

VICE CHAIR OF THE
MINORITY CONFERENCE

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CONSUMER PROTECTION

MENTAL HEALTH

COMMITTEE MEMBER

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

JUDICIARY

WOMEN'S ISSUES

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



SENATOR

PATRICIA M. CANZONERI-FITZPATRICK

9TH SENATE DISTRICT

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July 24, 2025

Empire State Development (ESD)
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to express the frustration of the Elmont community, which I represent, over Empire State Development's (ESD) lack of engagement related to the Belmont Redevelopment Project, specifically the promise to build a community center for Elmont.

It has been over a year since the last Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting, held via Zoom on July 30, 2024. Since then, it is my understanding that ESD has failed to provide any updates to CAC members or the broader community. This was the first and only meeting that was opened to the public, yet residents were prohibited from offering comments or asking questions, despite their direct stake in its impacts. Assurances were made that a meeting would be held in early 2025, which did not occur, and repeated inquiries by members of the CAC have not been answered. There have been no further meetings scheduled, and no updates provided regarding the status of the Elmont Community Center, which was a promised community benefit. It is widely known that New York Arena Partners (NYAP) agreed to a five-year schedule for the community center or they would face a \$5 million penalty. It was reported that ESD granted NYAP a six-month extension in November 2024 to locate an appropriate property but it is currently unknown if a property has been identified or whether an additional extension was granted.

This continued disregard for public input and community involvement is entirely unacceptable. We are requesting the following actions:

1. **Convene a CAC meeting immediately.** As stated above, there has been no meetings for over a year, and holding a meeting is a necessary first step to apprise the community of the status of the community center. In addition, the public should be permitted to participate in such meeting.
2. **Provide a full update on the status of the Elmont Community Center.** Our community deserves to know if a property has been identified for the location of the center, the results of the RFP, and a proposed timeline including any extensions that have been granted related to the penalty period.
3. **Establish and publish a regular meeting schedule.** ESD must commit to transparency and accountability moving forward which should include quarterly meetings of the CAC.

It is critical that ESD respond without further delay by providing a clear plan that includes a firm date for the next CAC meeting and establishing a consistent, public meeting schedule with a commitment to regular communication.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing from you promptly with next steps and a proposed plan for re-engaging the community in this important process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia M. Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick', written in a cursive style.

Patricia M. Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick
State Senator, District 9

CC: New York Arena Partners (NYAP)
New York Racing Association (NYRA)