

STOP THE PLASTIC PARK

March 11, 2021

To: Senator Brian Kavanagh
Assemblywoman Emily Gallagher

Dear Senator Kavanagh and Assemblywoman Gallagher,

The community is incredibly grateful for the support you and your colleagues provided in stopping the New York State (NYS) Parks' redesign of Marsha P. Johnson State Park and its preclusion of community input for this redesign. A formidable combination of the letter that your coalition submitted to NYS Parks, the community coalition letter submitted to NYS Parks, the Stop the Plastic Park petition, the tremendous outpouring of resistance to the park redesign and construction and the non-transparent input process leading up to and at the March 4, 2021 Parks and Waterfront Committee meeting by committee members, Marsha P. Johnson's family, STARR and throngs of community attendees. This resulted in the committee passing a resolution to the full board demanding construction halt and that NYS Parks meet with the community to reconsider the park redesign. *On March 5 this led to NYS Parks halting construction on the park redesign.*

However, this is a partial victory and there is still significant work to be done. On March 9, 2021 prior to the full board meeting of Community Board #1's convening that same evening, NYS Parks Regional Director Leslie Wright submitted a letter to the board (which she delivered orally at the meeting) stating that the foam core flowers and plastic mural would be removed from the design, and that NYS Parks would convene community input meetings to conceive alternatives to those elements. But building out of the two concrete platforms would continue along with all other elements of their new design with the intention of reopening the full park in June of this year. Remarkably, it was discovered on the same day that NYS Parks had issued a Request for Proposals for food concession markets to take place on both new platforms with a term to last as long as 9 years. This proposal was *not disclosed during the Parks and Waterfront Committee meeting on March 4th*, and the community has had zero input on this state-designated use of the park.

In reaction to these developments, the full board unanimously approved a resolution (attached) by a vote of 30-0 demanding construction remain halted for the entire park and *all* elements of the new design including the hard platforms and food concession uses, until they are reconsidered by the local community, the family, and the LGBTQ+ community. There has been an emphatic outcry to make the park more green, not add more pavement.

Therefore, we urgently request that you seek a response from NYS Parks to the key demands in the community board's resolution: that park construction remain halted for all areas and

elements of the park, and that the redesign of all elements and areas be reconsidered by impacted communities, including the RFP, which should be withdrawn.

To comply with the CB resolution, we urgently request the official design plans for the construction of Marsha P. Johnson State Park and a timeline for the process of community engagement.

Thank you for leading on this issue.

Best regards,

Stop the Plastic Park

Cc: Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney
Councilmember Stephen Levin
Councilmember Antonio Reynoso
Kristina Naplatarski, District Leader
Emile Bazile, District Leader
Brooklyn Community Board #1
Anika Dorsey Good, Marsha P. Johnson Family Foundation
Mariah Lopez, STARR