

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 5, 2004

**14 Organizations Join DDDDB's Call for Passage of Albany Legislation  
Bill Would Require City Review of Ratner's Nets Arena Plan  
*Diverse Communities United in Demanding  
ULURP Review for 17 High-Rise Megadevelopment***

BROOKLYN— Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn and 14 other community groups hand-delivered a letter to Albany lawmakers this week demanding the passage of legislation that would require Bruce Ratner's Nets arena megadevelopment to go through the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP).

The 14 organizations and individuals who co-signed the letter represent a broad cross-section of Brooklyn and NYC neighborhoods and constituencies. They include:

- NYPIRG/Straphangers Campaign
- Fifth Avenue Committee
- Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development
- Pratt Area Community Council
- Fort Greene Association
- Atlantic Avenue Betterment Association
- Dr. Tom Angotti (Professor of Urban Affairs & Planning Hunter College)
- The Brooklyn Bear's, Community Gardens Inc.
- Friends and Residents of Greater Gowanus

“Bruce Ratner and his Shadow Syndicate of more than 50 investors are making every effort to sidestep the normal channels of democracy and public oversight for major developments,” said DDDDB Spokesperson Daniel Goldstein. “This letter makes clear that the people of Brooklyn will not tolerate their flagrant foul against the public interest. We won't accept anything less than a fair, open and accountable process for reviewing this taxpayer-subsidized proposal – and that means ULURP.”

Bruce Ratner and his political supporters (including Governor Pataki, Mayor Bloomberg, Deputy Mayor Doctoroff, and Borough President Markowitz) have repeatedly said that the proposed Nets Arena Complex will bypass ULURP and be administered by the Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC). With ESDC as the lead agency, New York's City Council and communities would lose the rights to oversee, vote on, or give input into a project that is expected to receive up to \$1 billion in taxpayer funding.

“ESDC is part of what State Comptroller Alan Hevesi calls ‘New York’s Secret Government,’ and Ratner’s plan is being funded by a Shadow Syndicate of mystery investors,” Goldstein said. “If a Secret Government Agency gets to manage his proposal, the circle of backroom wheeling and dealing will be complete, and the needs and voices of our communities will have been totally sacrificed to political favoritism.”

Instead, DDDDB and its 14 co-signers called on the Assembly and Senate to intervene and legally mandate the use of the ULURP process for this project. Their letter (see link below) urged passage of Assemblyman Richard Gottfried’s bill “to amend the New York State Urban Development Corporation (ESDC) Act, in relation to compliance with certain provisions of the New York City Charter.” The bill would make the ESDC’s power to condemn and acquire land in New York City subject to ULURP.

The 57th Assembly district, site of Mr. Ratner's proposed mammoth development, is currently without Assembly representation in Albany following the resignation of Assemblyman Roger Green. Since Green’s seat will not be filled until January, DDDDB and the letter's 14 co-signers have taken this critical matter into their own hands -- representing themselves in Albany, and calling on all other Assembly members to help Brooklyn obtain the appropriate City review of Mr. Ratner's project.

Other signers of the letter include: Prospect Heights Action Coalition, Fans For Fair Play, Brooklyn Vision Foundation, Inc., Boerum Hill For Organic Development and Fort Greeners For Organic Development.

*For full text of the DDDDB letter, see:*  
***<http://www.dddb.net/letters/ULURP.pdf>***

*For the full text of Assembly bill #A8235, see:*  
***<http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?bn=A2835>***

*For the City Charter, which established the ULURP procedure, see:*  
***<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/luproc/ulpro.html>***

*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.*

# Develop— don't destroy.

BROOKLYN

Daniel Goldstein, Spokesperson  
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August 2, 2004

## CO SIGNERS

**NYPIRG/Straphangers Campaign**  
Gene Russianoff, Senior Attorney

**Fifth Avenue Committee**  
Michelle de la Uz, Executive Director

**Pratt Institute Center for Community  
and Environmental Development**  
Brad Lander, Director

**Pratt Area Community Council**  
Deborah Howard, Executive Director

**Fort Greene Association**  
Ruth Goldstein, President

**Atlantic Avenue Betterment  
Association**  
Sandy Balboza, President

**Dr. Tom Angotti**  
Professor of Urban Affairs & Planning  
Hunter College

**The Brooklyn Bear's  
Community Gardens Inc.**  
Jon Crow, Coordinator

**Prospect Heights Action Coalition**  
Patti Hagan, Chair

**Friends and Residents of Greater  
Gowanus**  
Earnest Migliaccio, Board Member

**Fans For Fair Play**  
Scott Turner, Founder

**Brooklyn Vision**  
Philip Truscott, Chair

**Boerum Hill For Organic Development**  
Irene Van Slyke, President

**Fort Greeners For Organic  
Development**  
Lucy Koteen, Chair

Assemblyman Richard N. Gottfried  
LOB 822  
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Assemblyman Gottfried:

The citizens of Brooklyn and New York City are under threat of a massive development proposal for Prospect Heights, Brooklyn bypassing all city review and oversight, with an end-run around ULURP (Uniform Land Use Review Procedure). Without ULURP our communities have no input into this project and our city legislators will have no oversight or opportunity to vote on the proposal.

