



**Ca RICH**  
ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALISTS

# ENVIRONMENTAL BULLETIN

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## Fort Apache to The Green Way

By Richard Izzo

**C**A RICH has been spending a lot of time in the Bronx lately working on several cleanups within the NY State Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP). Working in the Bronx always reminds me of Metro North train rides into Manhattan that I took as a teenager in the late 1970s along with my band-mates, on our way to the music stores along 48<sup>th</sup> Street.

One thing that still stands out in my mind is the portion of the trip through the South Bronx, specifically the area near the infamous "Fort Apache" 41<sup>st</sup> police precinct which was so-named back then because the officers there felt like they were stationed at a remote hostile outpost.

I recall the apartment buildings we passed, many of which displayed lovely curtains and flowers in the windows. Unfortunately, those curtains and flowers were just pictures painted on plywood that was used to board up the gaping windows of decrepit burned-out building shells. By 1980, 40% of the buildings in the Bronx were burned or abandoned.

I thought about this on May 3<sup>rd</sup> as I listened to speeches by Mayor Bloomberg and HUD Secretary



Shaun Donovan (among others) at the historic groundbreaking ceremony for the planned Via Verde development on Brook Avenue in the Melrose Section of the Bronx.

Via Verde ("The Green Way") is a planned 222-unit residential

development designed to exceed the US Green Building Council's LEED<sup>®</sup> Gold standard (as well as the standards of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's (NYSERDA's) Multifamily Performance Program and the Enterprise Green Community) for environmentally responsible and energy-efficient building design.

Via Verde includes a 20-story tower, a mid-rise duplex as well as townhome-type units and is designed to use 31% less energy than comparable traditionally-designed buildings.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Oil & Water Don't Mix

**S**ince April 20<sup>th</sup>, one is hard-pressed to remain apathetic about the globally-watched trial-and-error saga attempted in a massive effort to stem the disastrous environmental and economic impacts attributable to a single 21-inch diameter riser pipe dispersing almost a million gallons of oil and methane (daily) into the Gulf of Mexico & northern Caribbean.

Although a large percentage of coral disappeared from this region years ago, and several 'dead zones' occur attributable to agricultural runoff, sadly, the government has now closed fully 40% (some 100,000 square miles) of Federal waters within this sea to fishing with unquantifiable impacts to the region's marine larvae. The resulting loss of thousands of maritime jobs and redirected tourism is lamentable, but, coupled with: the cumulative environmental impact to fragile and already-stressed ecosystems; multiple billions in Spill-

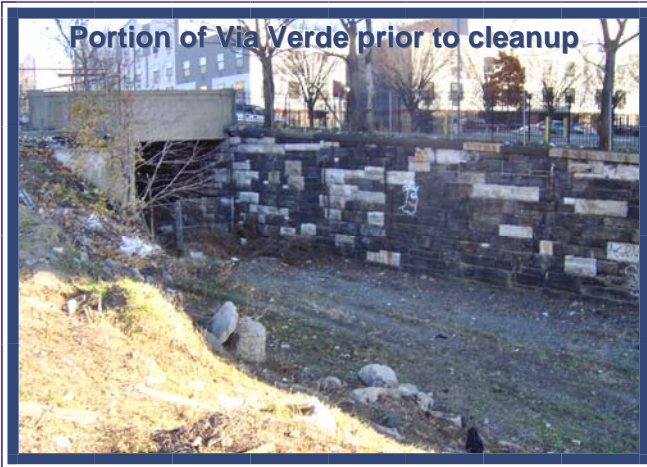


related economic damage; an Administration and energy industry forced into months-long crisis mode; and the tsunami of forthcoming environmental litigation, is arguably inexcusable.

Regardless of the duration of this frustratingly pervasive 'leak' which at best, has hopefully been stopped as you read this, or at worst, deemed ongoing for years ahead should planned relief well(s) fail, the cumulative environmental impacts from this and other similar insults upon marine water quality and biota remain chiefly immeas-

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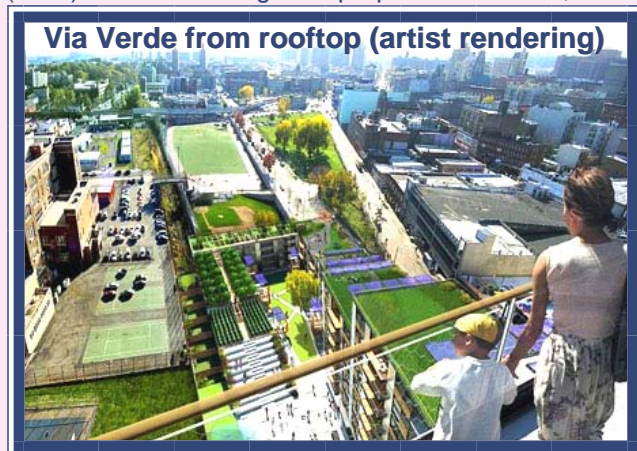
**Portion of Via Verde prior to cleanup**

