

Exhibit U

NYSCEF DOC. NO. 22
MAYOR
DOMINICK A. LONGOBARDI

RECEIVED VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR/2019
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SUSAN E. WALSH

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Incorporated Village of Floral Park

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July 29, 2019

Via email: belmontoutreach@esd.ny.gov
and Overnight Mail

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

Re: Belmont Park Redevelopment Project (the "Project"):
Comments of the Incorporated Village of Floral Park to
Final Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Avolio:

Enclosed are the Incorporated Village of Floral Park's (the "Village") initial comments to the above referenced Final Environmental Impact Statement issued by Empire State Development Corporation (the "ESD") on July 8, 2019 (the "FEIS").

These comments are submitted in addition to the comments of the Village's environmental counsel in this matter, Beveridge & Diamond PC ("B&D"), which will be submitted prior to the new deadline for comments to the FEIS. B&D's comments will also incorporate the preliminary review and analysis of the Village's traffic consultant for this matter, NV5.

The Village's comments are by no means an exhaustive list of all issues that need to be addressed in the FEIS. As the Village has repeatedly stated, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") was wholly deficient, based on fundamentally flawed assumptions concerning traffic and other impacts, and lacked basic information such as a competent traffic analysis to properly identify impacts and mitigation measures to address those impacts. Instead

of correcting these deficiencies in a revised DEIS, ESD issued and hastily noticed as complete an FEIS that still omits the foundational elements of an analysis necessary to justify ESD's conclusions. The FEIS is characterized by convenient conclusions unsupported by any data or analysis. The FEIS also introduces significant new information and mitigation measures that have never been subject to environmental review or vetted by the public, including a traffic management plan ("TMP") that was omitted from the DEIS, and which necessitate a Supplemental EIS ("SEIS") with a new comment period.

ESD has stated that members of the public are allowed to provide feedback on the FEIS during the "cooling off" period after the FEIS was deemed complete, but this period is not a substitute for public and agency scrutiny of these significant project changes that is required under the State Environmental Quality Review Act ("SEQRA"). These significant changes to the Project are in areas of critical importance and include the introduction of a new LIRR train station, which ESD only briefly analyzes based on the same flawed assumptions in the DEIS. ESD's false "feedback" period not only violates SEQRA's procedures, it is completely inadequate for the public and involved and interested agencies to review the FEIS. Thus, the Village cannot attempt to raise all of the deficiencies with the FEIS at this time. Based on its limited time available, the Village has identified some of the more obvious problems with the FEIS.

But first, it is important to note a troubling aspect of this Project, which has been ESD's apparent disregard for its public mission. As is required under New York State's Urban Development Corporation Act (the "UDC Act"), when considering a proposal such as this Project, ESD is required to "give primary consideration to local needs and desires." At the earliest stages of this Project, the Village attempted in good faith to work with ESD and the Project proponents, New York Arena Partners ("NYAP"), to achieve this goal. However, the good faith extended by the Village of Floral Park has not been reciprocated by ESD or NYAP.

Traffic on Local Streets & Navigation Applications

Perhaps nothing sums up ESD's approach to this Project better than one of ESD's proposals in the Mitigation Chapter of the FEIS. In the FEIS, ESD suggests:

To minimize potential diversions of traffic to local streets, the transportation management team, in coordination with stakeholders, would partner with navigation app providers such as Waze to define specific local residential streets which might otherwise be used as traffic diversion routes, such as Plainfield Avenue in Floral Park, to be designated by the navigation app provider as an "unavailable" road during event arrival and departure periods. Through traffic would not be routed to these "unavailable" roads even though they would not be officially closed.

(FEIS at 17-11).

ESD is apparently proposing to coordinate with Waze and other traffic navigation apps to misinform the public that certain roads are closed when in fact there is no intention to close the roads. Is ESD seriously suggesting that providing misleading information to the public is an acceptable mitigation measure? This proposal is questionable on many levels and as a traffic mitigation proposal it is doomed to fail because ESD's assumption that Waze and other navigation apps will designate these local routes as unavailable is directly contradicted in public statements made by navigation application providers that the applications only follow what a road system legally permits.

