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**CIVIC ALLIANCE DENOUNCES PLANS TO DRAMATICALLY ALTER
MASTER PLAN FOR WORLD TRADE CENTER SITE**

Coalition releases visualizations of proposals destructive to Libeskind plan

For Immediate Release

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NEW YORK – The Civic Alliance to Rebuild Downtown New York today denounced closed-door efforts to dramatically alter the recently selected master plan for the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site. The Alliance released illustrations visualizing the devastating impacts of proposed changes to the master plan, which was chosen as the official plan in February after an unprecedented public process.

“The Civic Alliance will not sit idly by while the heart of this visionary master plan is pulled apart by private interests,” said Robert D. Yaro, chair of the Civic Alliance and President of Regional Plan Association. “The entire world is watching what we do on this site, and business-as-usual simply won’t cut it.”

The Alliance specifically noted the following attacks on the master plan:

1) Developer Larry Silverstein has taken great liberties with the plan:

- He has proposed substantially altering the plan by adding yet another office tower on the site, positioned over the PATH terminal that was supposed to be a grand entry point into Lower Manhattan.
- He has distanced himself from Libeskind’s vision of the iconic Freedom Tower, including its sky gardens and elegant spire.
- He has refused to allow Daniel Libeskind to actively participate in the design process, moving back to his own architects and conventional building types – as seen and rejected by the public at the Javits Center last July.

2) Retail developer Westfield Properties has brought legal action against the Port Authority, and claims that the master plan isn’t retail-friendly enough. Westfield has pushed for an enclosed shopping mall – larger than the Paramus Mall – at the site.

3) There is pressure from some groups to eliminate the sunken memorial plaza, the heart and soul of the Libeskind plan – and the Port Authority is nearing completion of a substation that will make it almost impossible to realize his vision.

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"The Libeskind plan was chosen as the result of an historic and inclusive public process," said Holly Leicht, Director of Imagine New York. "Attempts to dramatically change it undermine the public's trust in the rebuilding process and betray the tens of thousands of people from New York and around the world who participated in the public process that led to its selection. While that process was far from perfect, it provided an unprecedented level and quality of public input. To ignore the results of that process would send a terrible message about our commitment to democracy and transparency in redeveloping the World Trade Center site."

"Attempts by both Westfield and Silverstein to maximize profits on the World Trade Center site clearly come at the expense of a visionary master plan," said Ron Shiffman, director of Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development. "We must have higher standards for this site, and we cannot settle for an ordinary office park and shopping mall. It's just not good enough."

"The memorial space is clearly what distinguished the Libeskind plan from the other plans, and was the primary reason for its selection," said Rick Bell, executive director of the American Institute of Architects, New York Chapter. "Bringing the memorial area up to ground level so that commuters can rush through every day changes the fundamental element of the plan. We understand that architecture plans evolve, but the critical ideas should not be altered."

The Civic Alliance to Rebuild Downtown New York is a coalition of more than 80 civic, labor, business, academic and community groups convened in October 2001 to provide a civic voice in rebuilding plans for Lower Manhattan in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center. The Alliance was convened by Regional Plan Association in partnership with the New School University, Pratt Institute and New York University.

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