



City of New York
Parks & Recreation

The Arsenal
Central Park
New York, New York 10021
Henry J. Stern
Commissioner

December 31, 1996

Mr. Jorge Santiago
140-19D Casals Place
Bronx, NY 10475

Dear Mr. Santiago:

Thank you for your letters concerning the vacant lots abutting Pelham Bay Park.

I am very interesting in acquiring these lots and assigning them protection as a Wildlife Refuge. My staff knows the property well and our Parklands Division has visited the site. They have discovered the following information:

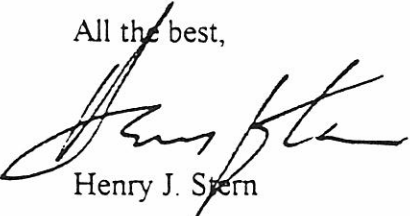
1. Lots 1, 14, and 16 were assigned to Parks on December 14, 1995.
2. Lots 20 and 235 belong to the New York City Division of Real Estate Services under DGS (now DCAS), and we will request a "hold" on these properties for transfer to our agency.
3. The remaining lots, which comprise the majority of the site in question, 61, 66, 68, 135, 180, 230, 277, 279, 281, and 343, are under the jurisdiction of the New York State Department of Transportation. We will contact that agency to determine if this land can be conveyed to us.

We will keep you informed of the status of our applications. If you have any further questions, please call our Chief of Parklands, Jane Cleaver, at (212) 360-3411.

I greatly appreciate the interest that you and the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality are taking in this vital issue of preserving natural open spaces. We will do our best to help keep this area "forever wild."

It was good of you to take the time to write.

All the best,



Henry J. Stern