



BCEQ Statement on the Approval of a Casino License for Ferry Point Park

December 15, 2025

From Casino to Park and Back Again

The [New York State Gaming Commission's December 15 approval](#) of the Bally's Corporation casino license on the site that was formerly part of Ferry Point Park marks the conclusion of New York City's ill-considered public land stewardship of our city's precious waterfront parkland and a high-stakes gamble on its future. Bronx Council for Environmental Quality, a 54 year all-volunteer non-profit environmental advocacy organization, agrees in spirit with [statement issued by the City Club of New York](#), which calls out the city's responsibility to plan and oversee its public land. Now that city government has given a portion of its most precious parkland assets to a gambling company, BCEQ calls for active involvement by both elected New York City officials and the public in the next, crucial step of this property transfer: the restoration of the alienated parkland.

BCEQ understands that we cannot expect transparency and fair value for lost parkland unless the public is invested and involved. This is why we [opposed](#) the casino proposal in the first place. The debate in the New York City Planning Commission gave short shrift to the environmental impacts of the 30% increase in impervious surfaces—blacktop and facilities—in an environmentally sensitive site with clear resilience challenges. The City Council debate over its June “home rule” resolution to surrender this parkland turned Ferry Point Park into a political football between Mayor and the local representative, with the short-term goal of keeping the Bronx “in the running” for the casino prize. No other public use or private parkland concession for Ferry Point was ever considered. The vote was framed as being for or against a casino, not for or against surrendering waterfront parkland.

New York City park stewards and voters must now rely on the political efforts, not typically open to public scrutiny, of their New York State elected officials to uphold the principle that New York State Department of Parks and Recreation has stipulated for alienation of municipal parkland: that there shall be *no net loss* of acreage through the alienation process. As participants in the landmark lawsuit that prevented the city's park giveaway of Van Cortlandt Park, BCEQ will be looking for champions of this principle. But park stewards have reason to fear that as the city continues to underfund its parkland property and looks to leverage it for private development, more park alienation will follow.

In 1934, a New York mayor gave birth to an era of good government and the modern management of our city's parkland when he evicted a privately owned casino from Central Park and gave parkland back to the people. In 2025, a New York City mayor, with the support of the New York City Council, did the reverse. The city officials who voted for Bally's casino must now answer not just to their park steward constituents but to this history and show all New Yorkers that their professed support for parks and their essential environmental benefits mean more than words.