FDR memorial park dedicated decades after being announced

Posted on Oct 17, Posted by Administrator Category City

It took just 40 years to get it done, but now the city has a new park, dedicated to no less than President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg joined former President Bill Clinton and Gov. Andrew Cuomo at today's dedication of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Park, which looks out at the United Nations from the East River.

Bloomberg said the state park, designed by American architect Louis I. Kahn, "will stand forever as a monument to the man who brought us through the Great Depression and brought us victory over great evil."

Roosevelt famously delivered a speech on Jan. 6, 1941, as the country was on the precipice of entering World War II, envisioning a world based on four freedoms: freedom of speech and expression; freedom of worship; freedom from want; and freedom of fear.

The park at Roosevelt Island was announced in 1973, but the project languished for years following the city's financial meltdown. It was picked up 30 years later by former Ambassador to the United Nations William vanden Heuvel and the Four Freedoms Park Conservancy.

In September, the New York Times wrote a warm review of the park , with Michael Kimmelman writing, "It gives New York nothing less than a new spiritual heart."

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Image of Bloomberg at the park from today's news conference, courtesy of the mayor's office.

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Roosevelt Island