



Sustainable Playland MORE PARK. MORE PLAY.

March 10, 2014

Dear Mayor Sack and Council Members:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Sustainable Playland Inc. (SPI), I want to thank you for the written input we received from the two standing committees and for conducting the Public Forum on February 25. We believe we addressed many of the questions and remain committed to working with Rye and the greater community on issues and concerns as we begin the review process laid out by the County Board of Legislators, which has responsibility for okaying the improvements to Playland that are planned for the first year and in the future.

SPI was formed in 2010 in response to the County's Request for Proposals (RFP) to "Re-invent Playland" in part because of the concern that inappropriate uses or development could take place. The plan received wide support from Rye residents and the City Council. During its RFP review and market analysis, SPI identified indoor and outdoor sports fields and recreation as a needed and desirable use and they were part of the original proposal.

The sports component is important because it brings year-round use and patrons to the Park. Having this year-round activity attracts new dining opportunities, enhances attendance for the Westchester Children's Museum and, along with the Ice Casino that will re-open this spring, creates a package of attractions that are neither seasonal nor weather-dependent and therefore make Playland far more economically sustainable. Of course, all of these attractions combine with the Amusement Zone which remains the centerpiece of the Park and its largest revenue generator.

The location for the field house was selected by SPI's architect to lessen to the greatest extent possible the impact on the adjacent residential neighborhood. The current building is in the same area shown in the original RFP while the overall Field Zone footprint is less than half the size, from 10.16 acres to 4.86 acres. At the same time, the field house proposed in the Playland Improvement Plan (PIP) is larger than the one shown in the original RFP submission, and that has been a concern of the neighbors. SPI listened and respects those concerns. As a result, working with Playland Sports, SPI has submitted to the County an amendment which

revises the PIP reducing the size of the building by 13 percent, moving it further away from the residential street and reducing the outdoor field area. It also increases the amount of parking available in the main parking lot.

The new field house size is the minimum necessary for the facility to be economically feasible. The building is now 82,500 versus 95,000 square feet, just six percent larger than in the RFP. Concurrently, the number of parking spaces has increased by 100. There are now 615 more parking spaces retained than in the RFP plan. The amendment reflecting the revisions is attached.

We have also heard concerns that SPI's current PIP is not in line with the original vision. SPI recognized that in bringing the Park into the 21st century it was crucially important to at the same time respect the Park's unique historic elements and sensitive location on Long Island Sound. We are deeply committed to these principals and, in fact, SPI is contractually obligated to historic preservation under its Asset Management Agreement with the County. It should be noted that SPI's plan and vision were and are consistent with Westchester County's 2006 Playland Master Plan.

The PIP now before the legislators pertains only to the first year. Implementation of the full plan will take several years but this does not diminish our focus on historical preservation, restoration of the landscape, adding more green space, creating a Great Lawn and providing greater public access to the Long Island Sound.

We have also responded to input from the public and members of the County Board of Legislators with regard to the Amusement Zone component of our plan. Our RFP called for reducing the amusement area by about 30 percent to allow creation of a Great Lawn fronting on Long Island Sound. During the review process, however, significant concerns were raised about the size of the reduction and as a result we dropped the plan to reduce the Amusement area and as a result will have a somewhat smaller Great Lawn. SPI believes that the revised plan will still produce an exceptional waterfront experience and park area with more green space and increased access to the Sound.

Additionally, during the review process concerns were expressed that we needed a more experienced amusement park operator. We responded by bringing on Central Amusements International, the North American arm of the Zamperla company of Italy, a global manufacturer

and operator of amusement parks and rides. Central Amusements had been a finalist in the county's RFP process.

To date SPI and the various operators have spent well over \$2 million in professional fees and invested hundreds of hours of volunteer and principal hours to bring this plan to fruition. We continue to believe our vision is highly appropriate to ensure that this unique landmark park is vibrant and viable for the foreseeable future.

From our beginning in Rye some three and a half years ago, SPI has viewed this effort as a true *public-private partnership* involving the County government, especially the Parks Department during implementation, the City of Rye and the historic preservation communities on the local, state and national levels. We have been and remain committed to the creation of a Playland that is sustainable economically, environmentally and historically, one that will revitalize, restore and protect this unique resource and one that will serve the families of Rye, Westchester and beyond.

We appreciate the interest, support and input few have received from the City and its citizens and we look forward to completing our review with the Board of Legislators so that we can begin the much-needed and long talked about restoration of Playland Park.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kim Morque". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Kim Morque
President