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\$8 MILLION FUND SEEKS TO MAKE WESTERN QUEENS A MODEL GREEN NEIGHBORHOOD

North Star Fund Kicks Off Initiative at Two Community Visioning Sessions

New York, NY - March 11, 2010 - North Star Fund today announced the launch of the Greening Western Queens Fund, an \$8 million, three-year initiative to create greener neighborhoods in the Western Queens communities affected by the July 2006 power outage. Residents and business owners in Woodside, Sunnyside, Astoria and Long Island City will see an infusion of funds to make their communities healthier and environmentally sustainable.

The project is a unique opportunity for the heavily-trafficked neighborhoods of Western Queens. Noise from the elevated 7 train and planes heading to La Guardia combined with few parks make this a neighborhood that craves trees, plantings and open space. The new fund will invest in tree planting and other environmental and energy efficiency projects.

North Star Fund is the New York City community foundation that is helping the local community to design and administer the distribution of the funds. The organization hopes to enhance environmental quality and boost the economy by creating green jobs. North Star Fund Executive Director Hugh Hogan thinks the project can become a model for urban areas nationwide. "This is an opportunity to re-envision an aging urban community to be more environmentally conscious and economically robust," said Hogan.

North Star Fund is working with Western Queens Power For The People, a community group that formed in response to the 2006 blackout. To get started, they are seeking advice from people who know the neighborhoods best—Western Queens residents. "We bring the know-how to manage the process. The vision will come from the people who live and work there," said Hogan. North Star Fund has scheduled two visioning sessions that are open to all residents and business owners in Astoria, Sunnyside, Woodside and Long Island City. The visioning sessions will take place on March 20 and March 27, 2010.

An Advisory Board will provide expertise and strategic guidance for the project. The Advisory Board will include experts in green infrastructure and urban forestry as well as members of the community.

The Greening Western Queens Fund is the result of a settlement between Con Edison and community groups in Astoria, Woodside, Sunnyside and Long Island City. The Public Service Commission of New York State selected North Star Fund to administer the project because of its expertise in facilitating community-led grantmaking processes.

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North Star Fund is New York City's community foundation supporting grassroots groups leading the movement for equality, economic justice and peace. Since our founding in 1979, North Star Fund has distributed over 30 million dollars to 1,600 groups working to create a more equitable and democratic city for all New Yorkers.

For more information please visit www.northstarfund.org.

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