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February 9, 2012

New York City Industrial Development Agency, Attn: Ms. Frances Tufano,
110 William Street, 5th Floor,
New York, New York 10038

To whom it may concern:

Once again, the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality (BCEQ) writes to employ your sense of justice and good government. We know it is hard for you to listen to the public. We know you will say that this will delay the Fresh Direct project – but you know that is not true. This time, your decision is not as urgent (as the now vacant parking lots at the stadium). Please give the public a chance to review this project.

For the last ten years, BCEQ has been working on protecting the Harlem River by identifying stakeholders, their issues and concerns. We have been successful -- the federal government recognized these efforts last year, when both the Bronx and Harlem River Watersheds were nominated as one of eight rivers nationally, to be in the Urban Waters Federal Partnership. We have been working with state and city agencies on this new initiative, but it seems we missed one -- the Industrial Development Agency of New York City.

The overarching vision for the Bronx waterfront of the Harlem River is a contiguous waterfront park. This is a fundamental consensus embraced by several generations of city and state agencies, elected officials, and their constituents. It has been outlined in some 25 plans that been developed, refined, and re-issued -- all with public participation over the same number of years. Moreover, the Bronx River Greenway has been planned, designed and funded for years. The people of the borough of the Bronx want a contiguous greenway along its waterways for boating, running, walking, fishing, and otherwise recreating. To find out that there is a new project, funded by public monies, that does not support the creation of said greenway, it very disturbing.

Many of us remember twenty years ago when this larger parcel of land was in the news – a secret deal trading a long term lease of state land. Turns out parts of it were not developed but left empty (as the Yankee parking lots). If there is anything to learn from this, it is maybe the public has something to say that can help.

There are so many other problems with this proposal, that **we urgently request you postpone the decision making process** until you can satisfy decades of decision making policies and comprehensive waterfront plans concerning the greenway, and other matters of health and safety that this project raises. We need a partner stakeholder to join us and others to make the Bronx a great place in which to live and work.

Sincerely,

Joyce Hogi
BCEQ President