

Mosholu Golf Course

A group of devoted Mosholu golfers wonder how many holes there are to play in the future

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It is only 8:45 on a sunny but cold Thursday morning, and in front of the Woodlawn cemetery and the last stop of the 4 train in the Bronx, where the Mosholu Golf Course sits, 64 year old Marvin Kelemen takes his first swing of a long day of golf. Mr. Kelemen is one of the many retired senior citizens who spend their free time playing on the Mosholu Golf Course every single day, whether it is hot, or cold, like today.

But not only senior citizens come to play golf here. People of all ages come from all parts of New York because of the easy access to transportation and because there are only nine holes, which is all that some players can handle. Even Councilman Adolfo Carrion, one of the youngest New York politicians squeezed some time from his busy schedule to get in some tee shots before a press conference scheduled for 11:15 a.m. that morning.

Unfortunately for all the people who currently enjoy the tranquility of the golf course, the construction of a \$700 million water filtration plant, on that very site, will force them to listen to the noise produced by the construction over the next five to seven years. A two-year battle, which according to some was not strong enough, was not successful in stopping the filtration plant from being built in the Mosholu golf course.

Last May 12th, Judge Gina Gershon of the Eastern District Federal Court ruled in support of the construction, which will begin on September 1, 2001.

This case got to her hands after five Norwood residents, Sonia Rivera, Fay Muir, Lena Burger, Harriet Gwynn Smalls, and Ora Holloway, with the advice of attorney Jack Lester, filed a law suit in federal court. That lawsuit was based on an argument that Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz raised, arguing that the construction of the filtration plant in the golf course required an order of state legislation. But Judge Gina Gershon made her decision based on the theory that since the plant would be con-beneath the Golf Course, the construction would not destroy parkland, and that the golf course would eventually be restored,



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therefore the state legislation was not necessary in this case.

Community members and leaders have appealed Judge Gershon's decision, but if opponents of the construction don't act fast, and more community members and golfers don't get involved soon, it is very possible that no one will be able to stop this from happening. "Even Hillary Clinton, who has expressed her disagreement about this construction, will have only a few months to fight this decision, that is if she can, and if she is elected as a senator in the following elections," says Mr. Kelemen, looking disappointed.

Mr. Kelemen, who is one of the first male graduates of the class of 1953 from Hunter College, retired from the school system

after working as a track coach for over twenty years in LaGuardia High School in Manhattan. He thinks that the problem with the process of stopping the construction of the plant was that the people weren't organized to fight this proposal. He admits that although he knew there were more things to do to stop the construction of the plant, he never got 100% involved. "We did what we could do, we signed petitions, and we wrote letters, but I doubt very much that the golfers here, at least the regulars who are mostly senior citizens, had the energy to be going from one place to another," says Mr. Kelemen.

Mr. Kelemen also expresses his concern for all his comrades, who unlike him will not have access to other places to play golf.

"I am afraid that this will be the end of golf for some of them. I can still drive and I have access to other places, but most of the people who come here live in this neighborhood, and don't drive, unfortunately. Golf means a whole lot to them; this is all that they enjoy," affirms Mr. Kelemen.

Councilman Adolfo Carrion also thinks that the fight against the filtration plant's construction has not been strong enough. "The congressional delegation has not really joined us as they should have to fight the plant, it is just not a priority for them," says Carrion, taking a sip of his coffee in the cafeteria of the golf course.

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