

THE FRIENDS OF LIBERTY STATE PARK

November 30, 2015

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Dear NJDEP Commissioner Bob Martin,

You must provide public hearings and a public comment period in carrying out the Governor's and your responsibility to New Jerseyans to maximize the public participation process regarding your LSP commercialization and privatization proposals.

The Governor and you must honor America and not subvert democracy – by living up to the highest standards of public participation for this priceless New Jersey and American park behind Lady Liberty and Ellis Island, our powerful national shrines to democracy.

The DEP commercialization proposals document and spokesperson statements have ONLY referred to a “stakeholder process” with NO MENTION of holding public hearings or having a public comment period. EVERY PARK USER and EVERYONE WHO CARES TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES ON LSP'S FUTURE IS A STAKEHOLDER.

LSP is “The People's Park” - a special gift from the People to the People – NJ's Bicentennial gift to America. **LSP is sacred American public space** due to its adjacent symbols of democracy in the harbor, its very scarce, green and peaceful urban open space, and its dramatic views of NYC.

A former DEP Commissioner stated that **“any proposal for LSP must have a broad public consensus”**. For 39 years, the overwhelming majority, the clear public consensus has strongly opposed commercialization/privatization plans - and those who care about LSP - on behalf of themselves and future generations have the democratic right to such an open, full public process.

You must make a pledge to agree to a democratic public process. In our August letter to you (in 2 emails and 2 letters which you ignored) we called for at least two public hearings at Liberty State Park, one on a Saturday and one on a middle of the week evening, and also for the DEP to provide a Public Comment Period of at least one month. Our August public participation process letter to you is at http://www.folsp.org/preservation/letter_DEP_bob_martin.PDF

The public hearings/public comment period must come before any so-called “master planner” engages in a so-called “stakeholder process” as the public has the democratic right to express themselves on all the development proposals to see if any proposals have a broad public consensus. So called “stakeholders meetings”, very likely to be manipulated to push forward these proposals which would radically change LSP, are an undemocratic and un-American substitute for public hearings and a long public comment period.

Regarding the DEP's intention to hire a “master planner”, we feel it is the right democratic process for you to go through a RFP process and use the public bidding process.

Sincerely,

Sam Pesin, president