New "No Retail" Alternative

Further, although the FEIS's inclusion of a new Project alternative that excludes the mall (retail) component is welcome, this alternative should have been included in the DEIS in the first instance. The FEIS's discussion of the new alternative is also misleading, as it appears that the mitigation measures considered in assessing the impacts for the Project with a mall component (including the TMP) were not included in the assessment of the impacts of the "No Retail" alternative. As a consequence, the comparison of the traffic impacts of the full "Build with Mitigation" Project to the significantly scaled down "No Retail" alternative falsely indicates that the "No Retail" alternative will actually have *more* negative traffic impacts than the "Build with Mitigation" Project. The only way ESD could reach such a misleading conclusion is by improperly assuming that comparable mitigation should not be applied to the "No Retail" alternative. Otherwise, the projected impacts for the scaled down "No Retail" alternative would obviously have been far less.

Since very little time has been provided to review the FEIS, one is led to the inexorable conclusion that ESD's assertion that the "No Retail" alternative will have greater impacts than the "Build with Mitigation" Project is the result of either: (i) a deliberate attempt to mislead the public to justify this unnecessary mall, or (ii) seriously flawed assumptions and analyses that were applied in the development of the FEIS. Either way, clearly, ESD should prepare an SEIS on these new items in compliance with SEQRA so that the public can be given a meaningful opportunity to review and comment on the technical analysis and questionable assumptions contained in the FEIS regarding this important alternative.

Traffic & Parking

ESD's Responses to the Public Comments from the DEIS Hearings and the DEIS Public Comment Period also reveal flaws in ESD's assumptions and analyses. Many questioned ESD's failure to account for the fact that traffic generated by the Project will overflow off of the already overburdened Cross Island Parkway ("CIP") onto local streets. One such question came from the President of the Bellerose Commonwealth Civic Association, Richard Hellenbrecht, who raised the point that:

"Traffic will be diverted to local roads such as Commonwealth Boulevard, 249th Street, Little Neck Parkway, and 266th Street/Plainfield Avenue to avoid the CIP." (FEIS Comment 11-51)

The ESD's response was essentially that patrons arriving by car will use the CIP because exits off of the CIP provide direct access to Belmont's parking fields that will serve the Project. The ESD states:

"Response 11-51: Access to the Project Sites is provided via three interchanges on the Cross Island Parkway (Exit 26A, Exit 26B/C, Exit 26D), two of which provide direct access to parking facilities. Access from local streets through the Bellerose area to on-site parking, however, would be circuitous and not desirable to motorists." (FEIS Response 11-51) (emphasis added).

At best, ESD's response to Mr. Hellenbrecht and the Bellerose Commonwealth Civic Association is a half-truth. While it is true that two of the exits off of the CIP provide access to parking fields, it ignores the fact that access to parking for the new arena and retail mall, including the 1,500 parking spots on Site B (the mall), 1,150 parking spots on the South Lot, and 2,004 parking spots on the East Lot is available from Hempstead Turnpike (see FEIS Figures 11-6, 11-7 and 11-8). Mr. Hellenbrecht's point that traffic will be diverted to local roads is absolutely correct and supported by ESD's own assumption that motorists will take the route that will provide them quickest access to arena or retail mall parking. In many instances, the quickest (especially when the CIP is overcrowded) and most direct route to parking at the Project will be off of Hempstead Turnpike. In those instances, local side streets such as Plainfield Avenue will be the most direct route to the site.

Moreover, nearly all of the access to the mall parking is accessible from Hempstead Turnpike (see FEIS Figure 11-8). Ignoring the impact of the mall traffic seems to be a recurring theme of the ESD.

The ESD gives roughly the same response to Nassau County's question as to traffic exiting the facility. The County asks at Comment 11-220:

"[A]re we to fully expect all departures to the south to remain on the Cross Island Parkway the entire time? It is likely that patrons will choose an alternate route taking local roadways into account. (Curran_2564)"

The ESD's response to this question is:

*"The most direct exit route from the project's parking facilities is via the Cross Island Parkway, not via local streets. Once exiting traffic merges onto the Cross Island Parkway, it is approximately a two-mile trip until vehicles can further disperse onto east-west regional highways such as the Grand Central Parkway, Southern State Parkway/Belt Parkway and or the major arterials, whereas **the use of local routes would be circuitous and typically much longer, typically encountering traffic lights and stop signs.**"*

Once again, the ESD ignores the fact that their own site plans contained in the FEIS reflect that exits from the mall (Site B) and the South and East Lots empty onto Hempstead Turnpike. Further, in both instances, ESD ignores that much of the Islander fan base and presumably a good percentage of the potential patrons of the mall will be coming from eastern

Long Island. For those coming from the east, approaching the Project from local roads that lead into Hempstead Turnpike will not be more circuitous than any alternative highway or parkway route when the CIP is at capacity.

