



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

Senator Martins Talks Job Creation, Belmont and Community With Youth Leaders

JACK M. MARTINS October 12, 2011

| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**



Taking his listening tour back to the greater Elmont, South Floral Park, North Valley Stream and Franklin Square communities, State Senator Jack Martins huddled with College, High School and Graduate student leaders to talk about community issues. The listening session was the 11th such discussion in the greater area by Martins. “My goal is a simple one. We need to engage with all groups and people. We hear from civic groups, chambers of commerce and

community leaders all the time. I wanted to hear from our younger leaders and listen to them,” said Martins.

Martins held the session in Elmont where he listened and discussed the Belmont plan, job creation issues and community. Youth leaders talked with Senator Martins about their hopes for the Belmont South Lot and Hempstead Turnpike development.

“I always hear a different perspective from our young people. Quite frankly, they’re not afraid to speak their mind and tell you what they think. I was really impressed with how interested our young people are in this project, and the fact that they are so strongly committed to seeing economic development in the Hempstead Turnpike corridor,” said Senator Martins.

Christian LaRoque opened the discussion asking Martins, “what do you think we can do to with the south lot and Belmont?” Martins discussed the ideas expressed at the Governor’s Regional Economic Task Force held last week. Senator Martins and Councilman Ed Ambrosino are on the Governor’s committee along with Hofstra President Dr. Stuart Rabinowitz.

“I think there is a lot of promise with the Belmont Coliseum idea. The details are important and we need to work with everyone to make sure we have a plan that is intelligent, makes sense and creates jobs. The plan has to be developed with all of these things in mind. By October 14th, the proposals have to be in and will be examined. What we must do, as a greater community, is to look at the plan and make sure it fits in with our vision,” said Martins.

Martins also expressed his personal thanks to the Elmont Coalition for Sustainable Development and its Co-Chairs Sandra Smith and Patrick Nicolosi for their work on

educating the community on the Elmont Vision and being a proactive part of the economic development process.

Job creation was also another area where Senator Martins touched on the job creation possibilities with the group. “Our community should be a hub for job creation and utilizing the educational backgrounds, skills and abilities our young people, families and seniors have. We have such a highly skilled workforce who can speak multiple languages and have great scientific, business and specialized skills. This is a perfect place to bring biotech, pharma, nanotech and other technologies,” Martins said adding, “Belmont, Hempstead Turnpike and the South Lot are prime territory to make this happen.”

Elzie Ross asked Martins about the coliseum project and the possibilities it has for the greater area. Martins answered that he was interviewed on News12 on the concept and related his firm conviction that development has to be in line with the Elmont Coalition for Sustainable Development Vision Plan and fit the needs of the community. In addition, Martins added that the coliseum would bring incredible job opportunities and jumpstart Hempstead Turnpike revitalization and attracting business. “The possibilities are endless and can be a win-win for everyone,” Martins said.

“The objective is that we have to create jobs and relieve taxes on homeowners. The economic development concepts being discussed at Belmont, the Hub and throughout the Hempstead Turnpike corridor are true job generators that make sense. At the same time, we will be sitting at the table together as a community and working to make sure that we don’t lose our neighborhood identity and quality of life,” said Martins.

Leaders from the Caribbean community strongly supported economic development, job creation and plans for the Belmont South Lot. During the discussion, questions were raised about the timelines for Belmont development and plans for the Hempstead Turnpike

corridor. "Once we have a plan, acceptance of a plan and the financing of the project, a real timeline can be established," Martins said.

Senator Martins also expressed his great support for the new economic development project at the old Argo Theatre site where a developer has been chosen to bring a new grocery outlet to the area. State funding of over \$2.4 million dollars has been infused for the project. "This project will truly invest in Elmont's quality of life by giving families access to a grocery store that is truly needed in the area." Senator Martins also noted that community leaders led by Jamaica Square Improvement League President Claudine Hall have long advocated for the grocery store plan.

Senator Martins expressed to the group his strong conviction that economic development can not wait and that plans must be put together. "My point is simply this, we need to start work on getting these projects off the ground now. That is the only way we will be able to attract good paying jobs and business to our community. There is absolutely no reason why from Elmont to Franklin Square's Hempstead Turnpike corridor we can't have new businesses popping up that employ our community members in highly skilled good paying jobs that meet the needs of our community."