



REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION, INC.

... a research and planning agency supported by voluntary membership to promote the coordinated development of the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Metropolitan Region.

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The development of Rockaway Point as a Jones Beach within city limits would be less costly than comparable facilities in the distant parts of Long Island or New Jersey shores it was asserted today (Thursday) by C. McKim Norton, executive vice president, of the Regional Plan Association.

Speaking at a capital budget hearing of the City Planning Commission Mr. Norton urged that capital funds be earmarked now for the purchase of lands about to be developed on Rockaway Point for a large scale housing project.

Mr. Norton stated that "the high cost and extreme difficulty of acquiring comparable access for New York City dwellers to similiar ocean-front recreation areas on Long Island or in New Jersey make the development of Rockaway Point as a public park a bargain for all tax payers in the Region."

"Not only would exorbitant costs be involved in creating such a highway network from the City to the beaches, but the fact is that 42% of the people in the City do not have cars and need a beach served by public transportation," he pointed out.

Mr. Norton pointed out that City, State and Federal government leaders all are in agreement as to the desirability of the development of Rockaway Point as a public park. He also pointed out that ten leading

city-wide civic organizations and six of New York City's seven daily newspapers have endorsed the idea. He said that "quick action is called for in view of this overwhelming support for the park. It would be unfair to both the builder and the 500 year round families and the 2000 summer cottage owners on the other major portion of Rockaway Point to prolong the uncertainty of their future."

Pointing out that the tip of Rockaway Peninsula offers New York City its last chance to provide oceanfront recreation facilities right in the City, Mr. Norton said that "in a very real sense Breezy Point Beach is priceless."

Referring to a \$1 million study on the Region's future and its recreation needs by the Regional Plan Association recently completed, Mr. Norton stated that, "first priority must be given now to preserving the Region's mountains and seashore, especially potential park land most likely to be gobbled up by developers." He cited Breezy Point as the most urgent situation of this kind.

Summing up the case for action Mr. Norton pointed out that available, uncommitted state and federal funds would go a long way if not all the way towards making the first step possible. He added that the whole project would not be completed overnight. "Those with holdings in the area could be given both fair compensation and reasonable time before the entire Point would be transferred to public use," he concluded.

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