



**Staten Island Borough President James P. Molinaro
 Senator Liz Krueger • Assemblymember Brian Kavanagh
 New York City Councilmember Oliver Koppell
 Rainforest Relief • NY Climate Action Group**

present

Materials for a New City:

Alternatives to Tropical Hardwoods for Public Outdoor Infrastructure

May 29, 2009, 12 NOON – 3:30 PM (LUNCH PROVIDED)

MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, 1 CENTER STREET, 19TH FLOOR SOUTH

*According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization,
 an area of rainforest the size of a football field is destroyed every second—
 that's an area the size of Manhattan every three hours.*

Join us for an afternoon of informative presentations by the nation's leading experts on the use of recycled plastic lumber and domestic hardwoods in public outdoor infrastructure. Together, we can design, build and repair our City without harming the planet.

12 – 12:30: Lunch (provided — please contact us if you will be having lunch)

12:30 – 1:00: Welcome and Introduction

Tim Keating, *Executive Director, Rainforest Relief, The Role of Tropical Wood Use in Deforestation and Climate Change*

Assemblyman Brian Kavanagh, *State Legislation on Tropical Hardwoods*

1:00 – 2:20: Recycled Plastic Lumber

Dr. Thomas Nosker, *Professor, Rutgers University AMIPP, The History and Technical Development of HSTL Materials*

Mick Langford, Trelleborg, *Pilings, Bumpers and Ferry Terminals from Recycled Plastic*

George Nagle, P.E., *Axion Intl., Axion Recycled Plastic Lumber*

Exposing and Challenging Rainforest Consumption

R A I N F O R E S T R E L I E F

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Malcolm G. McLaren, *President, McLaren Engineering, The Use of RPL for Marine Applications.*

2:20 – 2:30: Break

2:30 – 3:10: Domestic Woods

Klaas Armster, *Owner, Armster Reclaimed Lumber, Durable Domestic Woods: Their Properties and Availability*

Michael Corsello, *President, Nash Lumber, Cambia™ Thermally Modified Hardwoods*

3:10 – 3:30: New York City Parks

Celia Petersen, R.L.A., *Director, Office of Specifications, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, Bamboo Benches, 'Burnt' Boards and Assorted Atypical Alternatives — NYC Parks Department's Experience with Alternative Materials*

The use of old growth tropical hardwoods by New York City agencies has been recognized by Mayor Bloomberg as a significant contributor to global climate change: 25% of human-caused carbon emissions are the result of deforestation. Yet New York City remains the single largest consumer of tropical hardwoods in North America.

During the 20th century, in an effort to create safe and functional infrastructure for our City, agencies turned to the use of tropical hardwoods. They built tens of thousands of park benches, 12.5 miles of boardwalk, dozens of miles of subway tracks, the fendering and pilings of the Staten Island Ferry Terminal, the decking of South Street Seaport and the Brooklyn Bridge promenade. This adds up to millions of board feet of tropical hardwood — and the loss of countless acres of rainforest.

If there were an economically viable and ecologically sound material for public outdoor infrastructure, strong enough that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers used it to build bridges for tanks, wouldn't you choose that instead of rainforest wood?

In February 2008, the Mayor's **Office of Long-term Planning and Sustainability** crafted the **Tropical Hardwoods Reduction Plan**, which calls for a 60% reduction in city agencies' use of rainforest wood by 2020. However, with newly proposed marine transfer stations, miles-long renovations of Hudson River Park and dozens of other projects—none of which are counted in the OLTPS Reduction Plan—NYC is geared to double its consumption of tropical hardwoods.

Our City can do better. We can institute a smart, responsible procurement policy that prevents the unnecessary destruction of pristine rainforests.

All of the outdoor infrastructure currently using tropical hardwoods can easily and readily be constructed with alternative materials such as **recycled plastic lumber**. This high-tech material, invented at Rutgers University and favored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, will last far longer than any wood. The switch to RPL would utilize NYC's plastic wastes, create local industry and local jobs, reduce pollution and save public funds by eliminating the maintenance costs of rotten and worn wood. City agencies could also opt to build with durable domestic wood, produced from local sustainable forestry operations.

Many forward-thinking engineers and designers have already embraced materials that protect rainforests and spark local economies. The **Chicago Transit Authority** has utilized more than 125,000 RPL track ties for their light rail system. RPL ferry terminals have been built in many sites around the country and internationally. Here in NYC, the Parks Department has recently switched to domestic wood for park benches, thus eliminating the use of 50,000 board feet of tropical hardwoods each year. They've also committed to building new boardwalks without any tropical hardwood.

For more information on New York City's use of tropical hardwoods, go to www.RainforestsofNewYork.org