

**Comments by Corey Bearak on
“A Year in the Life of 'PlaNYC 2030':
Performance, Promise and Limits”**

In Queens and in much of the real civic movement - I mean the civic movement that involves our nabes and not just some large organizations with big pocket board members, PlaNYC failed us. They talk of zonings. Well, we did not want the zoning they forced on Jamaica with greater density extending along Hillside Avenue into part of eastern Queens. We wait for some two dozen downzoning and many more landmark reviews and designations. The underlying premise of PlaNYC - the increase in our population by 1,000,000 remains a FRAUD and that false assumption touted as a reality – begat City Hall's 2030 development scheme. While that scheme contains some nice initiatives, its premise and goal remains to justify development when we need to preserve and support. They want to build and build at all costs. Queens Civic Congress proposed [CIVIC2030](#) last June and this superior plan ought to be the basic of any further strategic planning in our city.

A Year in the Life of 'PlaNYC 2030': Performance, Promise and Limits

by [Steve Cohen, Executive Director, Columbia University's Earth Institute](#) | April 25, 2008

A little more than a year ago, Mayor Michael Bloomberg launched his pathbreaking "PlaNYC 2030" urban sustainability plan. According to [the city's own progress report on the plan's first year](#):

The implementation of PlaNYC's 127 initiatives requires the effort of more than 20 City agencies; the help of our Sustainability Advisory Board; partners and supporters from all across New York City; and close cooperation with the City Council and other elected officials. In the first year since the release of the plan, we completed rezonings, planted 54,484 trees, moved our taxis and black cars toward fuel efficiency, encouraged bicycling with 60 new lane miles, and engaged New York City in the most significant transportation discussion in a generation.

In a recently released report, The New York League of Conservation Voters Education Fund (NYLCVEF) assessed progress made on PlaNYC over the past year. The report evaluated the administration's response to eight main areas: air and energy, water, sustainable agriculture, transportation, green jobs, green procurement, solid waste and land use.

However, it was critical of the mayor's lack of progress on the revitalization of the city's waterfront, "one of the city's last great underdeveloped resources," as well as its attempts to reform New York's brownfield program and improve regional parks.

The biggest disappointment came from the mayor's handling of solid waste: "Of all the areas outlined in our 2007 Sustainability Agenda, the Bloomberg administration's performance is weakest in the field of solid waste."

The League criticized the mayor for not supporting broad enough recycling measures and for overreliance on congestion pricing revenue to improve mass transit. With congestion pricing now stuck in permanent Albany gridlock, the League suggested a variable-price parking program "to increase the rate for street parking in the Manhattan Central Business District during working hours."

In the end though, there are limits to what can be done at the local level. For the past seven years environmental groups have been avoiding Washington D.C. because nothing like sustainable development is anywhere on the Bush-Cheney priority list.

We need leadership in Washington that encourages sustainability and we need better technology to ensure that the economic growth is not accomplished at the expense of our childrens' well being.

Read the entire blogpost at:

<http://www.observer.com/2008/year-planyc-2030-performance-promise-and-limits>