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THE CRAIN'S INSIDER

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A daily newsletter on government action of importance to business

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TODAY'S NEWS

DOT PRIVATIZATION FINALS

The New York State Department of Transportation will hear presentations from the finalists today in its search for a consultant to explore how to privatize infrastructure assets such as roads and bridges. Gov. Pataki submitted a proposal that would let the thruway authority lease the Tappan Zee Bridge to private interests, but it was dropped from the budget. Other states and cities have generated billions of dollars in such agreements.

ATLANTIC YARDS CASH

The state Senate voted 57-1 yesterday to allocate \$33 million toward infrastructure for Brooklyn Atlantic Yards; the Assembly allocated the same amount two weeks ago. Only state Sen. Velmanette Montgomery, whose district includes the development site, voted against the funding. The governor is expected to allot another \$34 million, fulfilling the \$100 million promise the state made in a memorandum of understanding with developer Forest City Ratner. The 8.7 million-square-foot project includes a basketball arena, apartments, offices and retail space.

CLUB-PACKERS OUTFOXED

Two opponents of the proposed Brooklyn Atlantic Yards development have been outfoxed by a prominent Democratic club. Chris Owens, a candidate for Congress, and Ken Diamondstone, who plans to challenge state Sen. Marty Connor, had packed the Inde-

NASCAR tax zone is catch-22 for lawmakers

The International Speedway Corp. is looking for a legislator—preferably state Sen. John Marchi, R-Staten Island, who is retiring this year—to sponsor a bill creating a “transportation improvement district” on the island.

The district would capture taxes generated by ISC’s proposed Nascar track and keep them for Staten Island. But the push for the tax zone has dragged the island’s state legislators into the issue of the controversial speedway, whose fate rests with the City Council.

The lawmakers fear that it will look like

they support the speedway if they create the tax district, but if they don’t and the speedway is built anyway, the tax revenues would be lost to city and state general coffers.

Establishing the district now would be easier politically. Because the benefit to Staten Island is uncertain at this point, upstate legislators would not mind so much. But the district would be worth millions if the speedway is approved, and upstate legislators would demand something of equal value for their own communities.

pendent Neighborhood Democrats with 100 new members in a bid to win endorsements. But the INC moved up the date of its endorsement meetings, rendering the new members ineligible to vote because they hadn’t joined at least 60 days in advance. Sources say that club leaders didn’t want to do the bidding of activists fighting the Atlantic Yards project.

JAVITS SITE LAUNCHES

JavitsNow.com, promoting the plan approved last week by the Empire State Development Corp. to expand the Javits Center, launches today. NYC & Company produced the site, which includes facts, figures, renderings and floor plans for the expanded convention center and hotel. The Public Au-

thorities Control Board will vote on the controversial project on June 23.

AT A GLANCE

JOB LIST: The Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty is seeking a government affairs specialist. For information, contact Ilene Marcus at (212) 453-9596 or imarcus@metcouncil.org.

EVENT: The Working Families Party will hold a gala fund-raiser on May 4, starting at 6:30 p.m. at the 32BJ SEIU auditorium, Manhattan. Attorney General Eliot Spitzer is honorary chairman of the event. For information, contact Rachel Padgett at (718) 222-3796 or rpadgett@workingfamiliesparty.org.

Con Edison salutes Earth Day and invites all New Yorkers to celebrate by visiting *Earth Day 2006 at Grand Central Terminal*, 42nd Street in Manhattan, from April 14 through April 23. Enjoy amazing giant earth images, great music, spectacular face painting, learn about eco-friendly products for your home and alternative transportation vehicles like pedicabs, make recycled art, sample free organic food, and lots more. For details, visit www.earthdayny.org.