Developer(s) shall pay, in a fund set up by the Task Force, liquidated damages for such failure, the sum to be determined by the Task Force to be used by the Task Force to support the training program.
- The Developer(s) shall sponsor a mediation/arbitration team to resolve disagreements within 60 days of dispute.
- The Task Force shall enforce the Task Force Agreement at the Developer's expense.

- The Developer(s), in partnership with the Task Force, will engage an entity or a person to serve as the Program Administrator at the Developer's expense. The Program Administrator will monitor and manage the day-to-day activities for the Program and will report to the Task Force and the Queens Borough President's Office.
- The Developer(s) selected for the Project will submit reports to the Task Force, NYCEDC and the Queens Borough President detailing the attainment of the participation goals and Program progress, including details of outreach and capacity building activities. Such reports shall detail such Developer(s)' attainment of those MBE, WBE and, if applicable, EBE goals requirements, as well as all applicable Capacity-Building and Outreach requirements, as such provisions are included in any relevant City solicitation and/or agreement relating to the Project, as well as the attainment of any applicable additional provisions that may be included in the Task Force Agreement .
- The Developer(s) selected for the Project will require all contractors, prime and subs, to submit workforce employment reports outlining each trade to be utilized, total number of employees and number of minority and female workers and total number of hours employment for each employee classified in each trade.

# **WILLETS POINT RE-DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

## **M/WBE and Local Hiring Task Force**

### **Minority/Women Business Enterprise and Local Hiring Initiative**

The Willets Point M/WBE and Local Hiring Task Force (Task Force) calls for the creation of a Minority/Women Business Enterprise Contracting Program (Program) to be implemented by the Developer for all contracting activities related to Willets Point Redevelopment Project (Project).

EDC will distribute copies of the Task Force's Program, along with other documents relevant to the planning of the Project, as appendices to the RFP.

EDC, on behalf of the City, will incorporate the Task Force's program for outreach and capacity building into the RFP(s) seeking developers for the Project, and, to the maximum extent permitted by law, will incorporate participation goals for Minority/Women Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) and/or Emerging Business Enterprises (EBEs). EDC will also structure the RFP to encourage developers to partner with MWBE and/or EBE joint ventures and/or to use such joint ventures as prime contractors, and to maximize subcontracting opportunities, particularly those at dollar values below \$1 million.

The RFP:

- Will mandate that developers bidding for the Project comply, as a baseline, with the City's Local Law 129 M/WBE and Local Law 12 EBE program requirements.
- Will mandate that developers bidding for the Project comply with the City's apprenticeship program requirements, and propose Workforce Participation Plans describing, as a baseline, the developer's commitment to establish participation goals for both construction employment and permanent employment, consistent with federal, state and local laws and regulations.
- Will mandate that developers bidding for the Project agree to meet with the Task Force on at least a quarterly basis.
- Will incorporate the entire text of the Task Force's Program for capacity building and outreach, both for contracting and workforce participation, including all requirements for specific capacity building programs and outreach initiatives aimed at residents and businesses based in Queens, particularly the Project area. Developers bidding for the Project will be required to propose and present to the Task Force a detailed plan ("Plan"), describing how the developer will work with the Task Force over the life of the Project. The Plan will be required to specify the developer's proposed capacity building and outreach programs, and will further be required to include the developer's plans for engaging a Program Administrator and for periodic compliance reporting.
- Will mandate that developers bidding for the Project agree to negotiate a Project Labor Agreement governing the Project's construction, if appropriate.

In reviewing responses to the RFP, EDC, to the maximum extent permitted by law, will evaluate the developers' proposed Plans for the substantive quality and innovativeness of their approach, and for the degree to which they are likely to help ensure the successful completion of the Project.

The Regional Alliance for Small Contractors  
Testimony by Richard C. Hellenbrecht  
October 17, 2008

The Regional Alliance for Small Contractors, is a private not for profit organization providing advocacy and supportive services to small, minority and women-owned businesses for nearly 20 years. We are in complete support of the Willets Point project. Willets Point is a multi-year, \$1.5 billion project to create a mixed-use development with affordable housing, office and retail space and hotel/convention center in a underutilized section of Queens.

For the past year, we have worked with the Borough President of Queens on a dedicated task force of business, construction industry and labor advocates developing policies and procedures to ensure that small businesses will play a meaningful role in every phase of the project - from planning, design, real estate development and construction to operations, concessions and facilities management and maintenance.

We are pleased that the task force has also advocated and proposed significant utilization goals for minorities and females throughout the massive construction effort. Groups like "Non-Traditional Employment for Women" have promised to support increased workforce pre-apprenticeship participation for women interested in the project.

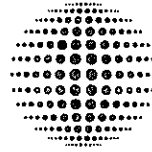
The carpenters, plumbers and electrical unions have provided vital input to the task force and have assured their complete support through aggressive recruitment efforts for minorities and women in their apprenticeship programs. This would ensure training and job experience in a long-term project, which upon its completion will add thousands of qualified union trades workers well on their way to journey and higher trades positions for future projects.

For small and local businesses engaged in the project, the Regional Alliance is prepared to provide capacity building services emphasizing training in business management, contract management, estimating, law, safety and other business and technical training to ensure success in the Willets Point project and preparedness for other projects. We also offer finance, insurance and bonding packages, which are essential to the success of small businesses.

Businesses currently located in Willets Point will receive relocation efforts and retraining of their employees. The task force has recommended that a jobs academy to be set up by LaGuardia Community College to prepare workers for new blue collar and white collar positions to become available in an invigorated Willets Point and other job creation centers in Queens and the city.

