

**October 17, 2011**

Hofstra University President Stuart Rabinowitz is being called upon by the Floral Park Task Force on the Development and Preservation of Belmont Park to immediately recuse himself from the Long Island Economic Development Council and to cease any further involvement with the group, especially concerning the potential location of a casino or moving the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum from its present 77 acre site, which is adjacent to Hofstra's 220 acre campus, to Belmont Park, which is owned by the State of New York. The Long Island Economic Development Council, which is co-chaired by Hofstra's president, was launched this past July by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, as one of ten regional planning group competing for \$1 Billion in state funding earmarked for local projects they determine to be part of their regional strategy. The Floral Park Task Force was formed as a result of the State of New York's taking over control of Belmont Park from NYRA in 2008, and as a hosting neighboring community, Floral Park has been very concerned about the various plans that have been discussed concerning the future of Belmont Park.

Hofstra University President Stuart Rabinowitz has been the co-chairman of this important planning group that has been advising Governor Andrew Cuomo on Long Island's regional priorities, including the prioritizing the potential inclusion of Nassau County's 77 acre site that is currently occupied by the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum. This past summer, the tax payers of Nassau County soundly defeated a referendum proposing that a new arena be built at its current site to replace the Coliseum, which was built in 1972. The New York Islanders have threatened to move if they are unable to play in a new arena when their current lease with Nassau County expires. There have been several proposals made concerning "the Hub" including the Lighthouse plan proposed by the New York Islanders' owner Charles Wang, which was dramatically scaled back after a thorough review by the Town of Hempstead.

Representatives of the Shinnecock Indian Nation have also discussed having 40 acres of the Hub site set aside in order to build a casino. Hofstra President Rabinowitz has said, "We're not only opposed to a casino [near] Hofstra University, but we have every intention of fighting it" according to Newsday [June 11, 2010]. Hofstra University President Rabinowitz has also told the New York Times that the prospect of an adjacent casino would be 'awful' and that scholars and researchers "would not be attracted to live in an area where there were busloads of New York City people coming to gamble." NYT [July 23, 2010].

While there are a host of projects in need of such funding on Long Island, under the leadership of Hofstra's President, the planning group has apparently focused its initial attention on the 77 acre site which is adjacent to Hofstra University's 220 acre campus on Hempstead Turnpike. In the Long Island Regional Development Council's submission of its 32 page report, less than 400 words are dedicated to the development and future of Belmont Park. Whatever the merits of redeveloping the 77 acre Hub site to fit nicely into the vision that not for profit landowner Hofstra University has for its own future, Hofstra's President must not be the one leading the planning group making such decisions.

Floral Park has set forth its position. We support maintaining Belmont Park as a world class thoroughbred racing facility, as it has been for over a century. Floral Park submitted its

Statement of Principles to the State of New York in 2007, demanding that any discussions concerning the future of Belmont Park include its hosting communities in Western Nassau County. We respectfully, but unequivocally, call for Hofstra University President Stuart Rabinowitz to step aside and resign in order that the process leading to any proposed changes at Belmont Park are made transparently and fairly to ensure the communities surrounding Belmont Park are given the same consideration as Hofstra University has apparently been granted in determining the future of its neighboring 77 acre Coliseum site.