



**Ruben Diaz Jr.**  
**Bronx Borough President**

**John DeSio**  
**Communications Director**

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**Contact: John DeSio 718- 590-3543**

**AUGUST 26, 2009**

## **BOROUGH PRESIDENT DIAZ & RWDSU PRESIDENT APPELBAUM DISCUSS PRINCIPLES OF KINGSBRIDGE ARMORY CBA AND DELAYED ULURP RESPONSE**

On Wednesday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. and Stuart Appelbaum, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, joined together in the shadow of the Kingsbridge Armory to discuss their shared commitment to the goals of the draft community benefits agreement that has been submitted to the Related Companies, the City-selected developer of the retail project.

Last week Borough President Diaz issued a draft community benefits agreement to the developer. That document, which was developed with input from the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance (KARA), Bronx Community Board #7 and local elected officials, outlined a number of guiding principles that the community and Borough President Diaz would like to see included as part of the proposed retail development, known as "The Shops at The Armory."

Under the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), Borough President Diaz was required to issue his recommendations on the Kingsbridge Armory project by Monday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, or be considered non-compliant with ULURP. However, logistical issues prevented the borough president from engaging in major negotiations with the developer on the principles of the draft community benefits agreement, something Borough President Diaz felt was necessary before he could take any public position on the development.

"After months of hard work, my office was able to bring the various stakeholders in this project together to craft a strong draft community benefits agreement that takes the needs of the community, as well as the needs of the developer, into consideration," said Borough President Diaz. "It is more important to me that we hear from the developer regarding their direction on this community benefits agreement before I make my recommendations than that we meet the ULURP deadline. We have worked too hard to see this process rushed."

The Department of City Planning has indicated that, while the Borough President's recommendations will be non-compliant, it will still be reviewed by the City Planning Commission.

The draft community benefits agreement that will be negotiated with the Related Companies includes provisions concerning a living wage policy, first source and local hiring, various

economic development initiatives, labor peace and the ability of employees at the retail development to unionize, community access to space at the Kingsbridge Armory and the development of a community facility as part of the project, the maintenance of local parks, green initiatives, and area traffic improvements.

The draft community benefits agreement also calls for a supermarket or big-box warehouse club to be excluded from the development.

“We appreciate the leadership Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz has shown in bringing all of the community stakeholders together to ensure any development of the Armory is good for the community,” said Stuart Appelbaum, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union and a member of KARA. He repeated KARA’s position that “Economic development that creates jobs that keep people in poverty accomplishes nothing.” Appelbaum added, “We expect and demand that the Kingsbridge Armory be developed in a way that strengthens the community, and not just enriches the developer.”

“We have laid out a strong community benefits agreement, and we want to work with the Related Companies to make this project a reality. I look forward to sitting down with the developer in the coming days to discuss this document and the principles contained within it,” said Borough President Diaz. “Developers who do business in The Bronx must be mindful of the desires of the community, and we hope that Related will take that advice to heart.”