The Regional Alliance database contains several hundred certified small, minority and women-owned businesses in Queens and many more in New York City and beyond. Outreach to these firms will be important to maximize their access and ensure goal attainment. Based on data available from Workforce New York, the Department of Labor and the Census Bureau we know there are thousands of Queens minority and women workers in the construction trades and related specialties who, particularly during in this economic slowdown, would benefit greatly from this major development project. We urge the Council to vote in favor of the Willets Point project to revitalize this large section of Queens, provide thousands of jobs, create homes for numerous families and increase tax revenues for the City. Please vote "yes".





**Partnership for New York City**

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON  
PLANNING, DISPOSITIONS & CONCESSIONS**

**WILLETS POINT REZONING**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2008**

**KATHRYN WYLDE  
PRESIDENT & CEO**

**PARTNERSHIP FOR NEW YORK CITY**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on the rezoning and redevelopment of Willets Point.

The Partnership for New York City represents the city's international business leadership and its largest private sector employers. The Partnership works together with government, labor and the non-profit sector to promote economic growth and job creation in New York.

The Partnership has a significant record of investment in Queens as a result of housing programs that we sponsored in the 1980s and early 1990s. In particular, we were active in transforming South Jamaica from a crime-ridden network of junkyards and other substandard uses into a thriving residential neighborhood. Through the decades, it was always clear that Willets Point was a significant source of blight and an important opportunity for redevelopment and renewal. We congratulate the Bloomberg Administration for committing the resources required to transform this long-neglected area in the heart of Queens into a borough asset.

The plan under consideration will stimulate significant private investment, as well as commercial and residential development activity. We endorse the plan to establish this

area as a regional destination, including one million square feet of retail space and 500,000 square feet of office space, a hotel, and a convention center. The potential for bringing tourists, conventions, meetings and trade shows to Queens builds on the presence of two international airports and promises to contribute to the city's tax revenues and job base.

New York's next great neighborhood is also poised to make history as our city's first "green" community. The project has been accepted by the U.S. Green Building Council as a LEED-ND Pilot project. Major infrastructure improvements, such as a new sewer system, street network, and subway station access, will transform an area mostly known for its illegal dumping and constant flooding into a safe, clean neighborhood with new parks and playgrounds.

Two issues have been raised in the course of discussion of Willets Point that I want to address. The first is the use of eminent domain powers to assemble sites. The ability of government to take control of land in the public interest has been absolutely essential for the renewal and growth of our city. The Housing Partnership participated with government in neighborhood revitalization efforts that were only possible because the city was able to clear title and assemble land through condemnation or the threat of condemnation. Private owners are not always rational—in other words, they will not always act in their own best financial interests, let alone the public interest. The city must be able to exercise powers of condemnation when the free market does not support necessary public improvements. Willets Point represents a responsible and necessary application of eminent domain.

The second issue is the matter of how and when project developers will be selected. The Willets Point LDC and the City's Economic Development Corporation are effectively the surrogate developers of this site. This has been a common practice for moving forward with complex projects that were driven by the public and community interest, not by any individual private developer. The Housing Partnership developed hundreds of projects with HPD that were approved under the ULURP process long before the private developer was designated or detailed development plans were completed. In my view, the Council should be engaged in making land use decisions that circumscribe how a property can be developed and what public benefits may be conferred on any developer who may be selected for a project. With due respect, I do not think it is the job of the Council Members to negotiate the financial and detailed design terms of deals with individual developers. With the Willets Point LDC in place, I think the community interests are well protected in this project and that the selection of one or more developers will be handled responsibly.

At a time when the city economy is facing serious challenges, Willets Point redevelopment promises to provide an important economic stimulus. We urge the Committee and the City Council to approve this rezoning without reservation.

**Statement for the Planning, Dispositions & Concessions City Council Committee  
On the Willets Point Development Plan**

by

**L. Nicolas Ronderos, Senior Planner, Regional Plan Association**

**October 17, 2008**

Good morning. My name is Nicolas Ronderos and I'm a Senior Planner for Regional Plan Association, a private, nonprofit research and planning organization serving the greater New York metropolitan region.

The stakes in this project are high. The proposed plan would displace an estimated 260 businesses and 1,700 employees engaged in auto repair, construction and other uses in a city that is seeing its industrial sector increasingly squeezed. The City would also invest substantial public funds in new infrastructure to support the project. However, for a number of reasons, it is time for the redevelopment of Willets Point to move forward, and Regional Plan Association supports this project.

First, redevelopment will bring a wide range of economic and community benefits. The City expects the redeveloped site to generate approximately \$2 billion in economic activity and an increase of around 5,000 jobs, in addition to nearly 6,000 units of needed housing, community facilities and 8 acres of open space. It will also connect the nearby thriving residential neighborhoods of Flushing, Corona and Queensboro Hill with the largely commercial and industrial College Point area and integrate a number of Queens attractions, including the new Citi Field, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park and the National Tennis Center. The proposed neighborhood has also qualified as a "green neighborhood" by the U.S. Green Building Council.

However, if it were only a question of replacing these largely industrial jobs with higher value activities, then it would be questionable whether there was sufficient justification for the use of eminent domain that goes with this kind of large-scale urban redevelopment. Instead, it would be preferable to redevelop the site incrementally, ideally in a way that retains some of the original businesses.

