



August 19, 2010

Mr. Christopher O. Ward
Executive Director
The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
One Madison Avenue, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10010

Dear Mr. Ward:

On behalf of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), the largest and oldest membership-based association of American citizens of Greek heritage, and countless Philhellenes, I am requesting the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to resume its part in the effort to rebuild St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, the only church destroyed in the attacks of September 11, 2001. I am also outreaching to you as a native New Yorker.

We understand negotiations between the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the church have stalled to the point of silence on the Port Authority's part. We also understand, according to news reports, that Port Authority officials stated "the deal is dead."¹ AHEPA has supported the rebuilding of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, and as such, we view the position of the Port Authority to be **unacceptable**. This is not a matter of building one religious structure over another. Instead, this is a matter of the Port Authority seeing through its commitment to move a post-September 11 rebuilding process of national significance along to its proper completion. The Greek American community is displeased and angered that after nearly nine years little tangible progress is evident. Simply stated, we will not tolerate further bureaucratic stall tactics.

Therefore, on behalf of the Greek American community, we request the Port Authority to honor its commitment to the congregation of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and resume negotiations to help rebuild the venerable little church that has served the community at large since 1922.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nicholas A. Karacostas".

Nicholas A. Karacostas
National President

The mission of AHEPA is to promote the ancient Greek ideals of education, philanthropy, civic responsibility and family and individual excellence through community service and volunteerism.

Cc: Governor David Paterson
U.S. Senator Charles Schumer
U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Representative Carolyn Maloney

¹ <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2010/08/17/ground-zero-church-archdiocese-says-officials-forgot>