

**Minutes**  
**The 32<sup>nd</sup> Meeting**  
**Of the**  
**Niagara River Greenway Commission**  
**Beaver Island State Park**  
**Grand Island, NY**  
**January 19, 2010 3:00 pm**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Kresse at 3:08 pm. Secretary Alice Roth was directed to call the roll and a quorum of members was determined to be present.

The following Commissioners or their designated representatives were in attendance:

Robert Kresse, Chairman

Tom DeSantis representing Paul Dyster, Vice-Chair & Chair Citizens Advisory Committee

Alice Roth, Secretary

Ron Pilozzi, Chair Local Government Advisory Committee

Ed McDonald, Commissioner

David Hahn-Baker, Commissioner

Mark Thomas, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Abby Snyder, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

Ron Hayes, NYS Department of Transportation

Renee Parsons, Department of State

Ray Witzleben, Empire State Development

Rob Daly, NYS Power Authority

Rob Belue, Executive Director Niagara River Greenway Commission

Absent: John Giardino, Commission Treasurer

There was no proxy votes needed for this meeting.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Mark Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Renee Parsons. Rob Daly wanted noted that in the "Wild Ones" section it was stated that the vote was unanimous, but the New York Power Authority had abstained from the vote. The meeting minutes were then approved unanimously as submitted.

**Comments from the Chairman**

Chairman Robert Kresse hopes that in the year 2010 to build from the past few years of the Commission and increase its responsibility. The Commission has been lucky to have legislation that allows the Greenway to find projects consistent and hopes the Commission will be able to expand on that in the future.

### **Public Comment- Current Agenda**

**Dorothy Westhafer** spoke as an individual about the Buffalo Access Acquisition Feasibility Study. She feels it doesn't meet the requirements for the Greenway because it lacks transparency.

**Margaret Wooster** spoke on behalf of the Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition. They find the LaSalle Park Master Plan, and the LaSalle Waterfront Park consistent with the Greenway. They find the Niagara County Parks Signage Project, the Niagara County Historical Society Project, and the Carousel Society Kiddieland Project not consistent with the Greenway. The Buffalo-Niagara Riverkeeper project was divided.

**Jay McCarthy** spoke on behalf of Buffalo Micro-Parks/Bark Yard. They think it is very important to continue to improve the LaSalle area along the waterfront, and hopes the commission continues to find projects consistent for LaSalle Park.

**Paul Leuchner, a former Greenway Commissioner, had a letter read for him by Executive Director Rob Belue.** A brief overview of the letter was as follows: The proposal for property acquisition by the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper contains no information about the properties in question. The basic requirements for the submission of applications to the Greenway Commission were not met. The Riverkeeper did not properly develop their proposal for review by the Commission or the public. The project should not have been allowed into the public review process. Mr. Leuchner asked the Commission to remove the Riverkeeper process from the review process.

There were no further public comments.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Financial Report**

Executive Director Rob Belue gave the financial report on behalf of Treasurer John Giardino. As of 12/31/09 there is a fund balance of \$21,919.15. The expenses have been salaries, meetings and the web page. The Greenway is still waiting for funds to go into their NHT account. A motion to approve the report was made by Commissioner Pillozzi and seconded by Commissioner David Hahn-Baker

### **Old Business**

**Project Consistency Review:** Chairman Kresse asked the Executive Director to take over this part of the meeting. The Executive Director explained the procedures that would be followed for project review. First, he will provide a brief overview of each proposal and then invite the project sponsors to make a brief presentation. Following the presentation Commission members will be able to ask questions. The process will conclude with a vote on consistency with the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

### **Buffalo-Niagara Riverkeeper- Buffalo Access Acquisition Feasibility Study**

The project presentation was made by Julie O'Neill, the Executive Director of the Buffalo-Niagara Riverkeeper. Commissioner Thomas thinks this is new territory for the Commission and it is important to note this is stage one of a process. He asked if the Buffalo-Niagara Riverkeeper will be back for funding. Julie O'Neill said they would when they have a specific site to be funded. Commissioner Thomas supports the study request. Commissioner Pilozzi asked how they would keep speculators away. Julie O'Neil said they would hopefully have a negotiated option. Commissioner Hahn-Baker commented that there is a dynamic between public involvement and secrecy. Both have to be met. He asked if there was a possibility of a broader view. Julie O'Neill said yes they could go larger, but it would be more expensive. Chairman Kresse called for a vote and the majority of the members found this project is consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

### **City of Buffalo- LaSalle Park Master Plan Phase 2**

The project presentation was made by Karen Stanley and Pete Merlow. Tom DeSantis asked how far this phase goes into the master plan. Karen responded that it is an expensive master plan and this is just a small piece of the overall plan. Chairman Kresse called for a vote and members were unanimous in their finding that this project is consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

### **Niagara County- Niagara County Parks and Signage Project**

The project presentation was made by Kevin O'Brian. Commissioner Pilozzi commented that signage would have to be consistent. Commissioner McDonald asked if this was part of the old system. Kevin O'Brian responded that it is at the site of the old, but it was taken out and would be all new. Commissioner Hahn-Baker was also concerned that the signage be consistent. Chairman Kresse called for a vote and members were unanimous in their finding that this project is consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

### **Niagara County Historical Society- The Charles Rand Penny Collection**

The project presentation was made by Doug Forley and Melissa Dunlop. Commissioner Thomas had an issue with connectivity. Commissioner Roth was impressed with the work done at the museum. Chairman Kresse asked what the core focus of the collection was. Melissa said the Erie Canal. Tom DeSantis said this was a heritage connection and they need to find a way to make this recognizable to the larger Greenway. Abby Snyder agreed. Chairman Kresse called for a vote and members were unanimous in their finding that this project is consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

### **City of Niagara Falls- LaSalle Waterfront Park**

The project presentation was made by Tom DeSantis. Commissioner Hahn-Baker complemented the City of Niagara Falls on its partnerships with contractors. Commissioner Pilozzi asked if the floating docks had current problems, and Tom DeSantis said he was told it will work. Chairman Kresse called for a vote and members were unanimous in their finding that this project is consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

### **Carousel Society of the Niagara Frontier- Kiddieland**

The project presentation was made by Rae Proefroch. Commissioner McDonald supports the project for its historical background. Commissioner Thomas said the most important thing is that this is for the children and to keep that in mind. Commissioner Hahn-Baker said this is an example of how to

articulate on connectivity. Chairman Kresse called for a vote and the majority of the members found this project is consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

### **Public Comment- Open Topics**

**Thomas Frank, Amherst, New York:** Mr. Frank spoke on various subjects.

### **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Mark Thomas seconded by Commissioner Alice Roth. The meeting adjourned unanimously at 4:48 pm.

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Alice Roth, Secretary  
Niagara River Greenway Commission