



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Senator Klein, Assemblyman Sepúlveda, Council Member Palma & Bronx Residents Rally Against Proposed 'Hot Sheet Motel'

JEFFREY D. KLEIN June 30, 2015

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*Klein, Sepúlveda, Palma & Castle Hill Neighborhood Betterment Association call on NYC Department of Buildings to issue stop work order on planned Bronx motel in violation of state & federal law*

*Klein pushes for passage of legislation requiring community review before construction of any new hotel/motel in The Bronx*

**NEW YORK, NY - State Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester), Assemblyman Luis Sepúlveda (D-Bronx), Council Member Annabel Palma (D-Bronx),** the Castle Hill Neighborhood Betterment Association (CNBA), and nearly 50 community leaders and residents, today rallied in front of the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) to call on the oversight agency to issue a stop work order on a proposed 62-room 'hot sheet motel' at 2338 Bruckner Blvd in The Bronx. The renewed call comes on the heels of the DOB's recent approval of plans for the proposed project without the submission of any new designs or renderings by the developer.

For more than a year, Senator Klein and the Castle Hill Neighborhood Betterment Association have been working to address the construction of this motel in an area where there are no local businesses or restaurants that call for overnight accommodations, thus serving as a potential breeding ground for illicit or criminal activity.

“Seedy motels offering day rates in an area with no need for local accommodations has the potential to draw illegal activity that could hurt an otherwise strong community. The DOB has green-lit a project without proper review of the violations it presents, and continues to ignore the voice of the Castle Hill community. I stand together with local residents when I say that this type of establishment has no place in our neighborhood. Moving forward, any planned hotel or motel in The Bronx should to be subject to community review as a matter of law,” **said Senator Klein.**

“I stand with the residents of Castle Hill and my colleagues in government to support developments that are safe, well-planned and respect the rights and concerns of the residents they may affect. The motel currently under construction on Bruckner Boulevard does none of that. Motels in these areas attract the wrong kinds of people who will have a detrimental impact on the Castle Hill community and the borough of The Bronx. I support the efforts of the CNBA and hope that we can further work with DOB to come to a resolution on this matter,” **said Assemblyman Sepúlveda.**

“It has been over a year of organizing and lobbying against the development of the ‘Days Inn Motel’ on the Bruckner, and my colleagues Senator Klein, Assemblyman Sepúlveda, and I still have serious concerns about the hotel coming to our community. Building a hotel in a questionable location without the appropriate infrastructure and population density to accommodate it, will only attract undesirable and illegal activity. Today, we stand together to demand that the Department of Buildings properly respond to the issues raised by the residents of Castle Hill. With no equivocations, our communities and residents deserve better,” **said Council Member Palma.**

In 2014, the DOB first issued a stop work order on the construction of the “Days Inn Motel” after plans submitted by the developer were called into question and found to be in violation of the zoning resolution, code and Multiple Dwelling Law.

In January 2015, the stop work order was lifted by the DOB without any substantial evidence that the project had come into compliance and met the applicable requirements. The lack of oversight and blatant negligence exhibited by the DOB in recent months is counterintuitive to the agency's role in ensuring compliant, responsible development in New York City.

“It is incredible that the DOB Commissioner fails to heed the united voice of our community, or even that of our elected officials including State Senator Jeff Klein, Assemblyman Luis Sepúlveda, Council Member Annabel Palma as well as William Rivera, the District Manager of CB9,” **stated Fernando Penate, Castle Hill Neighborhood Betterment Association Board Chair.**

“The CNBA is protesting Commissioner Chandler’s lack of respect for the Castle Hill community, if not The Bronx. Commissioner Chandler has ignored our many requests for a response to our objections and concerns, which have been submitted to him many times. He needs to stop his disrespect and reply to us ASAP as we are the voting constituents of his boss, the Mayor,” **stated Nancy Rodriguez, Castle Hill Neighborhood Betterment Association board member.**

At the rally, Senator Klein also called for the passage of legislation he authored and introduced earlier this year that mandates a community review process before a motel or hotel can be constructed in The Bronx. The legislation would require that project sponsors notify the New York City Planning Commission and the local community board of any proposed hotel/motel in Bronx County, and mandate that no more than 45 to 90 days after the notice is filed, the Planning Commission hold a public forum to garner feedback from the community. After due consideration of local residents’ concerns, the New York City Planning Commission would then issue a determination approving or denying authorization of the project.

With construction on the motel well underway, Senator Klein, Assemblyman Luis Sepúlveda, Council Member Palma and the Castle Hill Neighborhood Betterment Association are calling for an immediate stop work order to be issued by the DOB until a full audit of the “Days Inn Motel” is completed.