We are advised by our Traffic Consultant, NV5, that regional traffic models (i.e., the New York Best Practice Model (NYBPM)) calibrated by cloud based data such as Streetlight can readily analyze how vehicular traffic is most likely to approach the Project. Such modeling programs are available to perform this analysis. ESD should have utilized such traffic modeling programs rather than applying their own clearly flawed and biased assumptions and analysis regarding traffic impacts. However, given ESD's track record in this process, it is difficult not to come to the conclusion that ESD is purposefully avoiding utilizing such traffic modeling programs because it knows they will reflect the true impacts this Project will have on local roadways.

New LIRR Bellerose Terrace Train Station

Despite the major flaws noted above, not all of what is contained in the FEIS is bad. For instance, in response to public comments, including 2,500 letters from residents of Floral Park, and demands from certain public officials, the FEIS reveals plans for the construction of a new train station in Bellerose Terrace to serve Belmont Park. While the addition of this station may help alleviate some of the negative impacts of the Project, the new train station should be subject to a thorough environmental review and not merely folded into the tail end of this already adulterated process.

Even a good idea, if not properly vetted and implemented, can have negative consequences. In this case, there are many questions and concerns regarding the proposed train station that need to be addressed. First and foremost, the train station will not be fully functional at the time the arena and the mall are scheduled to be opened. Additionally, is the station's proposed location, adjacent to the Floral Park Bellerose Elementary School property, the least impactful location? What alternative locations were explored? Will the proposed location, which is a significant distance from the arena and mall, be sufficiently convenient for the fan base and other patrons of the Project, to reduce automobile traffic? What buffers, such as construction of a berm, are necessary to ensure that the adjoining property and its current use as a children's sports field and playground are not negatively impacted? (The currently proposed vegetated fence is clearly insufficient). What operational impacts will the new station have on other LIRR lines, such as the Hempstead line?

However, even if the proposed train station is helpful in addressing traffic concerns to a degree, the station does not sufficiently address the negative traffic impacts from this Project. In fact, that is not merely the opinion of the Village of Floral Park. That is the opinion of NYAP. On December 10, 2017, at a presentation with the other bidder on the Request For Proposals at Elmont Memorial High School, NYAP stated that both a full time train station at Belmont *and* structural changes to the Cross Island Parkway were essential to the viability of their proposed Project. See Correspondence dated December 11, 2017 from Village of Floral Park to Senators Phillips, Comrie and Kaminsky and Assemblymembers Solages and Vanel, attached as **Exhibit A**.

More recently, at the Joint Legislative Hearing in the Matter of the 2019-2020 Executive Budget on Transportation, held on January 30, 2019 ("Joint Hearing"), Senator Comrie raised the same point regarding the need for expansion of the Cross Island Parkway in relation to the Governor's development proposals for Belmont Park. A copy of the Transcript from the Joint Hearing is attached as **Exhibit B**. The exchange between Senator Comrie and Executive Deputy Commissioner Epstein of the Department of Transportation went as follows:

SENATOR COMRIE: As you know, part of the Governor's plan is to have the Islanders come to Belmont Park. Cross Island Parkway, as you also know, is one of the most crowded roadways in the city. It's constantly backed up almost whatever time of day. We need to get the Cross-Island Parkway expanded. There hasn't been any plans put forth that I've seen about expansion of the Cross Island Parkway. But in order to ensure that those communities are not inundated with side traffic going through their communities, we need to expand the Cross-Island Parkway if the Islanders are going to come and also do another 200 days of events at the stadium at Belmont Park, so ...

DOT EX. DEP. COMM. EPSTEIN: I'm a Ranger fan, so we might have to talk about that. (Laughter.)

SENATOR COMRIE: You talk to the Governor. The Governor wants the Islanders.

DOT EX. DEP. COMM. EPSTEIN: Understood, sir.

SENATOR COMRIE: But I haven't seen anything about it. I've been asking for it at the ESDC hearings. It's an important component that has to be done. So I hope that your office is already working with ESDC on a plan to expand the Cross Island Parkway. And it's an ambitious plan, but it needs to be done just because the time has already passed for a project of that type.

Exh. B, Joint Hearing Transcript at pp. 342- 343.

