



ST. STEPHEN'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Real Church for Real People

10/30/09

City Council Member Oliver Koppel

Greetings Councilmen Koppel:

I am writing to ask your support of the Community – Benefits Agreement for the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment project.

As you know tension between developers and workers is an old story; one we can see at work right here in the Bronx as I write. The question is always one of profit; who gets it and to what degree?

My position is the Bronx (all of the Bronx) profits when working people are paid *living* wages. It also follows when working people earn more they spend more and businesses grow tangentially. No one wins in a depressed economy as we are currently experiencing, however everyone wins when there is balance between these two ancient rivals.

Why not help lead change from the current paradigm in support of working wages and improved earnings for businesses. Both groups will benefit where there is compromise and inspired leadership. This has always been my best impression of you and your leadership skills.

Please consider supporting this proposal.

Sincerely,

Rev. Nathaniel Dixon, Pastor St. Stephen's United Methodist Church

November 6, 2009

Councilman Oliver Koppell
3636Waldo
Bronx New York 10463

Dear Councilman Koppell:

Let's start with the good news – **congratulations on your re-election!**

And let me add **our appreciation to you for your continuing support of the COVE**. You may not yet know, but in August, Mosholu Montefiore Community Center folks informed us that MMCC could not continue their responsibility for COVE programming. **The Knox Gates Neighborhood Association has reassumed direction of the COVE, and your discretionary support is keeping the doors open for Knox Gates young people, and making possible the terrific opportunities described in the accompanying flyer.**

But let me also say, I was surprised to hear you are no longer backing KARA's demand for **living wage jobs at the Kingsbridge Armory**. In the long struggle against the Croton water treatment plant, you were strong in your support for good jobs for local people, and it was **from you we learned the importance of a Community Benefits Agreement!**

The redevelopment of **the Kingsbridge Armory is a publicly funded project, on public land, and Related Companies got \$60 million in tax breaks, and an incredible deal of paying \$5 million for a \$20 million publicly owned building**. Related Companies is claiming they won't make a profit if they have to pay a living wage?! The question is only how much profit they will make. And the same, for the retailers in the shopping center the Armory will become.

Related has got to want to develop this project. Insisting on a CBA will only bring them to the CBA negotiating table. And if they back off and do not negotiate, there are so many negative impacts of the project on the surrounding community, it's not our loss.

We ask that you only approve development at the Kingsbridge Armory if the development will bring living wage jobs to Bronx residents, and a Community Benefits Agreement is in place.

Lyn Pyle
Knox Gates Neighborhood Association