A few examples of Via Verde's 'green' attributes are:

- ◆ photovoltaic solar panels to power common areas and exterior lights;
- ◆ harvesting of rainwater to irrigate planned raised-bed vegetable and fruit gardens;
- ◆ cross-ventilation and solar shading for efficient cooling during summer months; and,
- ◆ high-efficiency building systems as well as 34,000 square feet of planted green roofs to create "sky gardens" and help reduce the 'heat island effect' associated with conventional buildings.

The Green Way is arguably the jewel in the proverbial crown of Mayor Bloomberg's New Housing Marketplace Plan to create and preserve 165,000 units of affordable housing by 2013; and the May 3rd groundbreaking ceremony marked the achievement of the City's 100,000<sup>th</sup> affordable housing unit. All of this (and more) on a former blighted property historically used as a railroad facility and automobile service station located just a few blocks from the notorious Fort Apache.

That former site usage is the reason why CA RICH's expertise was called upon by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) for site investigation purposes and then, subse-



**Via Verde from rooftop (artist rendering)**

quently, by the development team of Phipps Houses and Jonathan Rose Companies, to perform testing and remediation services, provide engineering controls and guide the site through the BCP under the auspices of both the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH).

Our services, provided in concert with site preparation and construction include:

- ◆ Testing and removal of soils impacted by former on-site industrial usage;
- ◆ Identification and removal of underground storage tanks (and NYSDEC tank closure);
- ◆ Testing/certification of imported clean fill;
- ◆ Enhanced natural attenuation of impacted ground water through targeted application of chemical oxidation and on-going monitoring; and,
- ◆ Design and installation of a sub-slab vapor barrier and sub-slab depressurization system as a precautionary measure to prevent vapor intrusion into the planned building.



**Mayor Bloomberg at the groundbreaking ceremony**

CA RICH is proud to be a member of the Via Verde development team and participate in the site preparation and construction of this environmentally cutting-edge development of historical importance to the City of New York. It is gratifying to know that when we look up and see the curtains (solar shading) and flowers (sky gardens), not only will we know they're real, but also that they are providing real energy savings as part of a sustainable building design.

For more information on Via Verde, go to the Phipps Houses website at [phippsny.org](http://phippsny.org). For more information on CA RICH and our proven BCP services visit our website or call us.



*(Oil & Water... Continued from page 1)*

**“...the depth of our global environmental footprint is deepening in ways we cannot fully understand.”**

urable. Given all our science and engineering accomplishments we can still no more map and contain the distribution of undersea oil plumes drifting freely with ocean currents, than we can control the effects of a spreading volcanic ash cloud upon air travel or air quality. Consequently, its long past time to recognize that neither governments nor private enterprise are equipped, nor can they be relied upon, to prevent or 'fix' these kinds of accidents responsively, and as such, the depth of our global environmental footprint is deepening in ways we cannot fully understand.

Public response to this 'worst-spill-to-date' will be a better mousetrap (e.g. design improvements to blow-out preventers) in conjunction with further offshore regulations. However, each progressively larger oil spill will be typically cast as the 'worst spill' of its day - whether caused from a leaking undersea well, accidental discharges from land-based storage terminals, or oil tankers running aground.

Again, this current spill is no different, just the biggest so far. In fact, over the past 25 years, such accidents continue to resist prevention regardless of well-intended regulation - all due to a heightening demand of the product. A few of the laws promulgated years ago already 'on the books' to prevent recurrence of these events include the Clean Water Act, the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and possibly the Endangered Species Act.

Clean water is a necessary global product to sustain life and mankind must lessen its dependence upon oil as a cheap and widely-subsidized source of energy. This realization is now hitting home hard as long as the oil spill is hitting us (literally). In the years ahead, as mankind's population doubles to 11 billion (2050), it is painfully obvious that our plentiful and renewable energy resources (e.g. water, wind, solar, nuclear) are prone to sensible and sustainable management and must be preferred over non-renewable oil & gas.

