

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
Sunday, June 30, 2001

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**QUEENS CIVICS INVITE OLYMPIC COMM.  
TO PARK OLYMPICS ELSEWHERE (IN NYC)**

*Queens Civic Congress offers Flushing Meadow Corona Park tour to U.S.O.C.  
Sun., June 30, 11:30 a.m. - East side of Unisphere  
(east of Queens Museum & Queens Theatre in the Park, south of Tennis Center)*

With the United States Olympic Committee's visit New York to review NYC 2012's bid to make the city the host for the 2012 Summer Games, the Queens Civic Congress, a borough wide coalition of 100 neighborhood-based civic and community groups, offering the U.S.O.C. a tour of the Flushing Meadows Corona Park sections where NYC2012 misguidedly proposes to conduct water sports events. To date, no plans exist for NYC2012 and the U.S.O.C. to tour the affected sections of this heavily-used park.

"We offer today to help the U.S.O.C. gain a first-hand look at the impact of NYC2012 proposals to tear up the heart of a heavily used people's park," stated Queens Civic Congress President Sean M. Walsh, who noted apparent plans for the U.S.O.C. to stop by the National Tennis Center in the northern section of the park. "We hope the U.S.O.C. and our friends at NYC2012 join us for this tour."

"We recognize how a New York City Olympiad could be an enormously exciting event for millions of sports fans and for New Yorkers," said Queens Civic Congress executive vice president Patricia Dolan, also president of the Kew Gardens Hills Civic Association which borders the park. "The entire project could founder on the choice of venues. Ms. Dolan drafted the latest Queens Civic Congress letter offering the U.S.O.C. tour, following up on an invite issued 11 months ago to the day.

"We believe other, more suitable, sites exist in the New York metropolitan area, if not within the rest of the five boroughs to offer the venues needed," stated Queens Civic Congress Vice President Nagassar Ramgarib representative of many of the new Americans and other immigrants who avidly enjoy the park.

"While the organizers tout alleged community support from folks really connected to special interests, their continued failure to recognize the meaningful and considered objections to commercializing a passive wetlands and adjacent ballfields and picnic areas may just put their bid in real jeopardy," stated Richard Hellenbrecht, also a Queens Civic Congress Vice President who frequently uses the park.

“Queens residents will not stand idly by the destruction of the protected class one wetlands around Willow and Meadow Lakes, the playgrounds at Meadow Lake and the ball fields near the Unisphere for a three week extravaganza,” added David Kulick, a Queens Civic Congress Vice President and frequent park user who also serves as President of Flushing on the Hill Civic Association adjacent to the park. “NYC2012’s plans fail to account for the difficulty to obtain necessary government permits to develop protected wetlands.

“We remain mindful that the effects of NYC 2012’s plan will likely displace new immigrants and residents of under-served neighborhoods from Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Residents of these communities depend on the park for recreation and cultural activities,” said Queens Civic Congress Vice President Kenneth Cohen a member of Community School Board 25 and president of the NAACP’s Northeast Queens Chapter.

“With the strong and meaningful concerns raised by community advocates, whether they live in Queens or for that matter, the west side of Manhattan, it makes sense to recognize that our city -- which merits and deserves a chance to host the 2012 games – offers alternatives that will make the ultimate 2012 plan not only more attractive in the long run, but also allow for intelligent and complimentary infrastructure enhancements to strengthen our entire city in the new millennium,” concluded Queens Civic Congress Executive Vice President for Public and Legislative Affairs Corey Bearak.

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June 18, 2002

United States Olympic Committee  
One Olympic Plaza  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80909

Gentlemen:

We understand you will be in New York on June 30 and July 1 to visit several sites included in NYC2012's bid to make New York City the host city for the 2012 games. A New York City Olympiad could be an enormously exciting inspiring event for New Yorkers and the millions who would watch the games in person or on TV.

We hope to give you a first hand look at the impacts two of NYC2012's proposed venues events would have on Flushing Meadows Corona Park, the city's second most heavily used park.

Dredging and merging the two largest fresh water lakes in New York City would permanently destroy the New York State protected Willow Lake wetlands; displace heavily used ballfields and playground; require removal of a \$15 million recreation/ rest facility at the north end of Meadow Lake; disrupt a major part of the park for two or more years and require construction of a new bridge over Jewel Avenue, at a cost of at least \$70 million (to be paid for by tax levies).

NYC2012's plan for a white water rafting facility near the landmarked Unisphere would

encroach on soccer, cricket, baseball, softball fields and the Fairgrounds that are the site of annual cultural, religious and ethnic festivals that attract thousands of participants.

NYC2012's plan for the park post-Olympics is troublesome. It is unlikely that the boathouses or the white water rafting center could be profitably operated as a concession without additional commercial facilities that would only limit the public's free access and use of the park. A training center for rowers would require a level of public/private funding that would likely be impossible to sustain. NYC2012's plan for the wetlands would require a level of maintenance that would burden New York City taxpayers for decades to come.

Please call me at 718 263-1760 so we can arrange a time and place to meet.

Yours truly,  
/s/ Patricia Dolan