

**Develop—
don't destroy.**

BROOKLYN

Press Contact:
Daniel Goldstein
917-701-3056
press@dddb.net
www.developdontdestroy.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 4, 2005

**Bloomberg, Pataki Declare War on
Brooklynites and Taxpayers**
*MoU Will be DOA Once Public Learns
What a Bad Deal Ratner's Plan Is*

BROOKLYN—In a long-awaited move, Governor Pataki and Mayor Bloomberg today put their cards on the table. Their support for Bruce Ratner's backroom, taxpayer-subsidized sweetheart deal (for an arena and 17 high-rises in Brooklyn) has now been made official with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Empire State Development Corporation and Forest City Ratner.

"This MoU, in effect, says 'Screw you' to the people of Brooklyn and the taxpayers," said Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn (DDDB) Spokesperson Daniel Goldstein. "They're trying to force a bad plan down our throats without any real public input or accountability. Obviously, Bloomberg and Pataki care more about lining Bruce Ratner's pockets than they do about protecting the public's interest."

"The good news is that now we at least have some minimal information about the project, which sadly, had been hidden from public view until today. Now we can finally have a real public debate. And we're confident that, once this plan gets as much scrutiny as the West Side Stadium boondoggle, the public will understand why this kind of development is wrong for Brooklyn and wrong for New York taxpayers—and this MoU will become DOA."

Goldstein added that, now that Pataki and Bloomberg have chosen sides, it's time for other City and State leaders—especially those who are campaigning to represent the people of New York City—to show whether they stand for wasteful sweetheart deals, or for the people of Brooklyn and the taxpayers of New York. "Next week, we'll be putting that question directly to the Democratic Mayoral candidates. We believe voters deserve to know what their position is on this incredibly important issue, which could involve hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars."

The MoU calls for New York City and State to each put \$100 million into Ratner's project. But Goldstein said that those numbers don't add up. "Every objective evaluation to date indicates that the public subsidy will have to be much greater than that. And the only independent analysis of Ratner's plan showed that the public will be footing up at \$1 billion of the bill."

- more -

Goldstein noted that another major area the MoU does not resolve is the MTA's sale of the rights to Atlantic Yards. "Just like they did for the West Side Railyards, the MTA needs to put out a request for competitive bids so that they get the best return for straphangers on a valuable piece of public property."

"Bottom line," Goldstein said, "This document is filled with more of the same empty promises backed by wishful thinking. It guarantees nothing—except that the Mayor and Governor are going to have a hell of a fight on their hands."

DEVELOP DON'T DESTROY BROOKLYN leads a broad-based community coalition fighting for development that will unite our communities instead of dividing and destroying them.