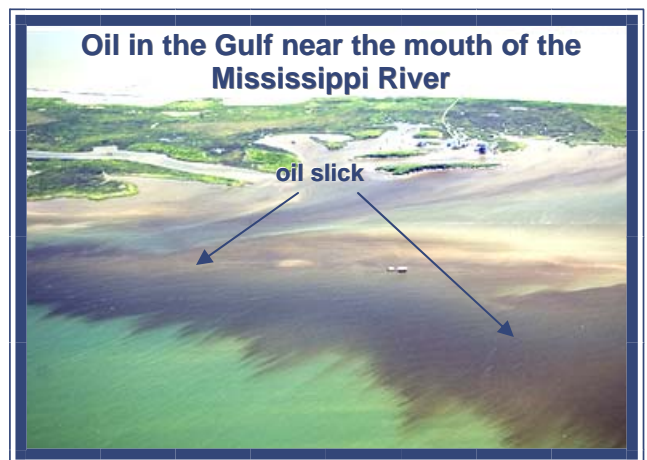
Fossil fuels are unsustainable when limited to precarious development beneath the Arctic, near coastal populations, or deeply offshore under the outer continental shelf where exploration & development is much more costly, dangerous, remote, and in the event of an accident, environmentally catastrophic.

Our thirst for oil must be slaked not with more oil, but with more alternative renewable energy sources brought to market by consumer demand - strengthened by rebalancing lifestyle choices and changing consumption patterns. Doing so will diminish the recurrence of these depressingly tragic events.

Sustainability is not a popular or partisan movement. It's been around a long time. It centers on mankind's global right or privilege to economic growth, environmental preservation, and social equity. It should be how we value the world we thrive in, and leave to our children. In popular terms, it's about "reuse, renew & recycle" - to exploit renewable resources over non-renewables. It's about rapidly-growing nations embracing and improving their living standards - but doing so sustainably. Its about the relatively recent public awareness of 'global environmentalism' and not simply the purview of a green movement across the western world.

More importantly, it's about a developing awareness of diminishing species diversity on land & sea complicated by faster-than-forecasted climate change causing ocean warming and sea level rise followed by predictable migratory trends seeking to exploit revalued natural resources such as clean water, clean energy, and adequate food (e.g. there's plenty of fresh water in the world, but not in all the right places).

Optimistically, one can forecast in the years ahead that with such exciting environmental and economic challenges confronting our younger generation, there is so much out there yet to do. The importance of promoting the need to protect and preserve our environment as one interdependent and interconnected world is now more apparent than ever before. As such, a paradigm shift in thinking should drive a market-based transition of our extractive minerals industries toward development of more abundant and renewable resources, thus offsetting the historical approach of competing parochial interests exploiting 'ownership' of the limited and polluting ones.



### What's new at CA RICH

CA RICH is continuing its work at several NY State Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) sites in the Bronx including Via Verde (see lead article) and Cornerstone B, where we recently designed and installed groundwater treatment and sub-slab depressurization systems integrated into the construction of the building.

The Firm is providing environmental services to the New York City Department of Design and Construction (DDC) and their General Contractor in the redevelopment of a former asphalt yard on Staten Island into a new NYPD Police Precinct.

CA RICH continues to expand our successful tenant inspection program for commercial land owners on Long Island with the addition of 100,000 square feet of tenant inspection space over the past two years.

Congratulations to our valued Client Dunn Development who's Atlantic Avenue Apartments in Brooklyn won the New York City Brownfield Partnership's 2010 Big Apple Brownfield Award for Affordable Housing.

We are pleased to announce that CA RICH is now certified as a sustainable building advisor (one of the first 25 issued in NY State) by the National Sustainable Building Advisor Program (NaSBAP).

Congratulations to **Steve Malinowski** who has been promoted to the position of Associate.

CA RICH is pleased to report that its company fleet has been updated with four new hybrid vehicles.

*For more information about CA RICH or the **ENVIRONMENTAL BULLETIN**, please call (516) 576-8844 or write to:*

**CA RICH CONSULTANTS, INC.,**  
**17 Dupont Street, Plainview, NY 11803**  
**E-Mail: [Info@carichinc.com](mailto:Info@carichinc.com)**

## CA RICH CONSULTANTS, INC.

A full-service environmental consulting firm providing strategic consulting and on-site support to help business owners manage all their environmental issues. CA RICH, independently-owned since 1982, is staffed by experienced environmental professionals skilled at understanding the intent behind environmental regulations, balancing business needs with environmental practicalities.

The Company supplies environmental consulting; Phase I & II assessments; compliance audits; investigation; remediation; groundwater resource management; storage tank; indoor air quality & hazardous waste management; soil vapor intrusion mitigation; brownfield redevelopment; sustainability, expert testimony; strategic thinking; dispute resolution; and all other professional services related to meeting evolving environmental regulations.

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