

THE FRIENDS OF LIBERTY STATE PARK

November 7, 2017

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Dear NJDEP Commissioner Bob Martin,

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www.folsp.org

We have learned that again, the DEP has made secret plans behind closed doors – this time regarding a LSP southside marina in the urban people’s “backyard”. We strongly oppose a commercial marina along LSP’s non-commercial, urban family picnicking LSP southside. Your “millionaires’ marina plan” is destructive of LSP’s “Central Park” true purpose of the urban people’s peaceful enjoyment of their urban haven, oasis, sanctuary and escape.

Backroom dealing has no place in deciding the future of the park behind Lady Liberty. We must emphasize, as we did in our 11/30/2015 letter to you regarding the Biederman plans, that **“major privatization and commercialization plans for the sacred and priceless park behind Lady Liberty must have public hearings and a public comment period”** and that “you must honor America and not subvert democracy”. As a former NJDEP Commissioner asserted, “there must be a broad public consensus for any plans for LSP”. The DEP sneaking through a massive plan without maximum public participation would be un-American and undemocratic.

The southside represents the spirit and magnificence of America in a way no other place does. We urge you to abandon these plans in the last weeks of this administration because we know that the overwhelming majority has and always will be against such privatization plans. This obscene giveaway would radically wreck the peacefulness of the lawn, picnic areas and jetties.

- The plan would destroy the sanctity, integrity and spirit of the **South Overlook Lawn** – the most sacred public lawn in the world.
- would be a heartless and unethical attack on family values - the ruination of the **peaceful southside picnic areas, used mainly by low and low-middle income urban families** - including the tree grove lawn between the boat launch parking lot and the “sundial” lot
- marina’s inevitable **confiscating of southside parking spaces**. In the summer, the lots along Pesin Drive, are packed with cars on the weekend, especially Sundays, and the park police often need to close Pesin Drive for some periods on Sundays as both lots are full.
- **block priceless open and expansive harbor views looking southward** - treasured harbor views enjoyed by people of all ages and cultures who walk, run, picnic, fish, etc.

The powerful southside waterscapes of the harbor bring to mind the discovery of North America and the timelessness of nature and are **pristine panoramas** that are meaningful to all. These treasured waterfront views in all directions belong to all people and to future generations.

Again, I urge you to drop your plans for a 2nd marina and at the very least, to promise public hearings and a public comment period for the peaceful openness of LSP’s southside. The heart and soul of LSP and its spiritual value for the urban people and all visitors are at stake.

Sincerely,

Sam Pesin
Sam Pesin, president