

Coalition Against Causeway Chaos

www.causewaychaos.org

March 24, 2015

Mr. Juergen Brendel, President
Venetian Island Homeowners Association
P. O. Box 398415
Miami Beach, FL 33239

RE: Watson Island Development and Impacts of MacArthur Causeway Traffic on Neighborhood Associations and Our Community

Dear Juergen:

The purpose of this letter is to request an opportunity to meet with your association as soon as possible regarding the Watson Island Flagstone development.

Your association joined in a Watson Island Coalition* two years ago that successfully discouraged developer Jorge Perez from partnering in a vastly expanded Flagstone project.

Here we go again. The Flagstone developers are back with plans that spell disaster for all of us!

The City of Miami Beach Commission is supporting our opposition by funding a definitive traffic study that will give the lie to the developer's claims and lay the groundwork for solutions to protect Miami Beach from being severed by traffic strangulation.

Miami Beach Mayor Philip Levine has written a letter enlisting neighborhood associations in this community effort. A copy of his letter to you is attached for your convenience. Once again, your support is crucial, and urgent.

Sincerely,



Roger Craver, President

*Palm-Hibiscus-Star Island Association
South of Fifth Neighborhood Association
West Avenue Residents Neighborhood Association
Belle Isle Residents Association
Venetian Causeway Neighborhood Alliance
Venetian Islands Homeowners Association
Miami Beach United Residents Association
Fisher Island Condominium Association (new)



PHILIP LEVINE
MAYOR

March 19, 2015

Juergen Brendel, President
Venetian Island Homeowners Association
P.O. Box 398415
Miami Beach, FL 33239

Dear Juergen,

The City of Miami's ongoing efforts to approve and support a massive commercial development on Watson Island, which includes over 500,000 square feet of hotel, retail, commercial, and restaurant uses, as well as a mega-yacht marina and two hotel towers over 53 and 35 stories tall built on a pedestal the size of The American Airlines Arena, is far more than an eyesore. In reality, it threatens to sever Miami Beach from Miami and strangle traffic to Palm, Hibiscus, Star, and Fisher Islands.

What has dismayed me most and triggered my decision to involve the City of Miami Beach was learning that, despite all of the changed conditions on both sides of the Bay since this project was first voted on in 2001, the City of Miami had not conducted any recent traffic studies to measure the current impact of the proposed project since 2004.

That's why I called a special meeting of the City of Miami Beach Commission to consider our options in dealing with this threat. I referred to the "continuing assault on the MacArthur Causeway."

As a result, the City Commission unanimously voted to undertake a comprehensive traffic study, to consider how the half-million square feet of commercial and hotel development will affect our streets, neighborhoods, and businesses; and authorized the City Attorney to examine all possible legal remedies available to the City.

I must be clear, however, that it would be unwise to rely solely on the new Miami Beach traffic study and the involvement of the City of Miami Beach to stop this project. Our City's actions are vital, and certainly necessary, but may not be sufficient to carry the day. I believe it will take a concerted effort by a broad cross-section of the community, in Miami Beach and Miami, to carry out the multi-faceted public education, advocacy, and legal actions required to stop the Watson Island/Flagstone project. This is not a time to hope that someone else will take up the cause and save the day. It is up to each member of your neighborhood or community group to learn the facts, discuss the issues with your family, neighbors, and business associates, and encourage everyone you know to do the same.

*Juergen Brendel, President
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Perhaps an outpouring of well-informed indignation from the community will bring about a change in direction from the City of Miami. Perhaps the litigation already begun by Steve Herbits and his group of litigants will prevail. They have initiated an impressive lawsuit, and have already spent more than \$600,000 in mounting what legal experts feel is a most credible challenge. I personally have contributed \$5,000 to their effort, because I believe it is imperative, that the legality of this project to be fully and transparently evaluated in the courts.

I urge you to learn more about this project; the threat it poses to our community and quality of life; and what you and your neighborhood or association can do to help.

For more information, please contact:

Roger Craver, President
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Coral Gables, FL 33134
(786)391-3542
roger@causewaychaos.org

Very truly yours,



Mayor Philip Levine