However, there is another aspect to Willets Point that requires wholesale redevelopment. The District's long history of industrial use, informal business practices and lack of basic infrastructure – including poor road and sidewalk conditions, chronic flooding and limited storm and sanitary sewer infrastructure – has left a legacy of hazardous contamination. PCBs, heavy metals, and pesticides leach into Flushing Bay and impair air quality for workers and nearby residents. In order to remediate the area and prevent future pollution, contaminated soil will have to be removed or covered with clean fill. Storm sewers need to be installed. Without clearing the site and starting over, not only will we be left with an area that is underperforming in its economic potential, but also we will be shirking our responsibility to protect public health and the urban environment.

This does not mean that there are not legitimate issues to negotiate. There are a host of potential benefits that should be maximized, from the number of affordable housing units to pedestrian access to the waterfront and adjoining neighborhoods, and the feasibility and benefits of a convention center. In addition, relocating displaced industrial jobs must be done as completely and effectively as possible. City resources, and the dollars that can be generated by redevelopment of the site, are too scarce to meet all of these needs, so trade-offs need to be made. However, the important point is to move the process forward and take advantage of this opportunity to make Willets Point a model of both economic and environmental sustainability.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify at this public hearing.



**City Council  
Hearing on Willets Point Development  
October 17, 2008**

**New Yorkers for Parks Testimony**

My name is Alyson Beha and I am the Manager of Research and Planning at New Yorkers for Parks, the only independent watchdog for all the City's parks, beaches and playgrounds. For nearly 100 years, New Yorkers for Parks has worked to ensure greener, safer, cleaner parks for all New Yorkers.

We applaud the City's proposal to create 8 acres of new public open space within the Willets Point development site. We strongly support the administration's insistence that the maintenance of the open space be paid for by the developers. Maintenance funds are very difficult to obtain, particularly in light of the current situation facing the City's economy.

We would like to voice some concerns regarding the details of the open space plan. According to the Draft Environmental Impact Assessment, development associated with the proposed plan will increase the residential population of the study area by more than 14,000 and the worker population by more than 8,000<sup>1</sup>. The only open space currently programmed for active recreation is a two acre park; however, this space is to be used exclusively by students of the proposed

school during school hours. Plans for the remaining 6 acres of open space indicate that it will be passive and diffused through the development site.

We recommend that the city consider incorporating a central signature park similar to Bryant Park, which provides a substantial contiguous space for both the worker and residential populations to use. We also encourage including a small playground within this space, providing some active recreation to small children, since the 2-acre park is inaccessible during school hours.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement indicates that Flushing Meadows Park will serve as the primary green space for residents of Willets Point. Although the northern border of Flushing Meadows is only a quarter mile from Willets Point, the closest public entrance is a one mile walk. We encourage the City to explore improving pedestrian connections to the northern area of the park as well as committing to an increase in maintenance funding to Flushing Meadows, so that it can mitigate the influx of visitors from Willets Point.

In conclusion, New Yorkers for Parks supports the City's proposal to create 8 acres of open space within Willets Point. We respectfully request that the open space program be re-evaluated with attention to a central multi-use park, additional active recreation acreage and improved pedestrian connections to Flushing Meadows Park.

Thank you.

---

<sup>i</sup> DEIS, Chapter 6, Open Space. p. 6-12.

**Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association**

**NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal**

**NYC Council Land Use Sub-Committee Hearing  
October 17, 2008**

**WPIRA**

**Willetts Point Industry & Realty Association**

# **Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association**

## **NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal**

### **Plan Flaws**

**Misrepresentations regarding the site  
Eminent Domain for Private to Private  
No ULURP Oversight  
Alternatives to consider**

# Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association

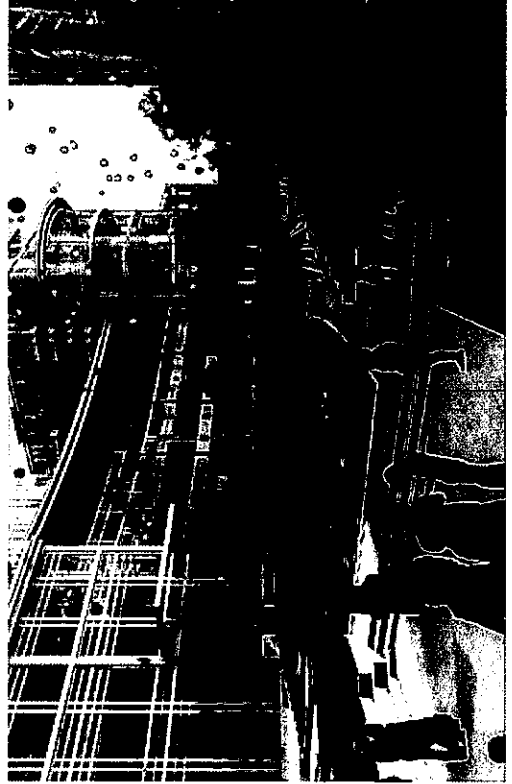
## NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal



### Willetts Point Redevelopment

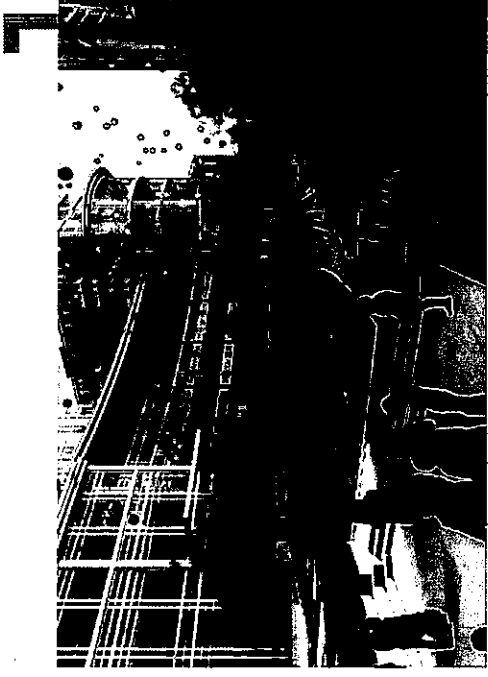
Willetts Point is very similar in scope to Another EDC project, the Flushing Commons in downtown Flushing.

