

Rothman Submits Public Comments On New Jersey Meadowlands Commission's Draft Master Plan

May 30, 2003

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Says Organization Supports His Vision Of An 8,400 Acre Meadowlands Environmental Park

Hackensack, NJ - Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) today formally submitted public comments on the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission's (NJMC) recent issuance of the Draft Master Plan for the Hackensack Meadowlands District. Rothman praised the NJMC for serving as a true partner in his plan to turn the 8,400 undeveloped acres of the Meadowlands into an environmental park - an effort clearly outlined in the Draft Master Plan.

eee"I am delighted that the central component of the Commission's "regreened" Draft Master Plan is our shared vision of an 8,400-acre Meadowlands Environmental Park. This is a bold, historic step which fulfills the call I made in the year 2000 to draw a thick green line around the contiguous, undeveloped system of waterways and marshes that comprise the unique Meadowlands ecosystem," Rothman wrote in his public comments letter to the NJMC "The protection, preservation, enhancement, and remediation of the Meadowlands - an area ten times the size of New York City's Central Park - will provide unparalleled recreation and educational opportunities for millions of current and future New Jersey and tri-state residents. Located in the heart of one of the most densely-crowded areas of the most densely-crowded state in the nation, the Meadowlands Environmental Park will serve as a model for the preservation of open space and the creation of urban park systems in the United States around the world."

eeeRothman expressed his gratefulness to the NJMC for fully matching the \$4.2 million in federal land acquisition funds he secured over the past two years as a member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee. The NJMC, which is currently negotiating the purchase of the 8,400 acres from landowners, expects to have 90 percent of the property permanently in public hands within the next year. Rothman also praised the NJMC for agreeing to partner with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on a three-year, \$5.2 million federal study of how best to cleanup and preserve the Meadowlands. Rothman organized the study and got the U.S. Congress to back the initiative in June 2001.

eee"As a Member of the House Appropriations Committee, I am truly grateful for the Commission's continued partnership in protecting and preserving these precious 8,400 acres," Rothman wrote in his public comments letter. "I share the Commission's vision outlined in the Draft Master Plan of a balanced approach to sustainable economic development for the Meadowlands District that will prevent sprawl and environmental degradation by focusing on the carefully planned revitalization of scores of brownfield and other under-utilized sites that dot the region. The Draft Master Plan is a landmark document that deserves the support and praise of elected and non-elected leaders at every level of government, residents of the region, and community activists and environmental stakeholders."

eeeA century ago, the Meadowlands was a vast piece of open space spanning 21,000 acres. Today, just outside of the Arena and Giants Stadium property, only 8,400 of those acres remain undeveloped, keeping river water from flooding the

streets of surrounding communities. That part of the Meadowlands still supports a diverse and growing concentration of migratory birds and is home to 65 species of nesting birds and more than 50 species of fish and shellfish.

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FULL TEXT OF ROTHMAN'S PUBLIC COMMENTS LETTER ON NJMC'S DRAFT MASTER PLAN

#####May 30, 2003

Ms. Linda Wills
Senior Staff Planner
New Jersey Meadowlands Commission
1 DeKorte Plaza
Lyndhurst, New Jersey 07071

RE: Draft NJMC Master Plan

Dear Ms. Wills:

I am pleased to offer the following comments on the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission's (the Commission) recent issuance of the Draft Master Plan for the Hackensack Meadowlands District.

I am delighted that the central component of the Commission's "regreened" Draft Master Plan is our shared vision of an 8,400-acre Meadowlands Environmental Park. This is a bold, historic step which fulfills the call I made in the year 2000 to draw a thick green line around the contiguous, undeveloped system of waterways and marshes that comprise the unique Meadowlands ecosystem. The protection, preservation, enhancement, and remediation of the Meadowlands - an area ten times the size of New York City's Central Park - will provide unparalleled recreation and educational opportunities for millions of current and future New Jersey and tri-state residents. Located in the heart of one of the most densely-crowded areas of the most densely-crowded state in the nation, the Meadowlands Environmental Park will serve as a model for the preservation of open space and the creation of urban park systems in the United States around the world.

As a Member of the House Appropriations Committee, I am truly grateful for the Commission's continued partnership in protecting and preserving these precious 8,400 acres. Over the last two years, the Commission has generously agreed

