

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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QUEENS CIVIC CONGRESS MEETING ON CREEDMOOR GIVEAWAY

The Queens Civic Congress opposes the flawed plan to construct schools at Creedmoor Psychiatric Center, announced Corey Bearak, an Executive Vice President of the coalition of more than 90 civic, community, cooperative and tenant associations and chair of its Special Committee on Creedmoor at meeting today (Sunday, March 26, 2000). The special Queens Civic Congress meeting also sponsored by the Bellerose-Hillside, Bellerose Commonwealth, Creedmoor, North Bellerose, Rocky Hill and Queens Colony Civic Associations took place from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at Bellerose Jewish Center, 254-04 Union Turnpike in Floral Park, one block east of Little Neck Parkway.

The Queens Civic Congress opposed the School Construction Authority/Board of Education plan at Community Board 13 and Community School Board 26 hearings in January and last month urged an immediate halt to all plans to develop the site and design the schools. "Any further action on this educationally dysfunctional plan wastes public funds," said Bearak in a letter to SCA President Milo Rivero and elected officials. "Waste no further time, move to redesign now."

At the outset, the Queens Civic Congress faulted the failure to follow a Community-initiated Master Plan to re-use surplus land and buildings at Creedmoor, squeezing three schools on a tiny site, placing an elementary school immediately next to a high school (including the use of shared facilities), the inability of the site to accommodate school and other buses, the need for on-site parking when off-site parking just does not exist, and the lack of facilities to provide students with a complete school experience. Changes to date do not resolve our concerns.

Civic representatives reject the revision plan that fails to commit the entire site to serve as a three-school education campus. It continues to site a high school next to an elementary school. We welcome state legislation to ensure the site gets development consistent with our Community-initiated Master Plan later adopted by the Working Group on Creedmoor convened at Queens Borough Hall. We hold our elected officials accountable for any development at Creedmoor that fails to follow our consensus plan. We urge public officials to indicate their support for the community's position. The Congress urges community members to support our grassroots effort to develop Creedmoor to serve community needs. The Congress provides a sample letter to the Governor, Mayor, Borough President, Board of Education and local officials to help community members share their concerns.

Queens Civic Congress Outlines its position on Creedmoor

"The Queens Civic Congress withdraws its support for the proposal to develop surplus Creedmoor property west of Commonwealth Boulevard). The Queens Civic Congress urges elected officials and the Board of Education to follow the Community-initiated Master Plan to re-use the surplus land and buildings at Creedmoor which plans for three schools, and none more, on the entire site. The site plan appears to count land currently buffering a heavily used

highway.

The proposals to date contain many flaws. It continues to place an elementary school next to a high school. Any state legislation to convey the site from the State to the City must require site plans that emphasize horizontal, not vertical development, the site's accommodation of school and other buses and on-site parking when off-site parking just does not exist, and sufficient facilities, adequately sized, to provide students with a complete school experience. The special traffic consequences and impact unique to this site require on-site parking sufficient to meet all staff and visitor needs when there exist no nearby streets to accommodate parking for personnel. Further, it must provide for New York City Transit and school buses to turn on narrow Commonwealth Boulevard.

The Queens Civic Congress, acting through its Special Committee on Creedmoor, wants the SCA and Board of Education officials to follow the Master Plan developed over two years by the community groups surrounding Creedmoor and incorporated in the Master Plan submitted to the Governor by the Queens Borough President's Working Group on Creedmoor. The Working Group included the Queens Civic Congress, community groups, District 26 board members and officials and local elected officials.

At successive meetings that included Board of Education officials, the Queens Civic Congress made clear the need to use the entire site to provide students a full-range of facilities, including athletic facilities not readily available at other sites being developed as schools elsewhere.

Page 33 of the "Creedmoor Master Plan discusses the "Public Educational Complex."

Any configuration shall make use of the entire 26 acres for public school purposes and schools shall be developed as part of a unified architectural plan. In addition, adequate athletic facilities and open spaces shall be incorporated into these plans.

Moreover, Board of Education officials clearly represented at the September 15, 1999 Creedmoor Working Group meeting, that it planned to proceed as if it purchased the entire site and provided for three schools across the entire campus.

The SCA-Board of Education three-school-squeeze-proposal is unsound and clearly creates environmental impacts not likely to occur if development followed the Creedmoor Master Plan.

The Queens Civic Congress calls upon the SCA and the Board of Education and public officials to keep their original commitment if three schools on the entire site.