Importantly, Senator Comrie's statements came after a prior discussion between Assemblyman Ed Ra and MTA Chief Development Officer Lieber at the same Joint Hearing regarding expanded LIRR services at Belmont. *See* Joint Hearing Transcript at pp. 94-96. Accordingly, Senator Comrie's observation as to the need to expand the Cross Island Parkway was *in addition* to the need to provide expanded LIRR service to Belmont in conjunction with the Project.

Consequently, although a train station might be part of a proposed solution, it is not the entire solution. Structural changes to the CIP to provide extra capacity still appear necessary as the FEIS fails to suggest other realistic options to mitigate the negative traffic impacts associated

with this Project. Since New York State is not proposing to undertake the required structural changes to the CIP, the only feasible alternative is to significantly scale back this Project to avoid the negative impacts to the surrounding communities.

Finally, it is obvious that the newly released Fiscal and Economic Benefits Section of the FEIS needs to be thoroughly and objectively analyzed. Even though the public was only given a very short period of time to review this new section, an objective assessment has pointed out ESD's tremendous overstatement of Project benefits claimed in the Fiscal and Economic Benefit Section of the FEIS in great detail. See Norman Oder, July 24 2019 **Gotham Gazette**, *Cuomo's Getting His Belmont Arena, But the Numbers Don't Add Up* (<https://www.gothamgazette.com/opinion/8687-cuomo-s-getting-his-belmont-arena-but-the-numbers-don-t-add-up>).

There are many other defects in the assumptions and analyses in the proposed FEIS that can and will be pointed out in the near future. If an extremely time restricted review can reveal so many obvious problems, then ESD needs to resolve the fundamentally flawed assumptions underlying its conclusions concerning the Project and issue an SEIS with respect to the new elements of the Project with a new comment period so that the Project's impacts are sufficiently mitigated and the public—that will be forced to live with this Project—is given a meaningful opportunity to review and comment on these plans.

Sincerely,

/s/ Dominick A Longobardi

Dominick A. Longobardi
Mayor

/s/ Kevin M. Fitzgerald

Kevin M. Fitzgerald
Deputy Mayor

/s/ Lynn Pombonyo

Dr. Lynn Pombonyo
Trustee

/s/ Archie T. Cheng

Archie T. Cheng
Trustee

/s/ Frank J. Chiara

Frank J. Chiara
Trustee
cc:

Mr. Howard Zemsky, President and CEO Empire State Development
Rachel Shatz, Vice President Planning and Environmental Review, Lead Agency Contact
Gerard Bambrick, Village Administrator, Village of Floral Park
Michael Murphy, Esq., Beveridge & Diamond

EXHIBIT A

(Correspondence from the Village of Floral Park to Senators Phillips, Comrie, Kaminsky and Assemblymembers Solages and Vanel, dated December 11, 2017(without Exhibits))

NYSCEF DOCKET NO. 22
DOMINICK A. LONGOBARDI

RECEIVED NYSCEF 09/09/2019
VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR
GERARD M. BAMBRICK



TRUSTEE
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Submitted via email: belmontcomments@gmail.com

December 11, 2017

Senator Elaine Phillips
Senator Leroy Comrie
Senator Todd Kaminsky
Assemblywoman Michaela Solages
Assemblyman Clyde Vanel

Re: Supplemental Comments submitted by the Inc. Village of Floral Park

Thank you for hosting the Listening Session yesterday. We found the presentations by the Islanders group and the NYC FC group very informative.

We also think their presentations confirm the Village's position as set forth in our December 8th submission, a copy of which is attached.

Both groups commented that the transformation of the Belmont LIRR station into a full time year round facility is integral to their proposals. The Islanders group also commented that significant changes to other aspects of the transportation infrastructure surrounding Belmont would be necessary components of their proposal. Specifically, they identified changes to increase the capacity of the Cross Island Parkway and the feeder roads leading to Belmont.

The observations of these very experienced developers reinforce the Village's position that any development at Belmont should be accomplished by first developing a Master Plan that takes into account the future development plans of the Belmont property as a whole (including any anticipated NYRA projects) as well as the existing transportation/infrastructure deficiencies and transportation/infrastructure improvements required to support development on the property as a whole. It makes little sense to proceed with consideration of these issues in a piecemeal fashion, especially given the location and unique nature and challenges associated with any major development of the Belmont property.

Moreover, as required by the UDC Act (discussed in our December 8th submittal) such a Master

Plan must be developed in coordination with the local community so that the requirement that the ESD "give primary consideration to local needs and desires [to] foster local initiative and participation in connection with the planning and development of its projects" is met.

