

Funding is needed for Island parks

The following was sent to Assemblywoman Elizabeth Connelly:

"We understand the conflict that you feel in the Corson's Brook Woods situation and your concern for the needs and rights of the disabled. We are still hopeful that a way can be found to satisfy the urgent need for modern housing for the disabled and also to protect the Corson's Brook Woods. We are sure that you would want this kind of a solution also because you have been a long-term supporter of Protectors of Pine Oak Woods, from the days when we were the advocates for Claypit Ponds State Park Preserve.

"We are writing to ask you to support state budget funding for both the Staten Island Greenbelt and Blue Heron Park. Clearly, the Greenbelt is the crowning jewel of Staten Island, a permanent signature and stabilizing force that will prevent us from becoming like the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens.

"As you know, the New York City Department of Parks has requested funding for a master plan for the Greenbelt, \$1 million over a three-year period. We are very hopeful that Senator John Marchi and the Staten Island members of the Assembly will fight to get as much of the \$1 million in this year's budget as possible to assure that the various phases of the master plan process move swiftly along.

"We are also supporting the request of Friends of Blue Heron Park for \$40,000 for master management plan funding for the park. It is clear there is a need to inventory the park, protect its water system and its slopes so that it can become available for appropriate public use as an environmental teaching site.

"We look forward to working with you in the months ahead for a better Staten Island and for improved protection for both the disabled and our natural lands."

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(The writer is president of the Protectors of Pine Oak Woods.)