



NEWS

Assemblymember Jim Brennan 44th Assembly District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For Immediate Release: November 7, 2007

Local Elected Officials Demand Independent Arena Security Study in
Letter to Governor Spitzer and Mayor Bloomberg

***Eight officials representing area of proposed "Atlantic Yards"
project unify around public safety and security concerns; lack of
planning cited***

(Brooklyn, NY) Elected officials representing the site and surrounding areas of the proposed Atlantic Yards arena, mixed-use project sent a letter to Governor Eliot Spitzer and Mayor Michael Bloomberg, demanding an independent security study for the project. The eight officials sending the letter included: Assembly Members Jim Brennan, Joan Millman, and Hakeem Jeffries, State Senators Eric Adams and Velmanette Montgomery, and City Council Members Bill de Blasio, Letitia James, and David Yassky.

Many of these same elected officials wrote a letter to Police Commissioner Ray Kelly in December of 2005 requesting information on terrorism and security planning for the project. No response was received.

As proposed, Atlantic Yards consists of a glass-walled arena with a towering glass entrance (with approximately 240 arena events per year), surrounded by glass-walled towers, built to the sidewalks, over the city's third-largest transportation hub, abutting the congested intersection of Flatbush and Atlantic Avenues—one of the busiest intersections in the city.

The letter was spurred not only by the lack of response to previous letters, but also by recent relevant eleventh-hour actions at the Newark Prudential Center Arena – actions which validate previous calls for an Atlantic Yards security study. Just days before the Newark arena was set to open, the Newark Police Department announced they would close streets

around the arena, citing terrorism concerns and security measures. On the decision and necessity of closing those streets, Newark Police Director Garry McCarthy told the *Newark Star Ledger*, "You can't construct an arena and put it right against a street in a post 9/11 world." The Atlantic Yards arena would abut two of the major thoroughfares in Brooklyn.

"We are asking for something quite reasonable- that the NYPD provide meaningful information to the public, as they have with the developer, regarding possible dangers and precautions being taken to ensure the safest arena/skyscraper complex possible, and the impacts of any security measures on the community and treasury," said Assembly Member Jim Brennan. "We want to know how the situation in Brooklyn differs from that which has just occurred in Newark."

"The risks are clear and the lack of information that has been shared with us is unacceptable," said Council Member Letitia James. "As a representative of my constituents I take no comfort in this. We need a proper security study now, well before any potential construction starts."

The letter from the eight elected officials was also sent to NYS Deputy Secretary for Public Safety Michael Balboni and Empire State Development Corporation President and CEO Avi Schick. The letter is attached, and will be available at:
<http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/?ad=044> .



JAMES F. BRENNAN
44th Assembly District
Kings County

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STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIR
Committee on Cities

COMMITTEES
Codes
Corporations, Authorities
and Commissions
Education
Real Property Taxation

October 29, 2007

Hon. Eliot Spitzer
Governor of the State of New York
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Hon. Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor of the City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Governor Spitzer and Mayor Bloomberg,

As elected officials representing Brooklyn, we are writing to formally request a study of the security planning for the Atlantic Yards project and, in particular, the proposed Barclay's Center Arena. It is important to note that there have been requests for a full-scale security review of the Atlantic Yards plans in the past. Please see enclosed letter of 12/19/05 to Police Commissioner Kelly.

Our concern has been heightened by recent developments in Newark, New Jersey. There, as you probably know, the Prudential Center Arena was completed and on the verge of opening when, in the interests of security, the Newark Police Department made an eleventh-hour determination that streets around the Arena would have to be closed to mitigate the risk of an attack.

We do not want to face a similar failure of planning in relation to Atlantic Yards, a project at least as susceptible to attack as the Newark arena. Specifically, we are concerned whether the streets around the Atlantic Yards project might have to be closed and to what extent the situation in Brooklyn differs from that in Newark. The Barclay's Center Arena will sit directly above the City's third largest transportation hub, the Atlantic Avenue Station, at the intersection of Flatbush and Atlantic Avenues, two major Brooklyn thoroughfares. The entire project is designed as a magnet of attention: it will include a glass-walled arena seating 18,000, an eye-catching all-glass 60-foot-high "urban room", surrounded by sixteen high-rise buildings, many of them glass-walled, containing retail and commercial space and over 6,400 units of residential housing. The project's singular density, scale, design and location all raise critical security concerns.

In the public interest, we urge you to commission an independent study of the security issues and project design of the Atlantic Yards project. Ideally, this study should be conducted by the State and City police in conjunction with the office of Homeland Security, and it should be strictly independent of the project sponsor and Empire State Development Corporation to avoid any semblance of conflict of interest. And it needs to be undertaken as soon as possible, so that any necessary changes can be incorporated into the project's design before significant construction begins.