If New York State and its agencies, such as the MTA and the Department of Transportation, are amenable to making the significant investments to effect the changes the proposed developers deemed necessary yesterday, then that fact should be confirmed and incorporated into a comprehensive Master Plan for the Belmont Property.

Perhaps then, once it is confirmed that these massive improvements to and around Belmont will be undertaken, a new RFP could be issued and other potential bidders who are provided with this information would be interested in bidding for the opportunity to develop the property. Then the community and ESD will be able to make rational decisions, and would have a fuller choice as to development options than the two options presently being contemplated.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

/s/ Dominick A. Longobardi
Dominick A. Longobardi
Mayor

/s/ Kevin M. Fitzgerald
Kevin M. Fitzgerald
Deputy Mayor

Cc:

Senator Elaine Phillips via email @ ephillips@nysenate.gov
Senator Todd Kaminsky via email @ kaminsky@nysenate.gov
Senator Leroy Comrie via email @ comrie@nysenate.gov
Assemblywoman Michaela Solages via email @ SolagesM@nyassembly.gov
Assemblyman Clyde Vanel via email @ vanelc@nyassembly.gov
Michael Murphy Esq Beveridge & Diamond

EXHIBIT B

(Portions of Transcript of Joint Legislative Hearing in the Matter of 2019-2020 Executive Budget on Transportation, held on January 30, 2019- selected portions – pages 94 to 96 and pages 341 to 343) entire Transcript available at :

https://nystateassembly.granicus.com/DocumentViewer.php?file=nystateassembly_a6183fe09ec984fb14931e8abc9ac95c.pdf&view=1

1 BEFORE THE NEW YORK STATE SENATE FINANCE
AND ASSEMBLY WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEES

2 -----

3 JOINT LEGISLATIVE HEARING

4 In the Matter of the
5 2019-2020 EXECUTIVE BUDGET
ON TRANSPORTATION

6 -----

7

8 Hearing Room B
9 Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York

10 January 30, 2019
9:36 a.m.

11

12 PRESIDING:

13 Senator Liz Krueger
Chair, Senate Finance Committee

14

15 Assemblywoman Helene E. Weinstein
Chair, Assembly Ways & Means Committee

16 PRESENT:

17 Senator James L. Seward
Senate Finance Committee (RM)

18

19 Assemblyman William A. Barclay
Assembly Ways & Means Committee (RM)

20 Senator Timothy M. Kennedy
Chair, Senate Committee on Transportation

21

22 Assemblyman William B. Magnarelli
Chair, Assembly Committee on Transportation

23

24

1 2019-2020 Executive Budget
Transportation
2 1-30-19

3 PRESENT: (Continued)

4 Senator Leroy Comrie
Chair, Senate Committee on Corporations,
5 Authorities & Commissions

6 Assemblywoman Amy Paulin
Chair, Assembly Committee on Corporations,
7 Authorities & Commissions

8 Assemblyman Michael Cusick

9 Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer Amato

10 Senator Joseph Robach

11 Assemblyman Jonathan G. Jacobson

12 Senator David Carlucci

13 Assemblyman Charles D. Fall

14 Senator Robert E. Antonacci

15 Assemblyman Edward P. Ra

16 Senator Andrew Gounardes

17 Senator Jessica Ramos

18 Assemblywoman Karen McMahon

19 Assemblyman Félix W. Ortiz

20 Senator Brian A. Benjamin

21 Assemblyman Joe DeStefano

22 Senator James Skoufis

23 Senator Diane J. Savino

24 Assemblyman Steven Otis

1 going to be something that will improve their
2 mass transportation before they're going to
3 want to have to pay more to go into the city,
4 and I'd love to speak about that and push
5 that in this budget.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.
7 Assembly.

8 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.
9 Assemblyman Ra.

10 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Thank you, Madam
11 Chair.

12 Thank you for being here. We'll keep
13 it on Long Island, following up the Senator.

14 One of the major issues going on
15 within the district I represent, or adjacent
16 to the district, is the proposal for Belmont.
17 And I know Senator Comrie, my neighbor in
18 Queens, has spoken about the potential for a
19 full-time Long Island Rail Road station
20 there. My understanding is there has been
21 some study done of what it would actually
22 take. But given, you know, we're talking a
23 lot about cost and capital, that looks to me
24 like to be an opportunity that, you know,

1 somebody is getting a pretty good benefit of
2 doing something on that land and an
3 opportunity to find a way to have some
4 private funding help make something like that
5 a reality.

