

**Friends of Liberty State Park**  
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**“Legal Fund to Preserve LSP’s Sacred Views and Public Plaza”.**

**Dear supporters of Liberty State Park,**

The Friends and our excellent and dedicated lawyer, Cynthia Hadjiyannis, held a March news conference to announce this important lawsuit. Our cause is to save the dramatic views toward NYC and save the Public Plaza. **Our worthwhile fight against the negative impact of NJ’s 9/11 “hill and walls” memorial is necessary to protect LSP and to get a proper memorial.** We’re asking the Appeals Court to invalidate the DEPs permit, forcing them to undertake a new process that would include official public comment and public hearings. The case in part is based on DEP’s getting the wrong permit, one established for small scale recreational facilities.

**Excerpt from March 2007 news conference statement by Sam Pesin, president of FOLSP**

Liberty State Park is one of the most special places in our nation. The sacred and dramatic views from LSP are a treasure to be protected and passed on to future generations. Friends of Liberty State Park is filing a lawsuit to carry out our mission of protecting LSP on behalf of the public interest. **NJ’s 9/11 Memorial design, approved by the DEP with no public hearings, blocks powerful views of Ground Zero and lower Manhattan from the closest and busiest area in LSP, and blocks panoramic views of the NYC skyline, the world’s greatest urban skyline. This memorial severely harms LSP.**

Our goal is to save these dramatic views of the NYC skyline and of the Hudson River and also to save the park’s only public plaza. The public plaza now covered by a hill, was enjoyed and treasured for its views of the NYC skyline and the river activity. The skyline is one of the most important views in our nation, and was made more sacred after 9/11. **The design is 2 massive stainless steel Walls, 30 ft high by 200 ft long, inserted into 10 ft. high by 200 ft Hill. By its very nature, this design will have a severe impact on Liberty State Park.**

The essence of park history in the 31 years since the park opened in 1976 as NJ’s Bicentennial gift to America, is that caring citizens have persevered in opposing repeated threats to the park as a special waterfront urban state park with open spaces and dramatic vistas. The Friends’ have worked to preserve the legacy of the park’s founders, Morris Pesin, my late father and the park’s “father”, Theodore Conrad, a pioneer founder, and Audrey Zapp, the park’s “godmother”. With their vision of a great urban park with spectacular views rising up from abandoned train yards and decaying piers, they led the movement for 18 years to create the park and then for many years they led grassroots citizen battles against inappropriate plans. Since The Friends of LSP began in 1988 as a park advocacy group, we have faithfully defended the founders’ legacy so that this park, with its breathtaking views and common spaces will be preserved for future generations.

The DEP approved the Memorial without any public hearings. NY and PA had public hearings for its major 9/11 memorials. Last summer there was a tremendous public outcry urging the Governor and DEP Commissioner to provide public hearings and explaining the sensible cause of saving the Views and the Plaza. But the Gov and Com ignored the amount and reasons for opposing the memorial approved for this waterfront location. The DEP fast-tracked the Memorial approval and didn’t follow its own regulations. The DEP approved memorial construction in a way that excluded public comment and hearings.

We have faith that that the lawcase will get the DEP to follow its own regulations and that would lead to a democratic process with public hearings and the result will be an appropriate memorial, one that doesn’t eliminate spiritually powerful views and the Public Plaza, a memorial that doesn’t harm LSP. The Friends believes that the public has a right to public hearings for a public memorial in this public park.