



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

## Dinowitz, Klein Introduce Legislation to Designate Jerome Park as Parkland of NYC

JEFFREY D. KLEIN June 3, 2014

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Albany- Today Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (D-Bronx) and State Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) were joined by Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. and a host of community activists near the Jerome Park Reservoir to introduce new legislation intent on designating Jerome Park as parkland of the city of New York. The bills, A.9681 and S.7467, would set in motion a public process by which most or all of what is known as Jerome Park can either become designated as park lands or lands that can be readily accessible to the

general public for recreational use. The space could also be used as an urban wildlife or nature sanctuary.

The perimeter of the Jerome Park Reservoir, which is the area that would be turned into New York City Parkland as a result of this legislation, is currently owned by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Access to the land around the reservoir, which is enclosed inside fence, is currently off-limits to the general public.

"The New York City DEP has for years denied our community access to one of our most precious resources-the area around the Jerome Park Reservoir," **Assemblyman Dinowitz said.** "Even after the community defeated DEP's plan to build a giant water filtration plant in the Jerome Park Reservoir, The DEP refused to allow residents to get closer to the reservoir. It was only after the strong community opposition to DEP's subsequent plan to construct its monstrosity in Van Cortlandt Park that they decided, suddenly, there was a security risk in allowing people closer to the reservoir. (They didn't believe there was a security risk after 9/11, only after the community stood up to them.)

"This legislation would set in motion a plan that would hopefully designate the area around the Jerome Park Reservoir as parkland. Having grown up across the street from the reservoir, I know firsthand the amazing resource we have and its great potential."

**Senator Klein said:** "In a city as large and rich with culture as New York City, open space is an invaluable asset for any community. That's why, partnering with Assemblyman Dinowitz, I am proud to introduce legislation that will help to do just that in Jerome Park in the Bedford Park area of the Bronx. By designating all of all of the green space surrounding the Reservoir park land, in conjunction with launching a community group dedicated to boosting recreational opportunities, we can ensure more local residents and New Yorkers from all neighborhoods experience all that Jerome Park has to offer."

"The Jerome Park Reservoir is an incredible resource that should be enjoyed by our residents. This community treasure has been left unused for far too long. Northwest Bronx families have a right to enjoy the area around the Jerome Park Reservoir and I am glad that this new legislation will help make this area available for public recreational use. This has been a priority of mine since I became borough president, and I am proud to stand with my colleagues in calling for greater access to the area around the Jerome Park Reservoir as well as greater community involvement in determining the future of one of our Borough's crown jewels," said **Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.**