



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Statement of Senator Liz Krueger, Assemblymember Brian Kavanagh and Council Member Dan Garodnick on the Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding to Create an East River Greenway

LIZ KRUEGER October 17, 2011

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As representatives on the East Side of Manhattan in the State Legislature and the City Council, we are pleased to announce that we have signed an agreement with the City of New York, the Speaker of the Assembly and the Senate Majority Leader that has the potential to transform our community's waterfront and parkland.

We especially want to thank Mayor Michael Bloomberg and his administration and Speaker Silver and his staff for working so closely with us over the past year to develop an agreement that is a tremendous victory for both our community and all of New York.

On July 15, 2011, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed legislation that set forth a limited time period—between then and October 10, 2011—for negotiations to take place on a possible agreement to permit the United Nations to consolidate its facilities and improve security by constructing a new building on a portion of a public park on First Avenue between 41st and 42nd Streets. The central goal of the negotiations has been to craft an agreement that will unlock hundreds of millions of dollars in funding for critical public open space projects in our community that otherwise could not be obtained in these difficult economic times. Throughout our discussions with the City and our community, we have made clear that we would only accept an agreement that ensured the replacement of lost parkland, and a sufficient funding stream to create greater access to the East River and improve our existing parks.

Both before and after the legislation was signed, we worked to engage as many community members and organizations as possible in the decision making process. We are extremely grateful to more than four thousand community residents and dozens of organizations who weighed in—with their suggestions, concerns, support, and everything in between—whether it was at one of our three public forums, in small group discussions, through our website, or via email, mail or phone. We also received invaluable input from Community Board 6 and our partners in government: Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, Borough President Scott Stringer, State Senators Tom Duane and Jose Serrano, Assemblymembers Micah Kellner and Dan Quart, former Assemblymember Jonathan Bing and Council Members Jessica Lappin and Rosie Mendez.

After considering all of the feedback we received, and taking part in countless hours of sometimes difficult negotiations, we developed and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between City and State officials that we believe is a substantial win for improved open space on the East Side of Manhattan. The MOU, which is legally binding, lays out in great detail the plans and funding that will become available to close the gap in the East River Esplanade from 38th to 60th Streets, to expeditiously construct new active recreational space to replace the space that will be lost, and to make other significant parkland improvements on Manhattan's East Side. The MOU, as well as answers to frequently asked questions about its details, can be found at our website: www.EastSideOpenSpace.com.

Today's announcement is cause to celebrate, but it is not the end of the discussion by any means. The United Nations still must decide whether to move forward with the construction and financing terms detailed in the MOU. Additionally, the MOU establishes a new East Side Greenway and Parkland (EGAP) board with local representation overseeing the design and implementation of all the community projects over the coming years, and ensuring that local community members are continually consulted along the way. Many more public hearings will be held, including those that are required as part of the City's Uniform Land Use Review Process (ULURP) process, when the United Nations gets closer to the building development phase.

In the meantime, our offices look forward to a continuing conversation about the open space improvements that await our neighborhood.

[Full Statement](#)