



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

COMMITTEES
Banks
Cities
Consumer Affairs and Protection
Environmental Conservation
Steering

MICAH Z. KELLNER
65th Assembly District

June 5, 2009

Mr. Stephen Shane
Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation
591 Main Street
Roosevelt Island, NY 10044

Dear Steve:

We are writing because our offices have received some very troubling reports regarding the events that took place last Saturday afternoon at the Copabianco Field. While neither of us were there to witness this incident first hand, it seems clear that there is a growing problem surrounding the use of the field.

Our primary concern, at least in terms of what happened on Saturday, is the role played by the public safety officers. Rather than work to defuse tensions or broker a compromise between two increasingly antagonistic sets of people, it appears that the officers at the scene escalated the conflict. This kind of response doesn't help anybody. Our hope is that RIOC and the Public Safety Department are taking steps both to rectify the weekend's events and also prevent similar problems in the future. We understand that the officers were placed in a difficult position on Saturday. However, even in difficult situations, the PSD officers should be counted on to make things better, not worse.

The underlying issue leading to Saturday's conflict is the way that field time is scheduled. Parents have complained that their children's reserved field time is often taken up by maintenance tasks to make the field ready for play. Then, if games run over the allotted time, they feel pressure from adults who have the field reserved next. Without any buffer time built into the schedule, this understandably creates tension between the two groups.

The bottom line is that Little League baseball games – and sports in general – are intended to be enjoyed by children and to teach kids about values like fair play, perseverance, and cooperation. It's a shame that these lessons are being buried beneath a host of issues between adults.

We would welcome the opportunity to have a conference call with you and Keith Guerra to further discuss last weekend's events and what next steps can be taken to prevent a recurrence. Please feel free to reach out to John Moore in Council Member Lappin's office to schedule a time to do this. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Jessica Lappin
Council Member

Micah Kellner
Assembly Member