

**Bellerose Commonwealth Civic Association**  
**P.O. Box 260225**  
**Bellerose, NY 11426**

August 1, 2019

Via email: [belmontoutreach@esd.ny.gov](mailto:belmontoutreach@esd.ny.gov)

Mr. Michael Avolio  
Empire State Development  
633 Third Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

Re: Belmont Park Redevelopment: Civic and Land Use Improvement  
Comments of Bellerose Commonwealth Civic Association to  
Final Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Avolio

I write on behalf of the Bellerose Commonwealth Civic Association (BCCA) in response to the Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Belmont Park Redevelopment: Civic and Land Use Improvement Project. BCCA is an active civic association in close proximity to the proposed project at Belmont Park, lying along the Cross Island Parkway about a mile north of the park. We reiterate our past objections to this project primarily because the additional traffic will seriously impact the Bellerose community during hockey games and major events. Furthermore, we are seriously concerned with the newly proposed LIRR station. In addition, I refer to the July 29, 2019 letter from the Incorporated Village of Floral Park, same subject. We join in their call for a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to address many items that we concur were omitted, flawed or unsupported by data or analysis.

As I have stated in previous correspondence and in testimony, the Cross Island Parkway is the only controlled highway in eastern Queens/western Nassau County serving JFK airport as well as cars heading for the Southern Parkway to the south or northbound towards the Grand Central Parkway, Long Island Expressway and the two bridges going to the Bronx. Importantly, the parkway is an essential route for cars destined for Belmont Park. It is no secret that the parkway is frequently congested well beyond its capacity. During the extended evening rush period the congestion is most serious under current loads going southbound, i.e. towards Belmont Park.

Already during very heavy traffic conditions, streams of cars are noted on Commonwealth Boulevard and other local streets that are not constructed or configured for such heavy traffic. When fully operational for a major event, the proposed arena will attract thousands more cars exactly during the heavy rush hour period. Drivers will divert to local streets in order to move at all.

The FEIS introduced the concept of an additional Long Island Rail Road station in neighboring Bellerose Terrace. Apparently, this was added both to try to reduce the number of cars coming from points east and to respond to Elmont residents call for a full time, east-west station. The proposal came as quite a surprise to the residents of the small Bellerose Terrace community. No outreach was conducted and apparently very little investigation was done. Vague diagrams showed a footprint of a station, leaving adjacent homeowners to guess if they would have a new station looming within feet of their back yards. There is a concern that construction here will disturb Agent Orange which was used in the L.I.R.R. right-

of-way decades ago but no independent investigation was done to check. An electrical substation seems to be in the footprint and the station and it would impact the adjacent Floral Park Bellerose School.

This station proposal, alone, should be subject to its own environmental assessment. Mitigation of these situations must be considered and a full review of the estimated costs must be done to verify that the low estimate will not impact taxpayers later. Furthermore, given the absence of a direct and convenient mass transit option for Elmont residents to get to the proposed station, it is highly questionable how many Elmont residents would use this station.

I concur with the Village of Floral Park that a new comment period should be established, particularly with respect to the station and other new elements of the project so that the possible impacts can better be understood, considered and mitigated.

Richard C. Hellenbrecht, Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer