

Friends of LSP letter to the editor late March, 2015 regarding coming privatization plans.

Dear Editor,

The Friends of Liberty State Park thank Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto and Assemblyman Raj Mukherji for the revised Meadowlands bill's two important amendments to the LSP language, which will help ensure a public participation process regarding LSP privatization plans. However, the autonomous Meadowlands Regional Commission shouldn't have anything at all to do with the park and it's like giving planning involvement for Central Park to the Port Authority.

The Christie administration has already paid \$120,000 to consultants to search for development plans as part of its dead-wrong "Sustainable Parks" goal of turning LSP into a revenue-generating "venue". That sickening and outrageous goal ignores decades of the broad public consensus for an open space park for the urban peoples quality of life and for the enjoyment of all visitors.

One amendment in the Assembly bill states that after the autonomous Commission approves a plan, it will go back to the NJDEP Commissioner who will be responsible for any final approval and the other amendment states that "a LSP plan under consideration must have at least one public hearing at LSP."

We thank LSP supporters who sent emails and made phone calls, and our crucial allies, the NY/NJ Baykeeper, and the Jersey City Parks Coalition who organized a coalition of 57 local, regional and statewide groups. We also thank Jersey City Mayor Steve Fulop, Senator Sandra Bolden-Cunningham, Senator Brian Stack, and Freeholders Bill O'Dea, Anthony Romano and Gerard Balmir for their efforts to protect our priceless urban oasis.

The urban people who need LSP's open space for the quality of our lives and people around our state and caring elected officials will need to put democracy into action to stop the large scale privatization plans.

It's a matter of time before those privatization plans are pushed forward.

The public's and elected officials strong activism will be needed to defeat privatization plans for The People's Park. A huge grassroots effort will be needed to save LSP's open space and public access for future generations.