

NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE
1550 FRANKLIN AVENUE, MINEOLA, NY 11501

Richard Nicoletto

Presiding Officer

516-571-6209

rnicoletto@nassaucountyny.gov



Vincent T. Muscarella

Legislator, District 8

516-571-6208

vmuscarella@nassaucountyny.gov

February 7, 2019

Michael Avolio

Empire State Development Corporation

633 Third Avenue

New York, NY 10017

Dear Mr. Avolio:

As Nassau County Legislators, we represent the areas surrounding Belmont Park, and are aware of its vast, unused acreage and potential for development. We are supportive of reasonable development within Belmont Park that would produce economic growth while preserving the quality of life enjoyed by residents within its vicinity. However, the Belmont Park Redevelopment Project (“Project”) has expanded in scope that is far from reasonable, and its resulting impacts on the area will be devastating to our constituents.

Between 2017, the year that a Request for Proposals was issued for development at Belmont Park, and now, the scope of the proposed Project has grown tremendously. While the initial, smaller project included an arena, restaurants and a few boutique shops, the Project now boasts the arena plus a 435,000 square foot retail mall, 250 room hotel, and an office building. This enormous growth, even before analyzing its impacts, is alarming. In less than two short years, the Project has expanded well beyond its initial parameters.

The Project anticipates 45,000 visitors per day to Belmont Park, which will add between 1,200 to 1,500 vehicles per day to roads within its vicinity. This will undoubtedly affect traffic within central western Nassau County neighborhoods, as many of these vehicles will avoid an already congested Cross Island Parkway and Hempstead Turnpike by traveling through residential streets. However, despite this vehicular spillover, which will burden neighborhoods, there is no mitigation plan to manage this increased traffic flow. Also, the reduction in the proposed Long Island Railroad service from daily service to two trains per event will do nothing to alleviate traffic within the Belmont Park vicinity. In fact, there will be days where there will be no service to Belmont Park at all.

The significantly increased traffic volume will not only be onerous, but will impact the health, safety and welfare of residents, including children. An elementary school and high school are adjacent to Belmont Park, and a Church and corresponding Catholic school abut Plainfield Avenue, which is one of the few northerly/southerly roads that connects Jericho Turnpike and Hempstead Turnpike. School-aged children who walk and bike to school will be forced to travel

alongside an enormous number of vehicles, which will increase the likelihood of an accident by an alarming rate. Also, commercial vehicles traveling to Belmont Park are not permitted onto the Cross Island Parkway, and will also be sharing these roads. Further, during emergencies, police and emergency vehicle response times will be delayed, which, at worst, will lead to a tragic loss of life or property.

The Belmont Stakes, when it is not a Triple Crown Event, attracts between 40,000 to 60,000 visitors, so the Project would create a Belmont atmosphere everyday for surrounding neighborhoods. The northern parking lots adjacent to Floral Park-Bellerose Elementary School will be packed with cars and people tailgating before events. Lights from the parking lots, as well as cars that will be parked on Floral Park roads, will detract from the quality of life of residents. On the annual Belmont Stakes Day, Floral Park adds twenty additional police personnel at an overtime cost of approximately \$24,000 for one day. The police overtime cost for a Belmont Stakes Day for one year: \$8,760,000.

As Legislators, we support reasonable development at Belmont Park that drives economic activity and minimally disrupts our constituents' quality of life. Additionally, the ultimate project must be constructed by our union men and women, and be subject to a Project Labor Agreement (PLA).

Regards,



Richard J. Nicoletto
Presiding Officer
Nassau County Legislature



Vincent T. Muscarella
County Legislator, 8th L.D.

CC: Dominick Longobardi
Mayor, Village of Floral Park