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BREAKING NEWS:

Friends of Bushwick Inlet Park Denounce MTA Deal to Sell Publicly-Owned, Park-Adjacent Waterfront Property to Developer

Brooklyn, New York – October 21, 2021 – In an immediate and outraged response to the impending announcement of MTA’s awarding of development rights for a 2 acre parcel of land on the shore of the Bushwick Inlet and contiguous with the 27 acre Bushwick Inlet Park to Gotham, a residential developer, Friends of Bushwick Park (FBIP) denounced both the plan and the terms of the deal. FBIP, a community-based advocacy organization dedicated to the development, stewardship, and programming of a resilient, world-class park on the North Brooklyn waterfront, describes the deal as a betrayal of public trust and calls on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to withdraw from the “conditional designation” of Gotham for the redevelopment of 40 Quay Street in Greenpoint and to work with the Greenpoint and Williamsburg community to transform this waterfront site into a resilient public space.

MTA SELLING PUBLIC LAND NEXT TO A PARK - 40 Quay Street is publicly-owned land fronting onto Bushwick Inlet and Bushwick Inlet Park, a 27-acre city park that is currently under development. The property has been used by the MTA for many years as a storage facility for mobile wash trucks. In 2019, the MTA released an RFP seeking proposals to redevelop the site for residential use. In an earlier statement, FBIP had argued that, while the funding shortfalls of the MTA are well understood, a one-time injection of cash from selling public property (the 2 acres at 40 Quay Street) is not the way to solve the MTA’s systemic funding problems. But, the recently revealed terms of the deal - \$39m for the MTA if the developer succeeds in changing the zoning to allow for a bigger residential tower and less than \$8m if Gotham fails to rezone - are utterly insignificant, not only in relation to the MTA’s \$54b capital needs but also to the price paid by the City for other parcels that make up the 27 acre Bushwick Inlet Park. Says Katherine Thompson, FBIP co-chair, “For the price that MTA is getting for developing this public property in a neighborhood overwhelmed with development, the City could get a bargain on waterfront land that would be a critical addition to vital park space. “



Friends of Bushwick Inlet Park, with the support of the community board and local elected officials, believes that parks and open space is a far better and far more sustainable use for the property, noting that:

- 40 Quay Street is publicly-owned property, and as such should be used to the greatest possible benefit of the residents of the state. At this location, **the greatest public benefit is clearly served by a park.**
- 40 Quay Street – even in its current state, and certainly when it is redeveloped for high-rise residential – **inappropriately walls off the residents of Greenpoint from Bushwick Inlet Park.**
- 40 Quay Street, in connection with the adjacent Monitor Museum site, should be the **gateway from Greenpoint to the public waterfront.**
- 40 Quay Street sits adjacent to the narrowest part of Bushwick Inlet Park (less than 50’ wide). Expanding the public open space at this particular location would **significantly enhance the quality of Bushwick Inlet Park.**
- 40 Quay Street sits on landfill in a flood zone; as parkland, this property could be a visionary part of **a robust, sustainable and resilient Brooklyn waterfront.** A new development on the site would only exacerbate flooding for future generations.

Steve Chesler, co-chair of Friends of Bushwick Inlet Park, states: “The MTA’s claim that it is acting in the community interest is contradicted by the fact that Greenpoint/Williamsburg’s [Community Board 1](#) emphatically rejected the proposed MTA development in a resolution last year. Public land should be used for the greatest, most sustainable public benefit and, here on the shore of the Bushwick Inlet, that is as parkspace.”

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