### Flushing Commons





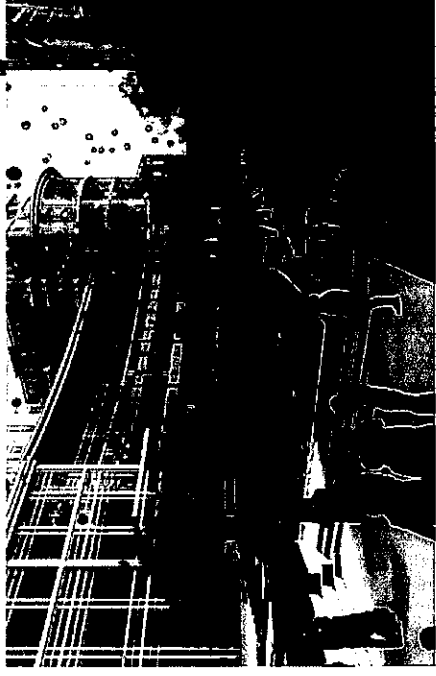
# [ Flushing Commons



The proposed \$500 million Flushing Commons project includes:

- One-acre town square of open space with a fountain plaza to be maintained by the developer
- Parking for 2,000 cars at below market rates in response to community requests
- 50,000-square-foot recreational center featuring pool, basketball courts and an exercise room with memberships available to community residents
- Business-class hotel with meeting rooms and banquet facilities
- About 500 residential units, with 20% marketed to seniors
- 350,000 square feet of retail space including local and national retailers, restaurants and a multi-screen cinema
- Create more than 2,000 construction jobs and 2,000 permanent jobs
- Incorporate low impact development techniques and green building technologies.

# [ Flushing Commons ]



Awarded to Rockefeller Group July 2005

3 years Later.....Status???

**No Progress No Start Date  
Developer cannot provide  
community benefits  
On City Owned Land**

# Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association

## NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal

### Plan Flaws

### No Developer

The EDC is making promises without knowing a developer will agree

Once chosen, Developer will be required to...

- Pay for Site Remediation
- Fund a minimum \$5 Million traffic mitigation fund
- Construct a Convention Center
- Provide 20% Affordable Housing
- Construct and Maintain Streets
- Construct a K-8 School

# Willets Point Industry and Realty Association

NYCEDC Willets Point Redevelopment Proposal

No Cost Estimates

The New York Times

End Seen to New York Building Boom

By CHARLES V. BAGLI

Major developers putting projects on hold.

October 14, 2008

**SCHOOL CUTS - \$180 Million**

**POLICE CUTS - \$100 Million**

**Service Cuts throughout the entire City**

# **Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association**

## **NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal**

**No Cost Estimates**

**EDC Estimate to date**

- **\$150 Million for Infrastructure and new Van Wyck Ramp**
- **\$250 for Land Acquisition and Business relocation**
- **Total of \$400 Million Total from Taxpayers in Capital Fund**

# Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association

## NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal

EDC Estimate of \$400 Million is not enough

Over 2 Million SF of private land in Willetts Point  
EDC has only allotted \$125/sf for land, fixtures and relocation  
Land Acquisition could double in cost as may other costs

Total Price Tag Estimated at \$1 Billion Before ANY Construction

# **Wilets Point Industry and Realty Association**

## **NYCEDC Wilets Point Redevelopment Proposal**

### **Misrepresentations**

- **Contamination**
- **Flood Plain**
- **Traffic**
- **Business Relocation**
- **Worker Re-Training**
- **Job Creation**

# Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association

## NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal

### Misrepresentations

- Contamination

### EDC continues to harp on The “Valley of Ashes”

#### Willetts Point History: A Valley of Ashes

Willetts Point in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century:

- Wetlands and creek were filled to use as an ash dump
- Brooklyn Ash Removal Company unloaded 110 railroad carloads of garbage per day to be burned between 1906 and 1932

*“valley of ashes . . . bounded on one side by a small foul river . . . a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills and grotesque gardens.” –The Great Gatsby*





# Wilets Point Industry and Realty Association

## NYCEDC Wilets Point Redevelopment Proposal

### FACTS:

- Many areas of New York City were formed from Ash and garbage dumps
- Rikers Island was originally 87 acres
- Today over 130 acres
- Jamaica Bay was created from refuse
- Ferry Point in Bronx
- Areas of Astoria
- These conditions exist today Throughout the City

From “Fat of the Land – garbage of New York”  
by Benjamin Miller

# Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association

## NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal

Why does the EDC talk about the ASH when:

- The EDC is NOT removing any ash
- They are only removing small “hot spots”
- They will cover the area with fill, not remediate contamination
- Weight of the fill will force any contaminated water under Willetts Point into Drinking Aquifer

# Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association

## NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal

Contamination

Owner Remediation

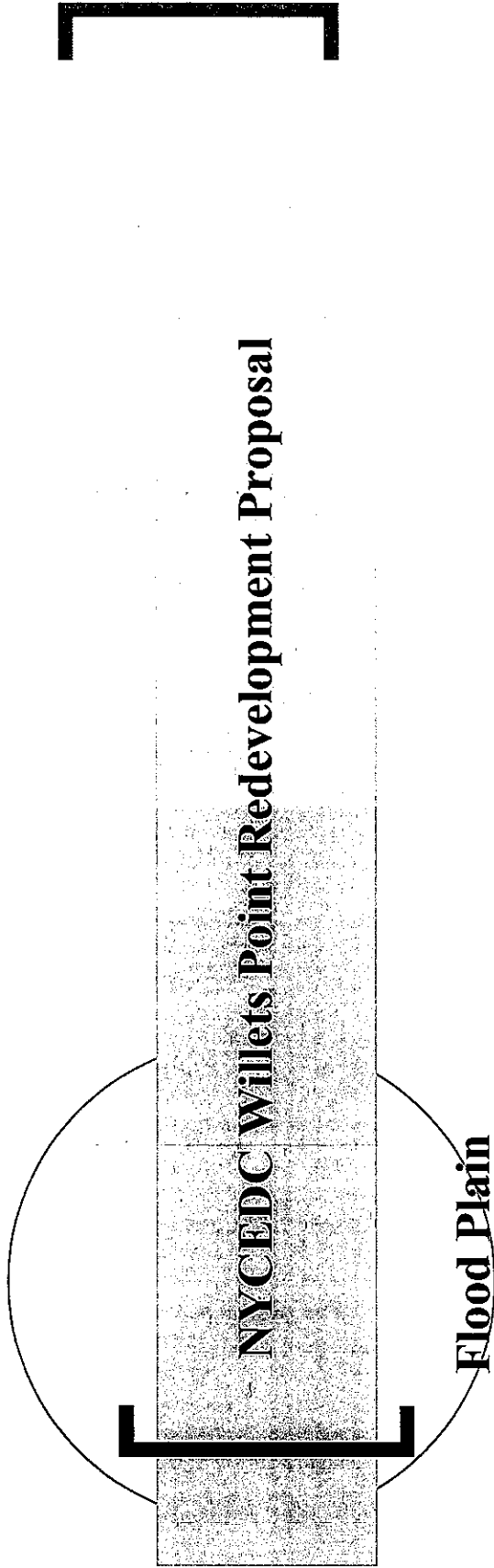
The Businesses of Willetts have shown EDC that their property is NOT Contaminated.

Local businesses have cleaned up many Acres with open spills already.

The EDC's position is self serving



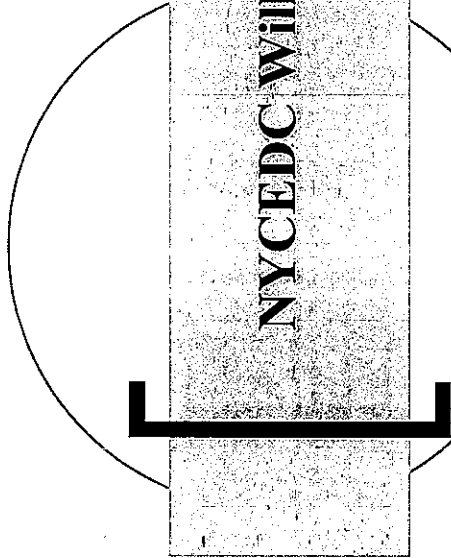
# Willets Point Industry and Realty Association



Willets Point is in the same 100 Year Flood Plain as

- College Point
- LaGuardia Airport
- CitiField
- The World Financial Center
- Most of NYC shoreline is in this same Flood Plain

# Wilets Point Industry and Realty Association



## NYCEDC Willets Point Redevelopment Propo

### Traffic

Final EIS determined

- Of the 29 interseptions studied
  - 12-13 unmitigated impacts
- Six of Seven interseptions on Northern Blvd. alone
  - Significant unmitigated impacts even on non-game days

### EDC's \$5M Traffic

Mitigation fund is pointless

“...modifications to improve capacity would not be feasible.”

“...mitigation options – including signal timing – would not be feasible.”

#### NORTHERN BOULEVARD AT 114TH STREET

Mitigation would not be necessary during the weekday midday and Saturday midday peak hours on non-game days, and the significant adverse impacts during the other peak hours would be unmitigable. Similar to Northern Boulevard at 108th Street, mitigation options—including signal timing modifications and geometric capacity improvements—would not be feasible.

#### NORTHERN BOULEVARD AT 126TH STREET

None of the significant impacts expected during all seven analysis peak hours could be mitigated. Because this intersection, at the convergence point of Northern Boulevard, 126th Street, and two highway exit ramps, it would carry significant project-generated traffic volumes, in addition to substantial No Fault traffic. The geometric characteristics of the intersection and the fact that significant impacts would occur on all approaches eliminate the possibility of full or partial mitigation.

#### NORTHERN BOULEVARD AT PRINCE STREET

None of the significant impacts expected during all seven analysis peak hours could be mitigated. With impacts from the Northern Boulevard approach, the geometric characteristics, complexity and signal timing characteristics of this intersection, and the cross-street congestion, provide no opportunity for mitigation.

#### NORTHERN BOULEVARD AT MAIN STREET

Mitigation would not be required during the weekday non-game and weekday pre-game peak hours, and signal timing modifications could partially mitigate the significant impacts during the Saturday pre- and post-game peak hours. The significant impacts during the Saturday midday peak hour on non-game days could not be mitigated.

