



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

## BRONX ELECTED OFFICIALS WRITE LETTER TO MAYOR REQUESTING MORE INFORMATION ON PLANNED RECONSTRUCTION OF RODMAN'S NECK

JEFFREY D. KLEIN February 2, 2017

| ISSUE: **NYPD, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, COMMUNITY**

**Bronx, NY**— Following the city's formal announcement to include \$275 million in their preliminary budget for the reconstruction of the NYPD Rodman's Neck training facility, Bronx elected officials wrote a letter to Mayor Bill de Blasio requesting the city prioritize and provide more information on the proposed new gun ranges, which in their current state have been the source of negative environmental impacts that have plagued the surrounding community for decades.

**Senator Jeff Klein, Assemblyman Michael Benedetto and Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj** asked that the city construct the six new outdoor gun ranges equipped with sound baffles early on in the reconstruction phase, release any findings to the public that back the city's claim that these sound mitigation structures will reduce noise to an ambient level and provide additional information regarding future controlled bomb detonations at the site.

While the lawmakers are thrilled that the city dedicated funds for the much anticipated improvements — especially the \$73 million dollars designated for the new gun ranges — their constituents in coastal communities surrounding Rodman's Neck deserve more answers.

“I applaud the city for dedicating \$275 million for the much needed reconstruction of Rodman’s Neck NYPD training facility. That investment, along with a commitment to have the project completed within 5-7 years, is an ambitious goal that previous administrations have been unable to fulfill. However, the coastal communities surrounding this facility have endured years upon years of noise and environmental pollution. I believe it’s only fair that these long-suffering residents receive some data to back the promised noise reduction, and the assurance that these new gun ranges will be prioritized early on in the construction process,” **said Senator Klein.**

“The city's allocation of \$275 million to reconstruct the Rodman’s Neck NYPD training facility is a step in the right direction towards enhancing the quality of life for City Island residents. For years they have voiced concerns over the noise and environmental pollution stemming from the outdated facility. While this investment is a welcomed one, I look forward to reviewing the data collected by the administration that will assure me and my colleagues that these concerns will be minimized,” **said Assemblyman Gjonaj.**

“The \$275 million appropriation is a giant step in what needs to be done in Rodman’s Neck, and I applaud our Mayor for finally listening to the pleas of the City Island community. However, there is still a lot more to do, such as cleaning up the contamination of our soil and water way and finding another home for the bomb detonation unit,” **said Assemblyman Benedetto.**

In addition to noise concerns, the current gun ranges at Rodman’s Neck have generated heavy metal contamination from the high volume of spent shells. Besides the \$73 million for the new gun ranges, the city plans to allocate \$51 million dollars for a new tactical village, which will offer officers active shooter exercises. The city has also set aside \$54 million dollars for a facility that provides gun services and ammunition storage. Lastly, \$97 million dollars has been appropriated for the installation of utilities at the site, such as gas and

water.

See the letter below:

January 31, 2017

Mayor Bill de Blasio

City Hall

New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio,

We are writing in response to the announcement of a \$275 million investment into the New York City Police Department Training Facility housed at Rodman's Neck. We want to thank you for dedicating funds to address this community's concerns regarding Rodman's Neck and for honoring the promise you made to this community at the town hall held last August. The \$275 million and a commitment to have the project completed within 5-7 years is an ambitious goal that previous administrations have been unable to fulfill. However, this urgency is precisely what the NYPD's highest capital improvement request should be receiving.

Speaking with our constituents, we know this community values the service of every city official and police officer that utilizes this facility. We will continue to welcome these dedicated public servants into our community for their biannual training, and hope that they return often to see everything it has to offer.

As you are also aware, we have also been vocal about the negative environmental impacts the range presents to coastal neighborhoods and communities. The environmental concerns that have been brought to our attention involve heavy metal contamination and the noise pollution generated by the range.

Our understanding, based on the January 31 press conference held at Rodman's Neck, is that the infrastructure improvements will be a priority early in the project. Our hope is that your administration can further sympathize with the concerns of our constituents. We encourage that the \$73 million that has been designated to address the outdated outdoor shooting ranges be prioritized, as they are the source of much of the negative effects listed above. We ask that every effort be made to address those concerns in earliest construction phase the project specifics will allow for.

Additionally, we would be interested to the degree in which the these renovations will mitigate the noise pollution for residents in addition to the noted environmental concerns. The sound baffling structures discussed at the press conference were said to have a substantial effect, decreasing noise pollution to ambient levels. The infrastructure improvements to the facility also address several environmental concerns that the community has long been reported by residents. Respectfully, we ask that any data your administration gathered in the planning stages, prior to this announcement, that describes the degree to which noise pollution will be reduced and specifics regarding the environmental impact of these renovations be released to the public. This will provide further assurances that these changes will provide the lasting effects that our constituents have been waiting on for many years and will provide additional transparency that previous proposals have not allowed for.

While it is important that the community's needs are addressed promptly, it is also vital that the police officers are given an adequate space to perform their fire arms training. Residents

have expressed an interest in having a liaison from the New York City Police Department provide periodic updates regarding this project for the community and also provide these updates monthly at the 45th Precinct Community Council Meetings.

Lastly, we request additional information regarding the controlled detonations being conducted at this facility and hope that some of these improvements will also allow for a more refined approach to these detonations than is currently being utilized. Increasing community notification regarding these controlled demolitions is an improvement, however and we hope that the process will continue to be refined.

Thank you once again for this important step towards realizing the vision of Rodman's Neck that has been sought after by the surrounding communities for many decades. We hope that these improvements will result in a training facility worthy of this great city and the brave public servants who protect us.

Sincerely,

Senator Jeffrey D. Klein

Assemblyman Michael Benedetto

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj