



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## Senator Lanza Welcomes Ground Breaking on New Conference House Park Pavilion

ANDREW J. LANZA April 27, 2018

| ISSUE: **PARKS AND RECREATION; ENVIRONMENT**



*“I am pleased the shovel finally hits the ground on the construction of the Conference House Park Pavilion. I am certain Staten Islander’s will enjoy this water front park with this enhancement and share the Conference House’s historical significance and rich history with family and friends for years to come.” Senator Lanza*

NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP, yesterday joined New York State Assembly Member Ron Castorina, New York City Council Member Joseph Borelli and Staten Island Deputy Borough President Ed Burke to break ground on the reconstruction of the

Conference House Pavilion. Located in the historic Conference House Park, the storm-battered pavilion will be renovated into a new 3,000 square foot, water and wind-resistant structure. This project is funded by a \$4.9 million allocation; with \$3.9 million from former Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Mayor Bill de Blasio, \$850,000 from former New York City Council Member Vincent Ignizio and Council Member Borelli and \$150,000 from former Staten Island Borough President James P. Molinaro and Staten Island Borough President Oddo.

“Conference House Park has been home to a waterfront pavilion since 1935,” said Commissioner Silver. “In keeping with that tradition, we are excited to restore this structure for public use and enjoyment. Park visitors will once again have a place to congregate and take in the sweeping views of the Raritan Bay and New Jersey shoreline.”

“This pavilion renovation means so much for Conference House Park,” said Borough President Oddo. “Unfortunately, this project continues to be a source of great frustration for many Staten Islanders, so it is great news to see that the groundbreaking finally took place yesterday. I look forward to the day Staten Islanders will have another way to enjoy their waterfront and take advantage of all Conference House Park has to offer.”

“I am pleased the shovel finally hits the ground on the construction of the Conference House Park Pavilion,” said New York State Senator Andrew Lanza. “I am certain Staten Islander’s will enjoy this water front park with this enhancement and share the Conference House’s historical significance and rich history with family and friends for years to come.”

“For the past 7 years, residents from across the borough have not had the ability to enjoy the views of the Raritan Bay from a pavilion here at Conference House Park. I am eagerly waiting for the completion of this project as we stand here at its groundbreaking. It will once

again be a great place for Staten Islanders to bring their families for years to come. I want to thank Borough President Oddo, Council Minority Leader Steve Matteo, Councilman Joe Borelli, and the Mayor's Office for the allocation of funds necessary to bring this project to completion," said Assembly Member Ron Castorina.

"Conference House Park is one of the rare gems in the New York City Parks system. We have nearly 1,000 years of history on one property, said Council Member Borelli. "The restoration of the Russell pavilion will return this park to its former tranquil glory, and once again, Staten Islanders will be able to look out over Raritan Bay and imagine John Adams and Benjamin Franklin rowing ashore at that spot in 1776. I am glad Commissioner Silver has made this project a priority since he came on board."

The pavilion was last remodeled in 2002, and has since deteriorated due to damage from several storms. Following infrastructural devastation caused by Hurricane Irene in 2011, it was closed to the public. The pavilion's revamp will also feature landscape enhancements and green infrastructure to better manage storm water runoff. Additionally, the project will be fully ADA accessible, and will include the creation of a pedestrian path leading to the pavilion from Hylan Boulevard.

The project is due to be completed September 2019.

The original pavilion was built in 1935 to honor Almer G. Russell, a community resident killed in battle during World War I. It was located on the shoreline, on the banks of the Raritan Bay at the end of Hylan Boulevard, within view of the historic Conference House. The Conference House, a grand stone manor house built in 1680, is named for the unsuccessful Revolutionary War peace conference that was held here on September 11, 1776 between the Americans and the English. Despite their negotiations to end the fighting, no agreement was reached and the Revolutionary War continued for another seven years.