



'12 Parks #3

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MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

**LEGISLATIVE
REFERENCE**

S.7517 – by Rules – Calendar #1087
A.10622 – by Rules (Nolan) – Cities Committee

TITLE AN ACT to authorize the city of New York to alienate a parcel of land, which includes a portion of Hallet's Cove Playground in the borough of Queens to the New York city housing authority on the condition that the parcel remains used for open space and recreational purposes permanently

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS

This bill would authorize the City of New York to alienate a parcel of land, which includes a portion of Hallet's Cove Playground in Queens for purposes of conveyance to the New York City Housing Authority ("NYCHA"). The parcel would come under NYCHA jurisdiction, but would be permanently maintained and operated by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation for open space and recreational purposes. The bill would take effect immediately.

REASONS FOR SUPPORT

This legislation would facilitate a zoning lot merger between the Astoria Houses, a NYCHA facility, and a proposed development to be undertaken by Lincoln Equities Development on a former industrial site known as Hallet's Point. This merger will allow Lincoln Equities to develop the affordable housing component of its project within Astoria Houses, adding approximately 2,300 units at the facility. The parcel proposed for alienation would form a connection between the two properties, thus enabling the zoning lot merger to occur. The property, which currently functions as a large cobbled planting bed for a row of trees buffering the outside of Hallet's Cove Playground, would be transferred to NYCHA. However, the legislation would require NYCHA to permanently retain the parcel as public open space under the operation and management of the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation. The existing row of trees would remain in place and continue to serve as a landscape amenity for the adjoining park. Thus, this proposed alienation legislation will result in no loss of open space and the parcel will continue to benefit patrons of Hallet's Cove Playground while also allowing for the construction of additional affordable housing within the NYCHA property.

As an additional part of this proposed development, Lincoln Equities will also open a new waterfront public access area in the proposed mixed-use development that would be required under the City's Waterfront Zoning Text. Further, Lincoln Equities has agreed to undertake or fund improvements to adjacent parkland, subject to the Parks Department's approval. Potential

park improvements include repairing and repaving the softball field and basketball courts, fence repairs and the installation of new fencing along the Parks Department's waterfront promenade, and the installation of low ramps for skate boarding. These capital improvements would result in a more useful park for the present and future residents.

Accordingly, the Mayor urges the earliest possible favorable consideration of this proposal by the Legislature.

Respectfully submitted,

WENDY E. SAUNDERS
Director

JG: 6/12/12