

The Jersey Journal

Activists fight marina proposal

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(The brief corrections/additions that are in parenthesis in the news article below are by Sam Pesin, president of the Friends of LSP.

NJDEP Commissioner Bradley Campbell's statements in this article are a great indication of his respect for the public's and the park's best interests. We'll inform people when an application is filed by the developers and remain vigilant about any proposal. We thank Senator Jon Corzine, Assemblyman Lou Manzo, CWA # 1037 president Hetty Rosenstein, NY/NJ Baykeeper Conservation Director and LSP Conservancy president Greg Remaud, John Tichenor, the Friends former president, Jeffrey Hook-for his GIS images- and all others who expressed their opposition to the developer's' lease proposal to build a S. End Millionaires' Marina.)

Activists are mobilizing to try to prevent a developer from building a marina on 42 acres of land (it is 42 acres of mostly water, with 2 grassy jetties included) along the southeast (proposal covers the entire southern) portion of Jersey City's Liberty State Park.

WA Residential Urban Renewal Company, LLC, is looking to obtain a lease to build a marina and a ferry stop(ferry was already approved) on two blocks(Jersey City tax map "blocks") of land (water) in the park that adjoins its property, the site of a planned three-building luxury condominium complex, according to a letter it sent to the state Department of Environmental Protection.

The condo complex, which will be known as the Residences at Liberty, is actually owned by the Applied Development Company of Hoboken, which built the Port Liberte condos nearby and is the co-owner of Liberty National Golf Course.

Sam Pesin, president of the Friends of Liberty State Park, characterized the proposal as "an obscene and outrageous proposal by developers who want to

make a private millionaires' marina at Liberty State Park's south end".

"The great American story is that people have fought passionately for a free non-privatized park behind the Statue of Liberty," Pesin said. "The park is really a sacred park and it's sacred because it's scarce open space in a densely populated area" (and because of its views of Lady Liberty, Ellis Island, the NYC skyline, and the harbor, and also because of LSP's role on and after Sept. 11, 2001). Pesin is calling on the developer to build the marina on the 17 acres(8 acres of water) it owns outside the park.

Liberty State Park is already home to Liberty Landing Marina, a 550-slip marina at the north end of the 600-acre park(that marina plans to build a dry rack boat storage building with spaces for 300 boats, as part of its 99 year lease).

DEP Commisioner Bradley Campbell said yesterday that an application to lease the land has not yet been filed with the department.

If the developer does file an application, Campbell said he would most likely reject it.

"Our stand against efforts to privatize the park whether through additional leases or applications remains the same: unless an applicant can show an overwhelming benefit to the public from conveying a lease hold, I am not going to support it," Campbell said.

An attorney for WA Residential Urban Renewal did not return phone calls seeking comment.