

For Release: Friday, February 17, 2012

Contact: Jack Friedman/ Jaqueline Donado (718) 898-8500

RPA Pres. Talks Convention Centers, “Airtropolis” & Silicon Borough at Queens Chamber

Regional Plan Association [RPA] President Robert Yaro, discussed economic, transportation and planning initiatives for Queens with leaders of the Queens Chamber of Commerce and members of the Queens business community, Friday, February 17, 2012. The Chamber invited Mr. Yaro to address the chamber after his RPA testimony recommending the State redevelop the Javits Convention Center site and shift most of its business to a larger facility in Queens at the State's NYC Regional Economic Development Council's October 2011 meeting. The Council included a convention center in its recommendation to the State and Governor Andrew M. Cuomo made it a hallmark of his State of the State message last month.

In addition to a discussion of the proposal by Genting to privately develop the largest convention center in America at Aqueduct, Mr. Yaro discussed the utility of a Willets Point as a complimentary facility. Mr. Yaro noted opportunities for transportation development that could connect to the Aqueduct site to extend to the Rockaways – he noted it as a necessity to justify that kind of investment. He also discussed the Port Authority's plans for LaGuardia and JFK airports, the Cornell-Technion campus spurring hi-tech startups in Western Queens and U.S. Interior Department efforts to increase public access to the Jamaica Bay portion of Gateway National Park. He noted the JFK re-development plan which includes new runways would require re-locating many facilities there offsite and suggested that much of Jamaica could become an “Airtropolis”; he recommended a look at the LAX and Chicago's O'Hare Airports.



The Queens Chamber of Commerce represents thousands of businesses and firms of all sizes that do business from and/ or in our vibrant borough. On behalf of its 1,200 members, collectively employing Queens County 500,000 residents the Chamber works to promote the general welfare of the Borough of Queens and to foster its commerce.

-30-

Regional Plan Association President Robert Yaro addresses Queens Chamber. Left to right: Joshua Bienstock (Resolve It, Inc.), Chamber Policy Advisor Corey Bearak, Vincent Petraro, Esq., Regional Plan Association President Robert Yaro, Chamber President Carol Conslato (Con Edison), Chamber Executive Director Jack Friedman, Ray Irrera [Ray Irrera & Associates] [Photo by Sophia Ganosis, Queens Chamber of Commerce.]