

NYC Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe commits to considering purchase of the St. Saviour's site if the owners are willing.



City of New York
Parks & Recreation

The Arsenal
Central Park
New York, New York 10021

Adrian Benepe
Commissioner

August 28, 2009

Dear :

Mayor Bloomberg asked that I respond to your email concerning the site of the former St. Saviour's Church property at 57-40 58th Street in Maspeth. We are familiar with the property and appreciate your interest in having the site acquired as parkland.

We believe the residents of Maspeth would benefit from more and better access to public parkland. The owners of the St. Saviour's site previously indicated their intention to develop the land for housing and had no interest in selling the land to the City. While we could not justify the forcible acquisition of the site through condemnation, we would consider purchasing the land if the current owners are now willing sellers. In addition to the completion of a rigorous municipal land use review process, this would require specific funding covering the full purchase price of the property, its improvement as a park, and the cost of maintaining the site into the future. At this time we have no such funding, but we would welcome allocations from the area's local elected officials.

Thanks to Mayor Bloomberg, the Parks Department has already advanced a number of projects that will create more open space for the residents of Maspeth. Gas Tank Park in nearby Elmhurst is a destination for residents within a large area of southeastern Queens. Our PlaNYC program to transform asphalt schoolyards into public playgrounds has also benefited the area. The Parks Department has already completed schoolyard projects at P.S. 58 on Grand Avenue and at I.S. 73 on 54th Avenue and is developing a site at P.S. 199 on 48th Avenue. We also expect to see a number of park improvements, including more parkland and new waterfront access in Maspeth, as a result of the State Department of Transportation's forthcoming Kosciuszko Bridge rehabilitation project.

We appreciate your support to create additional parkland in the West Maspeth community and hope that it may be possible to create more new parks for area residents.

Sincerely,

Adrian Benepe

