



PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Nancy A. Kist
(201) 823-0333

Summer Bus Tours at The Peninsula at Bayonne Harbor Deemed Huge Success

Weekly tours of the former military base allowed community members a rare opportunity to see the site and learn of future redevelopment plans.

Bayonne, October 3, 2003 -The Bayonne Local Redevelopment Authority (BLRA) is pleased to announce the tremendous success of their first-ever, summer bus tour series.

Tours of the former Military Ocean Terminal (MOTBY) were offered once a week, twice a day, to all members of the community throughout the summer. Over 300 residents participated in the tour series.

The hour-long tours were given by Jesse Ann Ransom, a project assistant at the BLRA, and included an historical timeline of the site from its days as an Army base to its current role in generating ratable for the City of Bayonne.

Tour participants were shown the dry dock, one of the largest of its kind on the eastern seaboard, the pier, which provides unobstructed views of lower Manhattan and the Verrazano Narrows Bridge, along with several warehouse and outside locations where television programs and films were shot.

The tours also afforded many Bayonne residents who were employees at the base to take a trip down memory lane.

"Those who worked at the base rekindled old times and marveled at what future redevelopment will bring to the site," said Ransom.

"We want the community to be a part of the future of The Peninsula and by offering tours we enable the public to follow us on our journey to redevelopment," said Nancy A. Kist, Executive Director, BLRA. "This is a very exciting time and we want to share that with the citizens of Bayonne."

Ransom also shared with the tour groups that The Peninsula at Bayonne Harbor was well-known in the television and film industry as being a prime location for conducting movie, commercial and print shoots.

The set of HBO's prison drama "Oz" was housed at The Peninsula. Soundstages for "A Beautiful Mind" starring Russell Crowe were built at a converted warehouse at the site as were

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soundstages for "Far From Heaven" starring Julianne Moore, "The Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" starring Jim Carrey. Sets are currently being built for a television series pilot and another film starring Julianne Moore.

Ransom also shared fun facts, including that famous basketball player, Shaquille O'Neal, once lived at the base as a child.

Most residents, even those that had been to the site before, were surprised at how large The Peninsula at Bayonne Harbor was.

"I didn't know just how vast the former base was," said Mrs. Pat Napier, a Bayonne resident who brought her two grandchildren along for the tour. "I was also unaware of the housing and was especially impressed with the Colonel's house."

"You read about what's going on at The Peninsula in the newspapers, but actually seeing the site is a lot different," Mrs. Napier added.

Sr. Imelda Hasson, of St. Andrew Church in Bayonne, agreed.

"It's not until you see The Peninsula up close that you can appreciate the size of the area, where things are happening and just the overall potential of the site," Sr. Imelda said.

"It was an incredible opportunity to see more of Bayonne. I especially enjoyed touring the dry dock - there was even a ship in port. I was truly amazed," she said.

The man-made peninsula, at 430-acres, juts more than two miles into Upper New York Harbor and is the largest tract of undeveloped land in the New York /New Jersey metro area.

Future plans for The Peninsula at Bayonne Harbor call for a vibrant mixed-use waterfront development plan comprised of residential, light industrial and office space. The site will feature a marina with ferry service, a public transportation station, a riverwalk and numerous recreational areas with parks and playgrounds.

The Bayonne Local Redevelopment Authority was created in 1998. The mission of the BLRA is to market The Peninsula at Bayonne Harbor for short and long-term redevelopment that benefits the City of Bayonne.

For more information, please contact Nancy Kist at the Bayonne Local Redevelopment Authority at (201) 823-0333.

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