Mr. Ratner's proposed Atlantic Yards Development of 17 high rises and a basketball arena would cover 11 acres of MTA rail yards and, through an abusive use of eminent domain condemnation, 13 acres of private property. The project also proposes to demap three blocks of city streets. The project has its largest impact on Brooklyn and the city, and it would change Brooklyn forever. Yet the developer and his political allies are doing all they can to push their project past the city and onward to the state, removing oversight, transparency and community input.

We and our elected officials cannot let this usurpation of crucial city powers occur.

**Therefore we are calling on the Assembly to take every step possible to keep this project within ULURP, doing so loudly and publicly.** We call on you and the Assembly to reinvigorate and pass your Bill #A2835. As you know, Bill #A8235 is summarized this way:

**This legislation would make the State's Urban Development Corporation (UDC, now the ESDC) powers to condemn and acquire land in New York City subject to NYC's uniform land use review procedure (ULURP) as specified in the existing City Charter.) (A2835 is here: <http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?bn=A2835>)**

**If ULURP is appropriate and deserved for the West Side Stadium (Speaker Silver has proposed a bill to require ULURP for the Stadium), then surely it is appropriate and deserved for this 24-acre proposal in Brooklyn. Many thousands in Brooklyn and beyond will support your call for ULURP.**

We are also asking the Senate leadership to propose companion legislation to A2835, and we are very willing to work with any Senator who wants to propose this legislation.

All elected officials representing the proposed site and five surrounding neighborhoods are strongly united in their opposition to the project and fully support the use of ULURP. Those officials are: Congressman Major Owens, State Senator Velmanette Montgomery, Assembly District Leader Francis Byrd, and City Councilwoman Letitia James. So, as we in the 57<sup>th</sup> Assembly District are without representation in the Assembly until January, we need the help of all Assembly members to provide us with our right to a voice in our legislature. We need your help during this extremely crucial moment for our district's and communities' future.

Sincerely,

Daniel Goldstein  
Develop Don't Destroy (Brooklyn)  
Spokesperson, Steering Committee Member

Cc: All Assembly Members

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leads a broad-based community coalition  
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# Develop— don't destroy.

BROOKLYN

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July 30, 2004

## CO SIGNERS

**NYPIRG/Straphangers Campaign**  
Gene Russianoff, Senior Attorney

**Fifth Avenue Committee**  
Michelle de la Uz, Executive Director

**Pratt Institute Center for Community  
and Environmental Development**  
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Philip Truscott, Chair

**Boerum Hill For Organic Development**  
Irene Van Slyke, President

**Fort Greeners For Organic  
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Lucy Koteen, Chair

State Senator Jim Alesi  
Albany, New York

Dear Senator Wright:

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We and our elected officials cannot let this usurpation of crucial city powers occur.

**Therefore we are calling on the Senate to take every step possible to keep this project within ULURP, doing so loudly and publicly.** We call on you and the Senate leadership to propose companion legislation to Assemblyman Gottfried's Bill #A2835. Bill #A8235 is summarized this way:

**This legislation would make the State's Urban Development Corporation (UDC, now the ESDC) powers to condemn and acquire land in New York City subject to NYC's uniform land use review procedure (ULURP) as specified in the existing City Charter.) (A2835 is here: <http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?bn=A2835>)**

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We are very willing to work with any Senator who wants to propose this legislation, particularly Commerce, Economic Development and Small Business chair, Senator Alesi.

All elected officials representing the proposed site and five surrounding neighborhoods are strongly united in their opposition to the project and fully support the use of ULURP. Those officials are: Congressman Major Owens, State Senator Velmanette Montgomery, Assembly District Leader Francis Byrd, and City Councilwoman Letitia James. So, as we in the 57<sup>th</sup> Assembly District are without representation in the Assembly until January, we need the help of all Assembly members to provide us with our right to a voice in our legislature. We need your help during this extremely crucial moment for our district's and communities' future.

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