

2/22/21 **The Jersey Journal editorial:** "So many hopes, dreams in LSP (interior) discussions"
<https://www.nj.com/opinion/2021/02/so-many-hopes-dreams-in-lsp-discussions-jersey-journal-editorial.html>

"What continues to cast a pall over the discussions, though, is the vicious and untruthful campaign (by Paul Fireman's surrogates) against longtime park advocates that appears designed to stop the passage of the Liberty State Park Protection Act proposed in Trenton. Should that happen, the fight to keep the ecologically sensitive and unrivaled "outdoor classroom" at the Caven Point Peninsula area of the park free from the threat of privatization would become that much harder. We renew our call for state legislators to pass the act and for Governor Murphy to sign it into law".

The Jersey Journal 8/24/20 Special report: Whose park is it, anyway?

by Margaret Schmidt (one of four stories that day)

<https://www.nj.com/hudson/2020/08/njs-long-fought-battle-whose-park-is-it-anyway.html>

"Fight after fight, it generally comes down to the choice of open space for all next to the most densely populated area in America or a high-value, high-prestige playground for a few that would come with a hefty cha-ching windfall for a private developer who would pay to clean up that old dump.

Fifty-three years after the last train left Jersey Central's flagship waterfront terminal now restored and the centerpiece of the north end of Liberty State Park another developer is reprising that old song, this time pushing an ugly, misleading narrative that would turn the heroes of the park into villains and co-opt the momentum of the Black Lives Matter movement. Paul Fireman, the billionaire who brought Reebok sneakers to the U.S., wants to expand his ultra-exclusive Liberty National Golf Club into part of the adjacent park, relocating three holes onto the environmentally sensitive Caven Point Peninsula so they'd have more breathtaking backdrops for televised tournaments.

Several local people some of whom have acknowledged receiving large contributions from Fireman for their community organizations have signed on to the narrative in part or full. And while Fireman has publicly said he is taking a break from seeking the peninsula, the well-funded effort continues to paper windshields with accusatory flyers and has set up social media accounts with doctored photos. At first, the narrative focused on initial visioning for the park, alleging that never-realized amenities like ballfields and basketball courts equaled an exclusion of minority interests and voices. Now, the focus has moved to 234 acres of still-polluted, fenced-

off land known as the interior,' alleging that environmentalists somehow like it that way.

Members of the nearby community and people who have worked on Liberty State Park over the years tell a different story...

Yet those charges don't stand up to news clippings and documents held in the Jersey City Public Library that clearly show the engagement through the years of individuals and organizations in Wards A (the Greenville section), F (Lafayette) and E (Downtown).

A public hearing transcript from 1994 captures the words of **Jersey City trailblazer Addison McLeon a former Tuskegee Airman and the first African-American from Hudson County to serve in the state Assembly** telling state officials that the only minority that would be served by a golf course in the park would be the minority of people who play golf. And those who were there say charges of exclusion simply aren't true.

I don't recall (minority residents) being excluded,' said Smith (an African-American former JC Council president), who has lived in Wards A and F his whole life and was in public office from 1993 to 2010. He rattles off how constituents could have contacted his at-large council office or his neighbor Ward F Councilwoman Melissa Holloways office, or any council member; how there were many public hearings; and how those meetings were advertised in accordance with the states Sunshine law. I don't think there was any exclusion,' he said.

Note from Friends of LSP

Any person or group could have gone to their elected officials at any time in LSP's 44 years and obtained a meeting with the DEP to advocate for any LSP initiative. Paul Fireman's bought-off surrogates never before spoken up about LSP until he started paying them.