

My Vision of Coney Island's Future

An essay by Zaman R. Gilani

My first emotion to the concept of a new amusement area for Coney Island was a mixture of amazement, joy, and wonder: wonder what the future of Coney Island was to be, joy at an overdue revitalization plan finally put into action, and amazement at the fact that life in Coney Island was looking up at last.

The first thing I did every summer when I was younger was take a ride on the stationary carts at Deno's Wonder Wheel (my sister was too scared to venture on the swinging carts). But the laughter quickly faded as the rides and games became old news, and Astroland was just another wonder in Coney Island's past. People still came, but not as much as the old days. At least that's what I gather. After I was about seven, the awe it brought was gone.

So when the C.I.D.C. introduced a new plan, you can understand my thunderstruck feeling of delight.

But reality rapidly replaced such a feeling as I mentally inquired what this sudden re-attraction would mean. With these large amounts of people entering per summer, where would they possibly park their cars or stay? There is only one parking lot around the Astroland area, and that is not going to provide sufficient space for so many cars. At least one place I can think of that could be put to good use for parking space would be the empty and rotting lot behind the abandoned Playland building. It has sat there in a lonely state of decay long enough.

A very efficient way to get even more income out of the new amusement park would be to set up or reopen the hotels around the area. One of the most convenient hotel spaces is the Terminal, Shore hotels and Shore Theater. Being at the Stillwell train stop, when people seeking a reprieve from everyday life stop by, they should face several hotels, which should prompt at least the slightest idea to book a room and enjoy the attractions a little longer than planned.

Another burning issue of mine is the state of Coney Island Creek. It has been left in a rejuvenation ruin. Seeing as how there is a clean up policy instituted currently, I think that this would be a magnificent opportunity to create some sort of waterway recreation program. It could include swimming, fishing, and anything else. Not to mention that the environment needs our help and Coney Island Creek would be a divine spot for a free-to-the-public ecology center, where anyone could just come in and learn a bit more about the wildlife in Coney Island.

As for me, when I look towards opening day, I feel pure admiration and marvel at what possibly lies behind the golden gates.