

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE December 13, 2014

Media Advisory

Protest Rally – New York City Voters To Protest Losing Access to Battery Park City’s Only Public Marina

Protest Rally Details

**Monday, December 15, 2014 at 6pm
South side of North Cove, Battery Park City
Liberty Street and South End Avenue
New York, NY**

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Public Voters’ Petition

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**PUBLIC LIKELY LOSING ACCESS TO BATTERY PARK CITY’S NORTH COVE,
ANGERED VOTERS AND RESIDENTS RALLYING TO PROTEST**

The Battery Park City Authority is poised to cut off the public from the water at North Cove, shocking the downtown community and raising disturbing questions about turning a public space into a gated parking lot for billionaires’ yachts.

In response, downtown voters will rally on Monday night, December 15th at 6pm, on the south side of the Cove, next to Gateway Plaza. An activist-driven [petition on change.org](http://petition.onchange.org) has already gathered over 600 signatures in less than 24 hours, calling on Governor Cuomo and the BPCA to keep the neighborhood’s premier park water space open to the public.

“What, Battery Park City voters don’t count anymore?” questions a New York City resident. “Taxpayer-built park space is being secretly given to the highest bidder who will cut off the public? It’s like turning Central Park into a private golf club, ringed with ‘REGULAR PEOPLE, DO NOT ENTER’ signs.”

Currently, hundreds of non-yacht owners share small boats out of North Cove every summer weekend through the Manhattan Sailing Club and School. But indications are that this community-based sailing will be destroyed, as large corporate bidders will likely close the Cove to regular residents, focusing on providing slips for private yachts.

Michael Fortenbaugh of MSC and the Sailing School, Battery Park City resident and operator of North Cove since 2004, has been instructed to hand over the Cove's keys on December 31st, resulting in water sports enthusiasts losing the only small boat access currently available in Manhattan.

Angered neighborhood activists and voters alike are galvanized by the apparent exclusion of local voters from the BPCA's closed door process.

"Now that Michael has been so successful in revitalizing the waterfront, it's primed for corporate takeover," opines Claire Morda, retired teacher at Kingsborough Community College. "But a big corporation won't focus on the community access - so what are regular people to do now? Take the ferry, I suppose? Looks like we'll simply be shut out."

"I work as a City Employee for the NYC Department of Education," states Randy Lewis, longtime sailor. "If North Cove is turned into a restrictive private marina, a middle class family like mine will lose the opportunity to sail in New York Harbor. We can't afford to purchase, maintain or harbor a yacht of our own."

Local press reports are that the Battery Park City Authority may turn over the Cove's operation to either Brookfield Properties, a large office park owner, or Island Global Yachting, owned primarily by Andrew L. Farkas who previously employed Andrew Cuomo, paying him \$2.5 million in salary, plus serving as a major fundraiser for Cuomo's political campaigns.

Unlike Michael's Fortenbaugh's sailing club and school, neither Brookfield nor Island Global Yachting appear to run community sailing programs. Fortenbaugh, however, serves thousands of water sports enthusiasts, mostly local residents and working class and middle class New Yorkers without the means to own private boats.