#### NORTHERN BOULEVARD AT UNION STREET

Signal timing modifications could fully mitigate the significant impacts during the Saturday pre- and post-game peak hours. Significant impacts during the other five peak hours could not be mitigated.

#### NORTHERN BOULEVARD AT PARSONS BOULEVARD

Prohibiting parking between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM (except Sunday) along the east side of northbound Parsons Boulevard and the west side of southbound Parsons Boulevard (currently meters) to provide daylighted right-turn lanes on both approaches, could partially mitigate significant impacts in all seven time periods.

#### 34TH AVENUE

One of the two study locations along 34th Avenue, the intersection at 126th Street (end the Grand Central Parkway and eastbound Northern Boulevard ramps), would be significantly impacted during all seven peak hours, since the intersection would be a key gateway to the District. The other intersection, 34th Avenue at 114th Street, would not be significantly impacted during any peak hour.

# Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association

## NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal

- Business Relocation
- Worker Re-Training
- Job Creation

EDC has had Willetts Point on its  
“Top Priority List” for 4-5 Years

WPIRA was formed over 3 years ago

To Date – Less than 5% of the Land  
under non binding agreements

Where has the EDC been???



# Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association

## NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal



### Worker Re-Training Job Creation

Jobs at Willetts Point include Union Jobs

Local 14 Operators

Local 731 Laborers

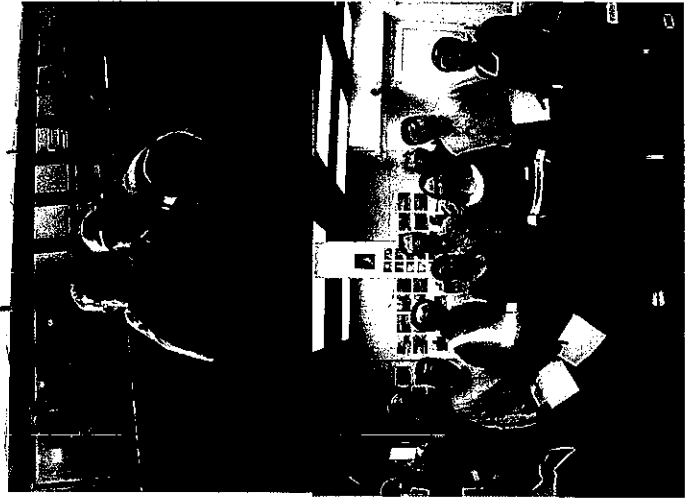
Local 282 Teamsters

Local 116 Laborers

Local 40 Ironworkers

Professional Engineers

Accounting Professionals



The Administration has pushed the locals to  
Support a project that has no chance of success

# Wilets Point Industry and Realty Association

## NYCEDC Willets Point Redevelopment Proposal

### Eminent Domain

#### Private to Private?

New London recently defaulted the developer and nothing has been built  
Why is the City willing to provide Sewers for new developer, not current owners

#### Public Benefit?

Tax abatements for developer  
Too little Affordable housing

#### Unlimited use of Eminent Domain?

Atlantic Yards – 90% of property was owned by Ratner  
Allows Wholesale taking without negotiation  
Use of Eminent Domain should be Limited to 10%



# **Wilets Point Industry and Realty Association**

## **NYCEDC Wilets Point Redevelopment Proposal**

### **Eminent Domain**

- **Land may not be acquired for years**
- **Existing businesses will fail**
- **High Paying Union Jobs LOST**
- **Like Flushing Commons**  
**redevelopment may never take place**

# Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association

NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal

## ULURP Process

- With no developer, there is no plan
- City Council loses oversight on land use
- EDC is left to negotiate with Developer

# Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association

## NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal

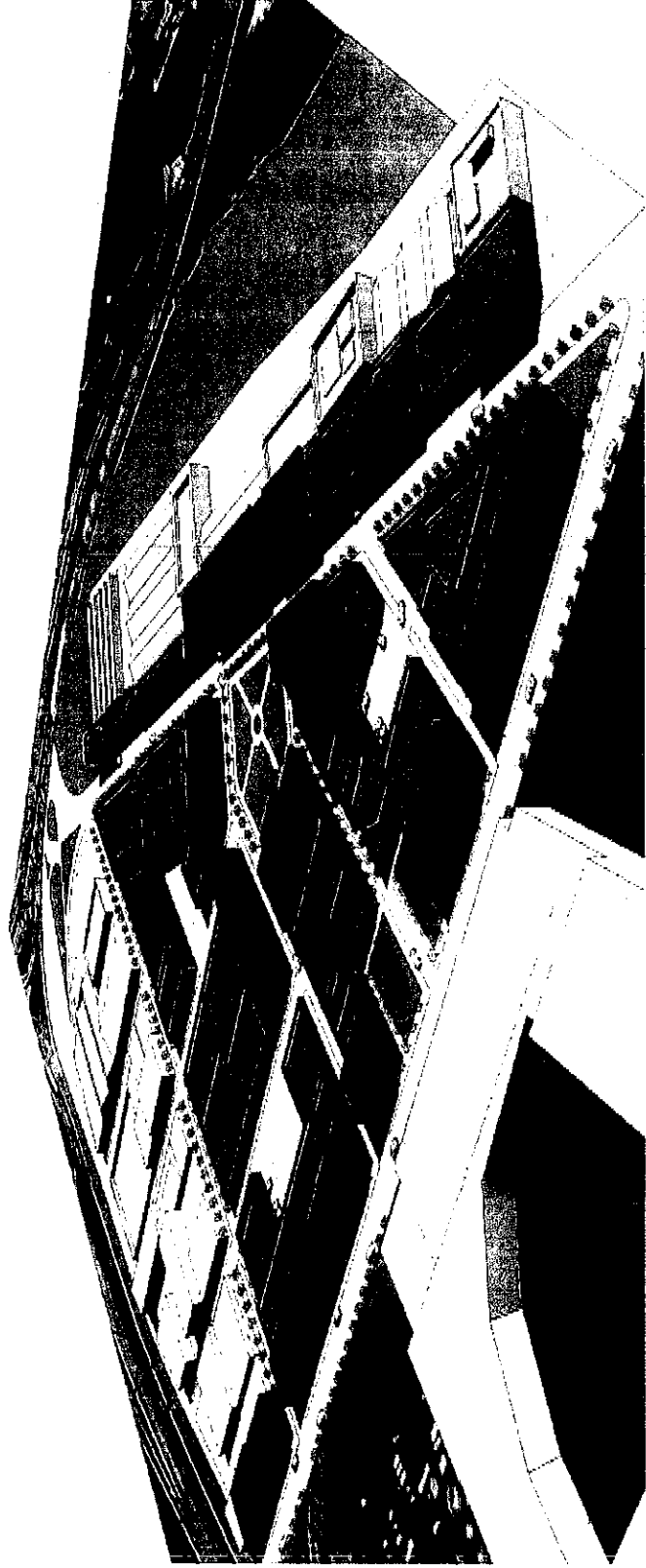
**Help the Existing businesses grow!!!**

