

September 9, 2015

Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver  
New York City Department of Parks & Recreation  
830 Fifth Ave  
New York, NY, 10065

Dear Commissioner Silver:

For nearly one full year, the fate of the former site of the ice skating rink in Van Cortlandt Park, located at Broadway and West 242<sup>nd</sup> Street, has remained in limbo. While a new ice skating rink may not be feasible for the site, given the unexpected closure of the previous rink, our community cannot abide the desolate, empty lot that has been left in the wake of this closure.

In the recently released request for proposals (RFP) for a new ice skating rink in Manhattan's Highbridge Park, the Parks Department urges potential concessionaires to consider the inclusion of a Holiday Market, such as the one that currently occupies Bryant Park, as part of the rink's development. In particular, the RFP notes that the Parks Department would expect a "high quality market, focusing on hand crafted items, art, unique gifts, and finely crafted jewelry," as well as food and beverage concessions.

The existing space at Van Cortlandt Park is a perfect location for such a market. The park is a well-known regional attraction and is easily accessible from all points, given its location to public transportation serving the Northwest Bronx and Westchester. The adjacent Broadway corridor already enjoys heavy foot traffic, and a new amenity such as a holiday market would only drive that traffic higher, which in turn would generate greater opportunities to draw customers to local businesses in the Riverdale and Kingsbridge communities.

While the long-term future of this site may be another ice rink, revived tennis courts or some other use, its short-term future is as a vacant lot. This does not have to be the case. We are urging the Parks Department to develop a weekend Holiday Market at this site for the 2015 season.

A one-year market would offer our community chance to experience a real amenity close to home, make use of vacant land and allow us to consider future uses of this site with real experience to make such decisions. Our offices are ready to work with your department to make this vision a reality.

Sincerely,



Ruben Diaz Jr.  
Bronx Borough President



Jeffrey D. Klein  
NYS Senate Coalition Co-Leader



Andrew Cohen  
NYC Council Member



Jeffrey Dinowitz  
NYS Assembly Member