

Connelly criticism was unjustified

The editorial "Greenbelt held hostage" was both overly dramatic and considerably perplexing, as well as an attempt to confuse the issues. A restraining order obtained by the conservationist groups currently prevent further progress in building group homes on the SIDC grounds which, in effect, "hold hostage" the mentally retarded-developmentally disabled population, and not the other way around. [Editor's note: The restraining order was recently struck down by an appeals court.]

Your ludicrous statement that it "took preservationists 20 years to get the Greenbelt recognized as an official city park" and "has taken Mrs. Connelly just a few weeks to partially undo that work," well, now, who's kidding who? Even your most devoted subscribers will have difficulty swallowing those lines.

Your crafty and whimsical comments attempting to discredit Assemblywoman Elizabeth A. Connelly were, at the very least, unjust and unfair criticisms. Mrs. Connelly has championed many worthy causes to benefit the Staten Island community and I submit they are well documented. Her appointment to a fifth two-year term as chairperson to the state Assembly mental health and mental retardation committee is testimony to her knowledge and ability.

Mrs. Connelly is a dedicated legislator and more, a truly sensitive and interested person.

I congratulate Mrs. Connelly for her consistent and continual efforts over the years as an advocate for the mentally retarded and developmentally disabled. I salute her in her courageous fight for what she believes is right, no matter the odds.

LOUIS PANZELLA

West Brighton