Very truly yours,

Eric Adams

Eric Adams
NYS Senate
20th S.D.

James F. Brennan

James F. Brennan
NYS Assembly
44th A.D.

Bill de Blasio

Bill de Blasio
NYC Council
39th C.D.

Letitia James

Letitia James
NYC Council
35th C.D.

Hakeem Jeffries

Hakeem Jeffries
NYS Assembly
57th A.D.

Joan Millman

Joan Millman
NYS Assembly
52nd A.D.

Velmanette Montgomery

Velmanette Montgomery
NYS Senate
18th S.D.

David Yassky

David Yassky
NYC Council
33rd C.D.

Enclosure

Cc: Avi Schick, President and CEO, ESDC
Michael Balboni, NYS Deputy Secretary for Public Safety
Hon. Joseph Bruno
Hon. Sheldon Silver
Hon. Richard L. Brodsky
Hon. Marty Markowitz
Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly
Shirley McRae, Chair, Community Board 2
Richard Bashner, Chair, Community Board 6
Robert Matthews, Chair, Community Board 8

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December 19, 2005

Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly
One Police Plaza
New York, NY 10038

Dear Commissioner Kelly,

As you most likely know, a large development has been proposed for Central Brooklyn at the Atlantic Yards site. The Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC) held a Scoping Hearing on October 18, 2005 in regards to this project, entitled Proposed Scope of Analysis for the Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Atlantic Yards Arena and Redevelopment Project. At this hearing, several witnesses criticized the ESDC's scoping document for its lack of attention to public safety in general, and specifically its failure to recognize the new safety threats that must be considered post-September 11th, 2001. We are therefore requesting that the NYPD complete a full Security & Preparedness Study in regards to this site.

This recognition of a changed world was implicit in the Police Department's 2004 undertaking a security study of the Ground Zero Project that resulted in changes within the site and to the Freedom Tower itself. It is therefore no surprise that at the above hearing it was reasonably suggested that a similar study be performed for the Atlantic Yards Arena Project. Borough President Marty Markowitz, a project supporter, has already agreed that a study is necessary. Like the Ground Zero Project, the Atlantic Yards Project is, in its sheer size, complexity, impact and risk for our Borough, very much in need of such a study before decisions are finalized.

It is not only the lives and property of all those who will be living, working, and visiting the complex and its environs, it is also the lives and safety of all police, fire fighters and other first responders that are at stake. It is clearly in the public interest to determine future risks, man-made and natural, at the start of this endeavor rather than one day reading about the creation of a commission to determine what went wrong and why.

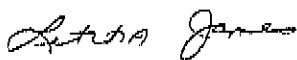
Those who testified at the hearing also expressed concern about non-disaster related issues. In November, the NYPD held hearings about the de-mapping of streets at another

Forest City Ratner development in Brooklyn, MetroTech. As the specific criteria for such closing are not publicly revealed (for security reasons,) a Police Department study at this time can play a critical role in the EIS process. For example, it would help clarify under what conditions street de-mapping or street closings can be expected for Flatbush, Atlantic or 6th Avenues and the remaining parts of Pacific Street, e. g.: an elevated Department of Homeland Security Terror Alert, a NBA post season event, a sensitive tenant such as the United Nations leasing office space, etc.

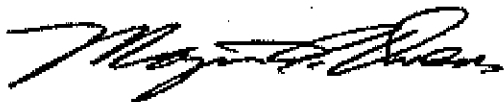
This is just one of many examples raised at the meeting regarding why it is clear that an NYPD Security & Preparedness Study needs to be performed in a timely fashion. What Deputy Commissioner for Counter-terrorism, Michael Sheehan wrote in a memo over a year ago still applies: "In the current environment of global terrorism, the mission [of the NYPD] entails much more than simply responding to events after they have occurred. ... The Freedom Tower represents a favorable scenario in which the vulnerabilities can be addressed in the design and construction phases, rather than making modifications after the fact. ..."

Replace "the Freedom Tower" with the "Atlantic Yards Arena and Redevelopment Project" and every word written then applies equally well today. Much is at stake. In light of events in New York, Madrid, and London, we ask for your speedy authorization of a full scale Security and Preparedness Study of the Atlantic Yards Arena plan.

Thank you sincerely,



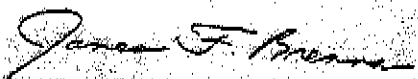
Council Member Letitia James



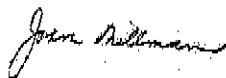
Congressman Major Owens



State Senator Velmanette Montgomery



Assembly Member Jim Brennan



Assembly Member Joan Millman