



Regional Plan Association

... 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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NEWS RELEASE

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Regional Plan Association today urged that the proposed Gateway National Recreation Area include the Breezy Point Cooperative, Floyd Bennett Field and Great Kills on Staten Island. No bill now being considered by Congress includes all three, but each is included in some bill under consideration.

The Association position is explained in the attached issue of The Region's Agenda.

All the bills to establish a Gateway National Recreation Area would include Sandy Hook in New Jersey and, in Queens, Jamaica Bay, Riis Park, Fort Tilden and the portion of Breezy Point owned by New York City. A map showing all the proposed areas is attached.

Regional Plan Association is a nonprofit civic organization which has been working since the 1920's for a more efficient and satisfying tri-state urban region surrounding the Port of New York and for wider opportunities for all its residents.

risen tremendously. This move was forestalled by action of the Board of Estimate in December 1966 when it mapped the land for a park.

The cooperative also placed private guards at its entrance, preventing public access to the public portion of the beach though the road was partly on public land. Access to the public beach along the oceanfront also has been blocked by the cooperative.

GREAT KILLS

Great Kills' mild surf is suitable for children. Though in New York, it is close to the inner New Jersey cities--Newark, Jersey City, Elizabeth, Perth Amboy--and to Brooklyn and Staten Island. It is the part of Gateway least costly to serve with public transportation.

FLOYD BENNETT FIELD

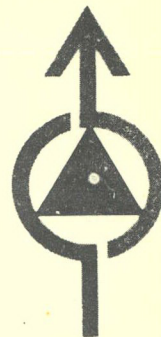
Floyd Bennett airport has been declared surplus by the Defense Department. New York State proposed housing on the site. New York City proposed a general aviation (non-airline) airport. Neither is especially suitable.

Under the flight path of Kennedy Airport, it is too noisy for housing. It would be expensive to provide public transportation for trips to work. There is no infrastructure--sewers, water, roads--to make residential development particularly economical. As to airport use, during inclement weather when Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) are in

A periodic report on progress and problems in implementing the Second Regional Plan, identifying obstacles that readers might help to overcome.

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THE REGIONS AGENDA



effect, flights to Floyd Bennett can interfere with flights to Kennedy.

As part of Gateway, Floyd Bennett could provide almost all the parking space for Breezy Point, with buses carrying people from there across the Marine Parkway Bridge. Swimming, picnicking, fishing and promenading could be offered around the perimeter. Over the years, the rest could be developed for camping and playing fields.

STATUS OF LEGISLATION

The House Interior Committee's Subcommittee on Parks (Roy A. Taylor, Chairman) held hearings in the Region on June 26.

The Senate Interior's Subcommittee on Parks (Alan Bible, Chairman) held hearings in May in Washington.

The bill introduced by the New York and New Jersey Senators includes Great Kills and the Breezy Point cooperative tract but not Floyd Bennett. The Administration bill excludes Great Kills and the Breezy Point cooperative tract but includes Floyd Bennett. Regional Plan favors including all three.

Interested individuals and organizations should write to their Senators and Congressmen and to both the House and Senate Committees on Interior and Insular Affairs. Additional information may be secured from the Gateway Citizens Committee, 24 West 40th Street, New York, N. Y. 10018, Room 901, telephone 212-695-5470.

THE REGION'S AGENDA

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JUNE, 1971

GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA GAINING GENERAL APPROVAL, BUT BREEZY POINT COTTAGES, GREAT KILLS, FLOYD BENNETT STILL AT ISSUE

With the President's approval, the proposed Gateway National Recreation Area seems close to accomplishment. However, significant differences remain among the bills being considered: inclusion or exclusion of (1) 322 acres in the center of Breezy Point, cooperatively held by some 2,800 cottage owners, (2) Great Kills on Staten Island and (3) Floyd Bennett Field in Brooklyn.

All are needed if this recreation area is to receive the projected 50 million annual visits without compromising the high national recreation area standards.

BREEZY POINT COOPERATIVE

The initial bills introduced by all four senators from New York and New Jersey and the several bills introduced by all but one congressman from the area call for acquiring all of Breezy Point, including that owned by the cottage cooperative. These bills provide for leasing the cooperative's tract back to them for 25 years. Congressman Murphy of Staten Island and now Senator Allott for the President have introduced bills which leave the cooperative's land out of the park altogether.

The cooperative's holding divides Breezy Point almost in two. It will be needed as transportation capacity increases to allow the full park potential of about 310,000 visitors a day. Bath houses, restaurants, pools and playing fields can go there, so they do not encroach on the oceanfront or on the natural areas upland which help to distinguish Breezy Point from other city beaches.

One small segment of the cooperative's land might be needed earlier so that people can move easily in front of the cooperative from the eastern segment, where most people will arrive at the beach, to the western tip.

It seems fairer to take the land now rather than waiting until it is needed so that any

addition or loss in value occasioned by public development of the park and transportation to it would accrue to or be borne by the public, not the cooperative, and so the cooperative does not sell its land for hotels, commercial activities or apartments before it has been acquired for the Recreation Area.

Also, public ownership of all the land is needed to prevent the cooperative from blocking full use of the park. The cooperative strongly opposed New York City's acquisition of the park in 1963, apparently preferring to share the peninsula with a high-rise city of 60,000 high-income people than to leave it natural and allow the general public to use it. Co-op representatives testifying before the Senate on May 12th asked that some of the land included in Gateway by all bills under consideration be left out so the cooperative could build more houses. They also asked that use of the beach to their west (the tip) be discouraged by limiting facilities there.

In the early 1960's after New York City acquired the land around the cooperative but did not have funds to develop it, local Queens and Brooklyn legislators opposed a bill allowing the State to own parks in New York City. Again, the local residents apparently hoped to halt Breezy Point's use by the public. The act passed but with a prohibition against the State developing Breezy Point. One result is that City children have not been bused to Breezy Point with State funds; they are bused at much greater cost some 50 miles further to Bear Mountain.

The cooperative, unknown to City officials, tried to secure from the State the new beach that gradually accretes in front of its holding. The accreted land is owned by the State as it is created. Had the cooperative secured this accreted land, the price of the land in front of the cooperative that the City had indicated it would take to connect its two holdings would have