### **Alternative to Consider**

- **1991 Claire Shulman Study**
- **Current Owners cannot expand**
- **Provide Streets and Sewers**
- **Funds for Infrastructure in place**
- **New York needs Industrial Property**
- **New York needs permanent Middle Income Union jobs**
- **Willetts Point - A New Industrial Park**

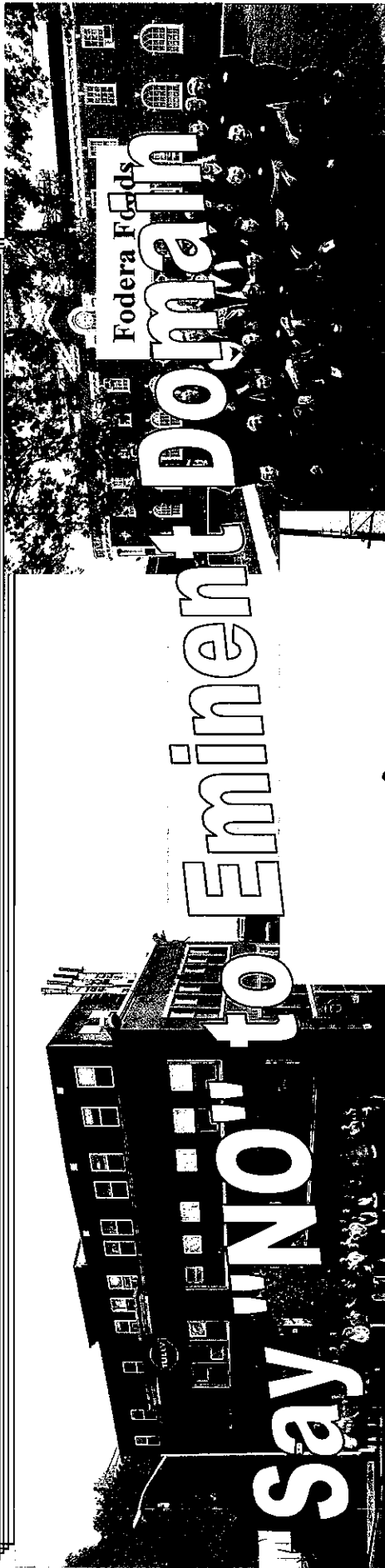
# Willetts Point Industry and Realty Association

## NYCEDC Willetts Point Redevelopment Proposal



Willetts Point Industrial Park

# Wilets Point Industry and Realty Association



Fodera Foods

T. Mina Supply

Before these businesses fade away



Feinstein Ironworks

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Willets*

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: *Erica Stallings* (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: *1*

I represent: *New York Immigration Coalition* <sup>OF 214</sup>

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*WILLETS VI*

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: *10/17/08*

Name: *Congresswoman Nydia Velasquez* (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Willetts

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Maria Esther Romero (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 74-09 37<sup>th</sup> Ave #421 Jackson Heights

I represent: Queens Community - QFAH

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Willetts

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Hannah Weinstock (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 74-09 37<sup>th</sup> Ave #421 Jackson Heights

I represent: Queens Community House QFAH

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Willetts*

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: *Monsignor Healy*

Address: *1021-04 34th Ave Jamaica, NY*

I represent: *Our Lady of Sorrows - OUA*

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Willetts*

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: *Elena Conte*

Address: *40 37th Detwands Ave Bch NY*

I represent: *Queens for Affordable Housing*

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Willetts*

Appearance Card

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Matias Gomez

Address: 103-04 39th Ave Corona, Queens

I represent: Queens Community

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Willetts*

Appearance Card

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Brad Lander

Address: 37a Delgado Avenue Bklyn NY

I represent: Pratt Center for Community Dev.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Marco Neira

Address: 126-26 Willets Point Boulevard

I represent: Small business and workers assoc

Address: Willets Point Boulevard

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**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Julia Sandoval

