

The Daily News Online Plus Edition Tuesday, March 29, 2005 Plus Edition  
Letter: Editorial off base on NAID land

To the editor:

Upon reading The Daily News' unsigned March 18 editorial "Focusing on Port's economic development," one first gets a feeling of "it just makes sense." However, the feeling quickly fades as it becomes apparent that it is a public relations piece written for the benefit of NAID.

For the sake of brevity I will focus on two of the editorial's environmentalist-related comments and leave such unlikely and quaint economic claims as: "... the development has the potential to create 300 to 500 jobs" and "... the jobs being proposed - manufacturing and professional - are the kind that municipalities are desperate to attract" for another time.

First, immediately following the "500 jobs" assertion, the editorial states: "But that effort is being vociferously opposed by environmentalists ... ." In fact what many local environmentalists favor for the NAID land is the concept of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) promoted by the Strategic Land Use Committee of which NAID was a member. TDR as explained in the SLUC final report "... is a land use regulatory tool under which development rights can be severed from a tract of land and sold in a market transaction." In this case, TDR could be used to redevelop some of the empty buildings in the current industrial park, while leaving the NAID land alone.

The second comment is: "NAID, against its better judgment, has also agreed to drastically limit the amount of development on this parcel, as a compromise with environmental interests." A more accurate ending for this sentence would be "...to comply with environmental regulations." NAID has not agreed to give up one square inch of "developable" land. The drastic limitations were always there; only now they're real because NAID knows they will not be allowed to ignore wetlands regulations.

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