

NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Senator Elaine Phillips' Belmont Park Redevelopment Plan Statement

ELAINE PHILLIPS March 22, 2018



Senator Elaine Phillips provided the following statement at the March 22, 2018 Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC) public scoping meeting for the Belmont Park Redevelopment plan.

As State Senator for the 7th Senatorial District, I want to provide input, as well as bring to the attention of Empire State Development Corporation, concerns that have been shared with me from various stakeholders from the Belmont Park communities.

While I believe that the Belmont Park Redevelopment plan is a positive step forward in providing a long overdue economic boost for the region, it cannot come at the expense of local residents and their quality of life.

The Belmont Park communities have brought serious, thoughtful and insightful concerns to my attention as a result of the changes in the draft scoping document published on the ESD website.

As part of my listening effort regarding this plan, I have spoken with our local school districts, elected officials and recently took a tour in and around the Belmont property. During that tour, many of these concerns were highlighted to me.

First, putting a 40,000 square foot electrical substation next to Floral Park-Bellerose School is inappropriate, short-sighted and directly impacts quality of life. Not only are these school grounds, but they are utilized by local athletic leagues in the evenings and weekends. This is a non-starter and must be immediately addressed by developers and PSEG. One only has to look at the Belmont Property to see that there are far better locations for the substation that will meet the needs of the economic development plan.

Second, I have very serious concerns regarding the height of the proposed hotel. If the hotel is developed, as it is outlined in the scoping document, the structure will become the tallest building in Nassau County. Simply stated, the height of the hotel should complement the track and arena and not negatively impact the quality of life for our community.

Third, the plan must provide an adequate and abundant barrier between residential homes along the South Lot. The quality of life that residents of Elmont and Floral Park currently enjoy should not be impacted by development as a next door neighbor. Fourth, Plainfield Ave is a major thoroughfare through the Elmont and Floral Park communities. This artery is the

home of Floral Park Memorial High School, Our Lady of Victory, several dozen homes and is an entranceway to Our Lady of Victory and Emanuel Baptist Churches.

The integrity of this corridor should not be adversely impacted by traffic patterns that could evolve into safety issues. The Plainfield Avenue entrance must be restricted for the New York Racing Association. Specifically, this entrance should only be used for horsemen, NYRA and the Equine Hospital.

Fifth, traffic studies cannot be limited to a half mile radius. The impact of the project far exceeds a half mile. To that end, traffic studies should look towards the impact of contiguous communities. In addition, special attention must be paid to Elmont Road, Plainfield Avenue and arteries that lead into the Jamaica Square section of Elmont as well as South Floral Park.

Sixth, developers should look towards beautification, revitalization and enhancement of current parks that surround the Belmont Park Development initiative.

Lastly, the development plan must keep within the breadth and scope it was originally designed. To that end, Empire State Development Corporation must continue to strive towards striking an appropriate balance between providing economic developments and disrupting the lives of the local communities.

I truly believe that the Belmont Park Development Initiative will enhance the community, existing horseracing industry, bring new jobs and create opportunities to Long Island when we ALL work together with respect, transparency and the communication that is needed to continue to build trust.

