

Tara L. Martin, Director of Communications
Phone: (914) 995-2016
Email: TaraM@westchesterlegislators.com



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Contact: Tara L. Martin | TaraM@westchesterlegislators.com | 914-995-2016 (office) | 914-380-0931 (cell)

WESTCHESTER COUNTY LAWMAKERS SUPPORT ADMINISTRATION ON PLAYLAND RFP PROCESS

Legislators ready to proceed with Westchester Children's Museum Lease Agreement

(White Plains, NY) – Today, Westchester County Board of Legislators Chairman Ken Jenkins (D-Yonkers) and the Board's Democratic Majority Whip and Legislator Judith Myers, representing the community of Rye, announced their support of plan unveiled by Westchester County Executive Robert Astorino seeking proposals to come up with new ideas and usages for Playland Amusement Park in Rye. "The Board intends to work with the Administration on the request for proposals (RFP) process," said Chairman Jenkins. "We have drafted a resolution that states that County Executive and the Westchester County Board of Legislators, together, agree that it is in the best interest of Westchester County to determine the use and management of Playland Park."

Legislators, also, announced plans to move forward on a lease agreement that would house the Westchester Childrens Museum at Playland. Slated for soft openings in mid 2011, the Museum would occupy the building formerly used as a Bathhouse at the park. That building on Play land's boardwalk is currently undergoing repair an renovation.

"At a time when budget cuts and the erosion of quality after-school youth programs are causing more people to seek out community-based alternative services within Westchester County, the Children's Museum will be a vibrant, interactive, cultural institution for children and families, a dynamic resource for schools, a welcoming environment for special needs children, and a means to build tourism in the county," said Chairman Jenkins.

The former Administration struck a deal to lease the newly-repaired South Bathhouse to the Museum for \$1 a year, if the Museum could raise the money to build the interior and operate it. The Museum has raised \$8 million so far and wants to ultimately raise \$14 million. It has already spent \$1.5 million on building designs. The Museum has already started educational programs with community groups. The lease for the Children's Museum and the RFP is currently being developed for presentation to the Board's Committees on Budget and Appropriation and Public Works, Parks, Labor and Transportation, chaired by Legislator William J. Ryan (D-White Plains).

Legislator Myers, a staunch advocate for the Children's Museum, supports the County Executive's request for proposals for Playland because the time is right to make a change, however she won't support anything that brings more traffic into this residential neighborhood, nor any discussions that do not include Rye residents at the table, or anything that prohibits public access to the Long Island Sound. "The Children's Museum represents a community-wide investment in our children without spending any taxpayers money," said Legislator Myers. "Over 870,000 children under 11 years of age live within a 15-mile driving radius of our future site at Playland Park in Rye. Yet, Westchester has relatively few cultural resources designed specifically for children. The Children's Museum on the boardwalk would be a welcomed addition to the outdoor cafes that don't interfere with boardwalk runners and walkers, to historic 'Kiddyland' for the very young, an Ice Casino for year-round skating, and a music tower for summer concerts.

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