

Member Organizations

Brooklyn Legal Services, Inc.

Brooklyn Lighthouse Comm. Church

Choir Angelus

Church of the Ascension

Congregation Ahavas Israel

Dupont Street Senior HDFC

*Friends of Newtown Creek/Barge
Terminal Playground*

GCU Lodge #1

Green Oaks

Greenpoint Ave/West St Block Assoc

Greenpoint Civic Council

GreenpointGreen

Greenpoint Property Owners Assoc

Greenpoint Reformed Church

Greenpoint Renaissance Society

Greenpoint Video Project

*Greenpoint/Williamsburg Youth
Soccer League*

Huron Street Block Association

Ind. Friends of McCarren Park, Inc.

India Street Block Assoc.

John Smolenski Memorial Dem Club

Neighbors Against Garbage

North Brooklyn Development Corp

North Brooklyn Greens

*North Greenpoint Neighbors for
Environmental Justice*

Oak Street Block Association

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church

Park Moms

People's Firehouse

Polish American Folk Dance Co.

Polish National Home

Polish Veterans Ladies Auxiliary

Polonia Technica

P.S.C. Community Services, Inc.

River Charter School

St. Anthony/St. Alphonsas Church

St. John's Lutheran Church

Stop the Barge

Sybiracy

*Vincent DePaul Society/St. Anthony's
of Padua*

Watchperson Project

WaterWays and Green Views

**181 North 11th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11211
phone (718) 383-1278
fax (718) 383-4855
www.gwapp.org**

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Testimony before the New York City Council on the Rezoning of Greenpoint/Williamsburg

My name is Joe Vance, I am co-chair of the Greenpoint Waterfront Association for Parks and Planning, representing 42 community organizations in Greenpoint and Williamsburg. I am also a member of the Community Board 1 Rezoning Task Force.

Our organization, along with the Trust For Public Land, commissioned an Open Space Initiative to study the parks and open space needs of Community Board 1, as well as the impacts of the proposed rezoning. I am going to use a visual aid to demonstrate how the proposed rezoning fails to provide sufficient open space to our community.

[A roll of Astroturf is held up, 6, tall and 25, long]

What you see before you represents the amount of open space that exists TODAY per person, in the 5 boroughs of the city of New York: 152 square feet per person. (approximately the size of a typical rental living room)

[A section is removed you are now seeing a piece 6, tall and 18, long]

What you now see represents the amount of open space that the Department of City Planning's own guidelines would provide per person: 109 square feet per person. (approximately the size of a typical bedroom)

[A section is removed you are now seeing a piece 6, tall and 11, long]

What you see now represents the amount of open space that exists TODAY per person, in the Borough of Brooklyn: 66 square feet per person. (approximately the size of a "galley" kitchen)

[A final section is removed you are now seeing a piece 6, tall and 5, long]

NOW what you see is what this rezoning will ultimately provide us with. A grand total of 31 square feet of open space per person. (less than 2/3 the size of a typical bathroom)

To clarify- the above analysis assumes a future build-out on the waterfront of 80% of the total rezoned floor area, and 40% of the total rezoned floor area upland. It DOES NOT take into consideration the impact of the even greater increase in population from the floor area bonuses currently being proposed.

As you know, both Community Board 1 and the Borough President have now voted "No with modifications" to the bulk of this rezoning. The modifications we feel are imperative in order to make this rezoning acceptable in terms of parks and open space are as follows:

- 1) We need (minimum) an additional 30 acres of park land based on the GWAPP/TPL Open Space Initiative- 30 acres BEYOND the 40 proposed in the rezoning. 16 acres are in this rezoning area- the balance are in the "Southside Waterfront" of Williamsburg.
- 2) Those extra parcels should be:
 - the (4) small parcels adjacent to the Bushwick Creek Inlet,
 - EITHER the "B&H Photo site", (where the Monitor was built and launched from), OR the (2) blocks from Kent Street to India on the East River.
 - the "MTA" site on Commercial a street. This last item by the way costs the city nothing as it is already owned by the city.
- 3) The city must *GUARANTEE* the acquisition of the private properties from North 9th Street up to and including the Bushwick Creek Inlet that they have identified as the new "Northside" or "Olympic" park. We have determined that the park mapping alone does not guarantee it will become a park, and we know the city does not have the \$100 million they estimate it will take to acquire the properties in any budget. If the Olympics do not happen, we are concerned there will be no impetus for the city - facing perpetual budget crisis - to come up with the money. Should that happen, the current owners could seek variances through the Board of Standards and Appeals to change the zoning to residential. In that case, the parks situation in or community would go from bad to unbearable.
- 4) The city should implement the plan of the "city wide civic coalition on open space". This group is the Municipal Art Society, the Regional Plan Association, the Metropolitan Waterfront Association, New Yorkers for Parks, the Brooklyn Greenway Initiative, Greenpoint Waterfront Association for Parks & Planning and Brooklyn Community Board 1. This plan calls for the shorewalk to be built "up front" with public funding and partially repaid over time by the developers. It also calls for a new "Greenpoint/Williamsburg Waterfront Conservancy" to work in conjunction with the Parks Dept to oversee all the parks in CB1.

Thank you very much for your time, and **please, don't make our children play in the streets.**

Joe Vance
co-chair, GWAPP