



TWIN TOWERS ALLIANCE

WHAT THE PEOPLE WANT — WHAT NEW YORK NEEDS — WHAT AMERICA DESERVES

July 17, 2010

[Name]
[Street]
[City, State]

Dear [Name,]

The attached material has been submitted to Attorney General Cuomo's office. We believe that it is a sweeping and powerful indictment of the current regime at Ground Zero. Although primarily directed to Mr. Cuomo as New York's chief law enforcement officer, and perhaps the state's next Governor, copies are being distributed to others in government, business, the arts, and the media to call attention to how a glaring disappointment can still be converted into an historic success.

The World Trade Center can still bring out the best in us and our leaders. There has to be a limit to the damage political cowardice and inertia can inflict upon the people. As long as what is going on at Ground Zero depends on avoiding inquiry, skirting the facts, and ignoring the public they were elected to serve, *officials are effectively cancelling out their own legitimacy.*

The American people are underwriting the World Trade Center and most of us have quite naturally wanted new Twin Towers since the day they were destroyed. Healing our skyline for real would finally bring healing to our nation. The majestic Twin Towers would add context and inspiration to the 9/11 Memorial *as nothing else could.* Many 9/11 Families strongly agree.

The public is entitled to know why a fully developed plan that would accomplish what most people much prefer has been ignored in favor of a plan that is widely unpopular, would cost much more and take much longer to complete. The official version of the facts is easily discredited and no one who thinks of him- or herself as a public servant would hesitate to evaluate what is presented here.

To overlook the long list of broken promises and take officials' word for anything, when there is so much credible evidence to the contrary, is irresponsible. An expedited, *independent*, cost/benefit analysis is required. The public has the right to evaluate the relative merits of the two plans before committing any more of our treasure to a boondoggle that makes Boston's "Big Dig" look puny.

There is good reason to charge that officials are well on their way to permanently blighting the site. If a "world-class" World Trade Center is really the goal, then a transparent analysis must be done now, because the public has no reason to trust officials' motives or instincts. *Of course* the Port Authority can raise steel and pour concrete; it has vast amounts of public money to expend. But does their project make sense? We can't allow them to misrepresent mere activity as real progress.

We believe that the attached material is convincing and requires action. If rebuilding the Towers were not the people's choice, we would never be engaged in this struggle. But wrong is wrong. For the people's officials to deny the public a real forum and then build on the people's land, using the people's money, against the people's will is a crime against us all.

Anyone who tries to paint us as spoilers will have a very hard time trying to make it stick, because the “Twin Towers II” plan speaks for itself. Who are the real spoilers – those who alert the public to the fact that their dollars are being funneled into a demonstrably inferior project? Or those who don’t want the public to find out that the far more appropriate, popular, affordable, buildable, and marketable Twin Towers that would mean so much to the people are still within reach?

Our concerns have nothing to do with architectural fashions. There is a profound confusion of roles at Ground Zero: The Trade Center site is public property, the politicians are our representatives, and Larry Silverstein is our tenant. Mr. Silverstein got the mother of all sub-prime mortgages in 2001, when a personal stake of \$114 million – about 3.5% of the total transaction – put him in control of the Twin Towers. He then paid himself back from the insurance proceeds.

So what gives him, or any elected official, or bureaucrat, the right to dismiss the will of the people who are actually paying for the project? If our government has degenerated to the point where a handful of wealthy politicians and their tools in the media can shape America against the will of the American people, we’ve got problems that are far more lethal to our future than foreign enemies.

It is always the same story. Politicians keep the public in the dark while they do what they want and then present us with the bill when it goes wrong. But there is growing, across-the board disgust with that behavior. We deserve so much better at Ground Zero. Deciding whether or not it is too late to correct course is a matter for the people – not for bureaucrats and politicians.

Can anyone imagine Philippe Petit, whose astonishing walk between the Towers was documented in the Academy Award-winning *Man on Wire*, being inspired by what is pictured below? Neither will anyone else be. The Twin Towers deserve another chance and so do we.

Reclaiming the Towers would encourage the best in our country and recapture our innate optimism. *There is no sense at all in ratifying their destruction, when we can still revive their power to amaze.*

Robert Kennedy said that political courage is rarer than valor on the battlefield. He was also fond of asking: “If not now, when? If not you, who?”

Sincerely,

Richard Hughes and Margaret Donovan for The Twin Towers Alliance

