



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Adriano Espaillat

Bronx Lawmakers Protest LG Company Headquarters

ADRIANO ESPAILLAT February 22, 2014



Senator Espaillat stands with Bronx elected officials in opposing LG's planned headquarters along the pristine Palisades, a national natural landmark.

Denis Slattery, New York Daily News

A quartet of Bronx politicians has vowed to boycott electronics giant LG to protest the company's controversial planned headquarters across the Hudson in Englewood Cliffs, N.J. State Sen. Jeff Klein (D-Throgs Neck), Assemblyman Jeff Dinowitz (D-Riverdale), Councilman Andrew Cohen (D-Riverdale) and Rep. Eliot Engel (D-Riverdale) are opposing the 143-foot-tall building, saying it will soar over the the pristine Palisades cliffs and encourage development along the Hudson river.

"It opens the door for future large-scale construction on the palisades and it's simply not necessary," Dinowitz said. "They can easily build a facility of equal capacity by building shorter and wider. Shame on them." The lawmakers decided to shun the company's products after Riverdale residents called for a ban at a recent community board meeting.

The federal government designated the Palisades as a national natural landmark in 1983, approximately 50 years after John D. Rockefeller Jr. purchased 2,500 acres of land atop the bluffs and donated it to the Palisades Park Commission, saying it should remain pristine. An LG spokesman balked at the opposition from across the Hudson, saying the politicians have been misled by activists and that the new site will offer an economic boost to the Tristate area.

“It’s easy for those who don’t understand the project to make those bold claims,” said John Taylor, vice president of communications for LG in the U.S. At this stage, the project can’t be redesigned,” he added, noting that the plans were drawn up more than six years ago and the company made adjustments to reflect public comments in 2011.

Meanwhile at an Upper Manhattan meeting where residents have been campaigning against the project for a couple of years, State Sen. Adriano Espaillat said it’s time for Gov. Cuomo to take a stand on the issue. Six North Jersey mayors wrote to LG last week, calling on the company to lower the building, and the Palisades Interstate Park Commission was planning to weigh a resolution opposing the tower at its scheduled meeting on Monday. “When a company, whether large or small, does something wrong by a community, that community shouldn’t support that company,” Dinowitz added.

Last week, the angry officials announced plans to file an amicus brief, adding their names to a lawsuit challenging a New Jersey Superior Court decision last year that upheld a zoning decision that paved the way for the LG site. The variance allowed the company to build its 8-story building, well above the 35 foot maximum height restriction. The suit was jointly filed by the New Jersey State Federation of Women’s Clubs and the environmental group Scenic Hudson. “I am committed to using every tool at my disposal to stop LG’s plan, including the power of the dollar,” Klein said. “If they want to earn profit, it won’t be from my wallet.”

A billboard erected this month in Harlem encouraged commuters on the West Side Highway to join the battle against the corporation. Company leaders said they are positive the protests will fade like a poor cell signal. “LG is confident in the goodwill and support of millions of U.S. consumers that are loyal to the brand,” Taylor said.