

June 16, 2014

The excitement of this year's 146th running of the Belmont Stakes and the potential for a Triple Crown also brought much needed attention focused on Belmont Park itself. For years Floral Park has been a strong advocate for the preservation and improvement of Belmont Park as a state of the art, world class thoroughbred racing facility, as evidenced by our Statement of Principles submitted to State of New York leaders in 2007. Now even *Newsday* has published an editorial entitled, "Rebuild Belmont Park for the Long Run" which noted that for thoroughbred "racing to thrive there, Belmont has to be redeveloped to provide a better experience every day." It's about time our calls for an updating and improving of Belmont Park may finally be getting the attention they deserve.

While California Chrome's D.A.P. owners may be leaving Belmont Park with the bittersweet memory of over 100,000 spectators gathering and cheering for a Triple Crown winner on the first Saturday in June, for the other 364 days of the year we are left with the reality of an outdated and neglected state owned facility within our midst. Floral Park has articulated a forward looking vision for Belmont Park which includes a complete "updating of roads, state of the art water, plumbing, sewer, water recharge basins, HVAC and electrical systems both within and surrounding these facilities.

Floral Park and the surrounding communities have now literally been waiting years for the State of New York to embrace our plan for a clean energy facility which can provide safe, dependable and efficient energy to Belmont Park and its surrounding communities. If Belmont Park needs to have lights to conduct sunset racing or a heated track to conduct winter racing or heating and air conditioning for its facilities, then a cogeneration clean energy facility modeled after the one on the campus of the University of California at San Diego, that has been proposed by Floral Park and the sister communities, must be part of the solution too. Creating a municipal utility to support a microgrid with Belmont Park at its heart and as its main client makes sense that is too hard for NYRA or the State of New York to continue to ignore.

While California Chrome may now be added to the long and glorious history of Belmont Park, the time has come to write and plan for the future of Belmont Park and its surrounding communities. Floral Park deserves to have a seat at the table whenever the future of Belmont Park is discussed. We will go anywhere at any time to fully participate in those discussions to make sure our vision for Belmont Park is heard as loud and clear as Sam the Bugler's call at the start of the Belmont Stakes. We are already in the starting gate and ready to go!