Address: 126-35 37 Avenue

I represent: Small business and workers

Address: Willets Point Boulevard

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

Willetts  
**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dolly Velasquez

Address: 7409 37th Ave Tr

I represent: Queens Community

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

Panel #2  
**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jerry Antonacci

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Crown Container / WPIRA

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Arturo Olaya (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 126-37 36 Avenue

I represent: Small business and workers

Address: Willels Point Boulevard

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

Willels  
Point

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Joseph Ardizzone (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 126-96 Willels Point

I represent: my self

Address: Willels Point Boulevard

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Wilets*

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Sara Lazo (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 103 of 39th Ave Corona

I represent: Queens Congregation S-QFAH

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Wilets*

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Richard Lee (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: Flushing

I represent: Asian Americans for Equality

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms\* ◆

Panel I

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Willetspoint

Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Peter F. Vallore Sr. (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Willetts Point Industry

Address: + Realty

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

Willetts

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Marta Velazquez (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 103-01 24th Ave

I represent: Queens Congregations - QFIAT

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

Willed's  
Point

# THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Altoyacia Perez

Address: Elmhurst, NY

I represent: Queens Congregations United for Action

Address: 103-04 39th Ave #105, Corona, NY 11368

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

Willed's  
Point

# THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Florencia Almaraz

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Queens Congregations United for Action

Address: 103-04 39th Ave #105, Corona, NY

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

Willets  
Point

# THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ruben Rivas

Address: Corona, NY

I represent: Queens Cong Repatrons United for Action

Address: 103-04 39th Ave #103, Corona, NY 11368

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

Willets  
Point

# THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Richard Anderson

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: The New York Building Congress

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



Willeys  
point

# THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10-17-08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Veronica Lewis

Address: 98-28 57th Ave Queens

I represent: Acorn 10-17-08

Address: 2-4 Nevin St Brooklyn NY

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

Willeys  
Point

# THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kathleen Pettit

Address: LaGuardia Airport Hotels

I represent: LaGuardia Airport Hotels

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

with  
points

# THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10-17-08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Deborah Greene

Address: 150 Metropolitan Ave Queens NY

I represent: ACORN

Address: 2-4 Nevins St Brooklyn NY

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

with  
points

# THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10-17-08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Wynne Evans

Address: 98-28 57th Ave Queens NY

I represent: ACORN

Address: 2-4 Nevins St Brooklyn NY

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

Willets

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. Point  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Arturo J. Pérez Saad

Address: 1150 Carroll St., Brooklyn 11225

I represent: @LST

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**Panel #2 THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

Willets  
Point

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. / Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: G.L. Soni

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: House of Spice

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL** Willets Point  
**THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dr. Tom Angotti

Address: Hunter College

I represent: HC Center for Community Planning

Address: 695 Park Ave, NY, NY 10065

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

WILLETS  
POINT  
**THE COUNCIL**  
**THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: NICHOLAS J. MIGLINO

Address: 146-06 20th Ave

I represent: WILLETS PT SMALL BUSINESSES

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

WILKETS  
Pt.

# THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MARILYN MAYS

Address: 202-02 109<sup>TH</sup> AVE. QUEERS

I represent: ACORN

Address: 2-4 NEWINS ST. BK

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

WILKETS

# THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: /

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Owen Goodwin

Address: 152 E. 160<sup>ST</sup>

I represent: MYSELF

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

WILLETS  
POINT

Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ESIM DIKE

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JON FURLONG

Address: 111 John St. NY NY 10038

I represent: Habitat for Humanity - NYC

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

Panel #1

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

WILLETTS Pt.

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dan Fernstein

Address: Willets Point

I represent: Willets Point Industry + Realty

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

794

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Maximio MOLINA

Address: 23-40 Astorvi Blvd.

I represent: Queens for Affordable Housing Coalition

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

Panel #1

**THE COUNCIL**  
**THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

WILLETS #1

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nelson Johnson

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Arnold + Porter.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

PANEL No 1

**THE COUNCIL**  
**THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

WILLETS PT

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Peter Tullmy

Address: Willets Point

I represent: WP IRD

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



PANEL II THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JAKE BOND

Address: WILLETTS POINT

I represent: WPIRA

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

PANEL II THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JOHN FODORA

Address: WILLETTS POINT

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Willetts Park*

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ANDROS CHARIDEMOU

Address: 127-48 Northern Blvd Flushing

I represent: SHEA Truck & Auto Repairs

Address: 127-48 Northern Blvd

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Willetts Park Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: RENELL KNIGHT

Address: 22-22 CORNAGA AVE

I represent: ACORN

Address: 2-4 Nevins, Brooklyn

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

5

PANEL II

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: JOE ARDIZIONE (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: WILLET POINT

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

Panel #2

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/17/08

Name: Susan Fordera (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 8 Creek Ridge Rd Bayville, NY

I represent: Fordera Foods

Address: 129-02 Northern Blvd Corona, NY

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

D

Willeys Pt. **THE COUNCIL**  
**THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Zipcar, Chris Ficalora

Address: 1265 Broadway, NY, NY

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL**  
**THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. / Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael Gerrard

Address: Willeys Point

I represent: Nelson + Porter

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

C

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 863 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: 10-17-08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CAROL CLARK

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: HPD

Address: 100 GOLD ST. NYC 10038

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 863 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: 10-17-08

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DAVID BEER

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: COMMON GROUND

Address: 505 Eighth Ave NYC 10018

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

C