6 I'm just wondering, are there
7 conversations going on with ESD with regard
8 to potentially having a full-time Long Island
9 Rail Road station there?

10 MTA MANAGING DIR. HAKIM: So I'll
11 start off just by saying that you're right,
12 those conversations with ESD to create
13 opportunities for a more robust service at
14 Belmont beyond just the special-event limited
15 service that we currently provide, is
16 underway.

17 I grew up in Rosedale, so I know the
18 value that a Belmont station could have to
19 that area. The ESD I think is looking for
20 funding opportunities with the private
21 development community as well. And we would
22 need, I think, some level of commitment in
23 order to advance additional service.

24 Significant improvements would be

1 required, both in the track, to make that
2 service work well.

3 MTA CDO LIEBER: In fairness, I think
4 we also need to make sure that as we go
5 through the options that are available, that
6 you're keeping in mind that the throughput on
7 that very crowded section of the Long Island
8 Rail Road needs to be maintained. We're
9 investing so much collectively in making
10 sure, between Third Track and East Side
11 Access, that we're going to be able to
12 increase Long Island Rail Road peak-hour
13 service by 45 percent. That's a
14 game-changer, more options.

15 As we go through the Belmont options
16 as a state government, we need to bear in
17 mind that we're trying to put more trains
18 through the system and make sure that it
19 works well together.

20 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Thank you.

21 And the other thing that I wanted to
22 ask about with regard to the congestion
23 pricing situation. Is it anticipated that
24 revenue will be distributed through the

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1 consider good asset management practices.

2 ASSEMBLYMAN BARCLAY: All right,

3 thank you. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

4 DOT EX. DEP. COMM. EPSTEIN: Thank

5 you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

7 I wanted to just acknowledge that

8 we've been joined by Assemblyman Walczyk.

9 Now to the Senate.

10 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you. Our

11 next is Senator Leroy Comrie.

12 SENATOR COMRIE: Thank you, Madam

13 Chair.

14 I wanted to -- or good afternoon,

15 first.

16 DOT EX. DEP. COMM. EPSTEIN: Good

17 afternoon.

18 SENATOR COMRIE: I hope the

19 commissioner is okay. I just wanted to talk

20 to you about a couple of issues.

21 My district is bounded by the Van Wyck

22 Expressway, Belt Parkway, Cross Island

23 Parkway, Grand Central Parkway. I wanted to

24 talk to you about the Cross Island Parkway.

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1 As you know, part of the Governor's plan is
2 to have the Islanders come to Belmont Park.
3 Cross Island Parkway, as you also know, is
4 one of the most crowded roadways in the city.
5 It's constantly backed up almost whatever
6 time of day. We need to get the Cross Island
7 Parkway expanded. There hasn't been any
8 plans put forth that I've seen about
9 expansion of the Cross Island Parkway. But
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11 not inundated with side traffic going through
12 their communities, we need to expand the
13 Cross Island Parkway if the Islanders are
14 going to come and also do another 200 days of
15 events at the stadium at Belmont Park, so --

16 DOT EX. DEP. COMM. EPSTEIN: I'm a
17 Ranger fan, so we might have to talk about
18 that.

19 (Laughter.)

20 SENATOR COMRIE: You talk to the
21 Governor. The Governor wants the Islanders.

22 DOT EX. DEP. COMM. EPSTEIN:

23 Understood, sir.

24 SENATOR COMRIE: But I haven't seen

343

1 anything about it. I've been asking for it
2 at the ESDC hearings. It's an important
3 component that has to be done. So I hope
4 that your office is already working with ESDC
5 on a plan to expand the Cross Island Parkway.
6 And it's an ambitious plan, but it needs to
7 be done just because the time has already
8 passed for a project of that type.

9 Just -- so I hope that you can get
10 back to us with that. I spoke to the
11 commissioner when I met with him a week ago.

12 I just wanted to talk to you, just
13 wanted to echo what Senator Kennedy said
14 about making sure that there's equity for
15 upstate with the NFTA and with money that has
16 to be done, NFTA money and CNYRTA money as
17 well. It's important that we keep our
18 upstate economy flowing as well and that the
19 opportunities upstate are not bumped. As I
20 can tell you from a better borough person
21 that has had MTA projects that are
22 continually pushed back, I understand what
23 Tim Kennedy and the other upstate Senators
24 said, that other monies constantly that are