

WVH Investigative Programs

The Tyranny of Government Commissions and Authorities

Robert Moses, the “Power Broker” of the New York Metropolitan Area, is considered the person most responsible for the creation and proliferation of the concept of governmental commissions and authorities. Moses ran for governor of New York and lost—a record defeat at the time. He then moved to amass power, rather than through democratic means, via commissions and authorities.

They are now ubiquitous—and most of them highly undemocratic.

Whether it be the Metropolitan Transportation Authority or the Port Authority of New York and Jersey or the New York State Thruway Authority or the New York Power Authority or the Long Island Power Authority—among many others—these entities, as the New York State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli states, “conduct business outside of the typical oversight accountability requirements” of government. This includes “employment practices, contracts and procurement procedures and financial reporting.”

DiNapoli and Governor Mario Cuomo have sought to far better monitor the many commissions and authorities in New York State, but this is difficult because these entities are power systems of their own without the transparency required of other government agencies.

DiNapoli and Cuomo have, further, been in the lead in trying to severely cut back on the number of commissions and authorities. It turns out that many are unneeded.

There are a few commissions and authorities around the nation that are sensitive to the public will and work well—because they utilize the process called democracy! They have elected board of trustees. The voters chose who runs these commissions and authorities and the elected trustees, who set the policy of these entities, are thus accountable to the electorate.

The investigative program would look into the Moses-inspired development of commissions and authorities, the fights to far better monitor them and to reduce their numbers, and the insertion of democracy in the commission and authority system through elected boards.

If You Live Within 50 Miles of a Nuclear Power Plant

More than half the 300 million population of the United States lives within 50 miles of a nuclear power plant. In the wake of the Fukushima nuclear plant accident, 50 needs to be realized as the number of miles in which evacuation of people would be necessary in the event of a nuclear plant accident.

The U.S. government advised American citizens who were within 50 miles of the Fukushima site to evacuate following the meltdowns at it—and they did.

Nevertheless, despite this lesson from Fukushima, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has continued to insist that a 10-mile evacuation zone is all that is necessary around the 104 U.S. nuclear plants (even though many are, like Fukushima, of General Electric manufacture).

This investigative program would focus on two areas within 50 miles of nuclear plants—each having no provision whatsoever for an evacuation of the public in the event of a major accident at these plants.

One area is the New York Metropolitan Area. New York City, along with eastern New Jersey, southwestern Connecticut and western Long Island, are within 50 miles of the two Indian Point nuclear power plants. Some 22 million people live in these 50 miles. The Indian Point plants years ago were called “accidents waiting to happen” by U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission inspector Robert Pollard, and have long been troubled. Moreover, they sit on the intersection of two earthquake faults.

The other area focused upon is eastern Long Island which is within 50 miles of the two Millstone nuclear power plants just west of New London, Connecticut. These two plants have also been long-troubled—producing, through the years, 60 whistle-blowers who worked at the plants who have alleged serious problems at them.

The 10 mile NRC evacuation zone is, in the aftermath of Fukushima, clearly unrealistic. But how could millions of people in the New York Metropolitan Area and hundreds of thousands of people on eastern Long Island be evacuated in the event of a major accident at the nuclear power plants so close by them? This issue is repeated all across the United States. Is this why the NRC holds stubbornly to the 10-mile evacuation zone, even though it is not about now real world experience?

The Killing of Vocational Education

High school students in New York State and increasingly around the nation have been forced into a course of study that is supposed to lead to an academic degree and college.

It began in the 1990s and has been termed an “educational experiment”—making what in New York State is called an academic “Regents” diploma a condition of graduation for high school students.

When I went to high school in the 1950s, students in New York were given the choice of pursuing a “Regents,” “General” or “Commercial” diploma. I’ve had friends not interested whatsoever in college who went the “General” diploma route, and meeting them since at reunions, they’ve done fine in trades and in other occupations for which college is unnecessary.

Meanwhile, the vocational high schools which were widespread in New York back then were—one-after-another—closed.

The only way out for a high school student in New York now from being forced in New York State to pursue the “Regents” track is being classified for “special education.” This has routinely played out in students failing “Regents”—and then being channeled into “special education.” Importantly, providing “special education” comes at five times the cost per student—a heavy price for school systems already hard-pressed financially.

In this investigative report, a retired school guidance counselor, Richard Blumenthal, who ran for the New York State Assembly with his campaign based on the problems of this system, would be interviewed, along with others involved with education as well as public officials.

“The Regents course of study and the Regents exams were always intended as a college preparatory program,” Blumenthal said. “But for a whole bunch of students, that’s not where their talents lie. Our work force is not principally made up of college graduates. College is not necessary in terms of the way most Americans or the world makes a living.”

Blumenthal tied the high attrition rate in New York high schools, as high as 50 percent in high schools in many cities including those New York City, to the “one-size-fits-all” “Regents” diploma mandate. And he called for “bringing back flexible diplomas.”

Among the more outrageous aspects of the system is the imposition of it on foreign students who arrive in their late teens in the United States, barely know English, are put in academic classes and put on the “Regents” track rather than being given an education in fields that would better suit their lives ahead. Many of them fail and drop out of school.

Real Estate Round Table

February 1st

Topic: Buying Near the Water

Nick Martin, PC AIA

Principal at Martin Architects

Enzo Morabito

EVP, Douglas Elliman

Nathan Orsman

Principal at Orsman Design

Christine Curiale

Branch Manager at Wells Fargo

Lee Najman

President, Lee Najman Design, Inc

Ernest Cervi

Executive Managing Director at Corcoran

Josh Guberman

President & CEO of Core Development Group LLC

Real Estate Round Table

January 31st

Topic: Green and Sustainability

John Tortorella

President of J. Tortorella Pools

Ed Hollander

President of Edmund Hollander Landscape Architects.

Robin Long, Esq.

Attorney at Law.

Shannon Willey

Founder of Sea Green Designs

Pat Trunzo

CEO of Trunzo Building Contractors

Patrick McLaughlin

VP, Brand Relations at Douglas Elliman

Sam Friedfeld

Licensed sales agent

Show Descriptions

101 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. Dina Lohan is Frank's guest this week.

102 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. Former United States Senator Alphonse D'Amato is Frank's guest this week.

103 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. Comedian Joey Kola is Frank's guest this week.

104 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. United States Congressman Pete King is Frank's guest this week.

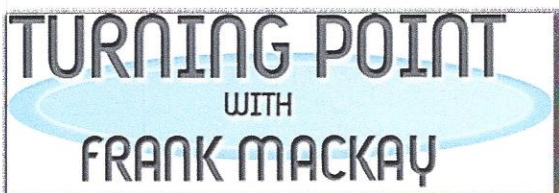
105 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. Music producer Cory Rooney is Frank's guest this week.

106 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. Former Governor of New York David Paterson is Frank's guest this week.

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108 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. Model and author Carol Alt is Frank's guest this week.

109 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. MMA superstar Gracie Renzo is Frank's guest this week.



110 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. Comedian Jackie Martling is Frank's guest this week.

111 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. Teresa and Joe Giudice from the New Jersey Housewives are Frank's guests this week.

112 BERNIE GOTZE INSERT HERE

113 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. Comedian Pat Cooper is Frank's guest this week.

114 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. Foghat's music legend Roger Earl is Frank's guest this week.

115 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. Veteran radio host Joey Reynolds is Frank's guest this week.

116 MARTHA WASH INSERT HERE

117 Frank MacKay engages entertainers and newsmakers in one-on-one interviews that reveal the significant moments in time that defined their success. Musician Gary U.S. Bonds is Frank's guest this week.