

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 9, 2005

Develop Don't Destroy Calls on Democratic Mayoral Candidates To Oppose Bruce Ratner's Taxpayer-Subsidized Sweetheart Deal *Open Letter Demands that Candidates Treat Brooklyn Like the West Side*

BROOKLYN—Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn (DDDB) today called on Democratic Mayoral candidates Freddy Ferrer, C. Virginia Fields, Gifford Miller, and Anthony Weiner to oppose Bruce Ratner's development proposal in Prospect Heights, Brooklyn.

DDDB's open letter to the four candidates begins:

We in Brooklyn have read, watched and listened intently as you have clearly stated your opposition to Mayor Bloomberg's deeply flawed West Side Stadium plan. We admire and appreciate the principled stand you have taken on behalf of the West Side community and taxpayers around the state to stop this wasteful, anti-democratic project from being forced down our throats.

Today we are calling on you and the other Democratic candidates for Mayor to take the same strong, public stand against a very similar boondoggle that Mr. Bloomberg, along with Governor Pataki, are trying to ram through without any real public input or accountability – Forest City Ratner's (FCR) Nets Arena and 17 High-rise Complex proposal in Prospect Heights.

“With last week's Memorandum of Understanding, our Mayor showed that he stands on the side of wealthy developers over the people of Brooklyn and the taxpayers of New York City,” said DDDB spokesperson Daniel Goldstein. “Well, Bloomberg may be content to rip off City taxpayers for Mr. Ratner's profit, but we don't believe that his opponents are. That's why we're asking the candidates, ‘Do you stand with the people of Brooklyn and their right to self-determination, or do you stand on the side of corporate interests at the expense of the voters and taxpayers of this City?’ Voters in Brooklyn are paying attention and there will be electoral consequences for candidates who ignore or dismiss the concerns of thousands of Brooklynites on this critical issue.”

Goldstein added, “In the coming weeks we intend to meet with each candidate to discuss this issue further and educate them on why the Ratner project is a raw deal, just like the Jets deal, and sets dangerous precedents for development in our city.”

For a copy of the letter sent to Mr. Ferrer, Borough President Fields, Speaker Miller, and Congressman Weiner, go to: <http://www.dddb.net/candidates>

To see Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn's press release about last Friday's Memorandum of Understanding between the Empire State Development Corporation and Forest City Ratner, go to: <http://dddb.net/press/0404MoUPR.pdf>

***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.***