

## Minutes

**The Nineteenth Meeting  
Of the  
Niagara River Greenway Commission  
Beaver Island State Park  
Grand Island, NY  
November 20, 2007 2:00 pm**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Kresse at 2:08 pm. Secretary Paul Leuchner 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  
Paul Leuchner, Secretary  
Ron Moline, Commissioner  
Paul Dyster, Commissioner  
Louis Ciminelli, Commissioner  
Mark Thomas, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Daniel David, for Abby Snyder New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
Ron Hayes, New York State Department of Transportation  
Rene Parsons, New York State Department of State  
Chris Schoepflin, Empire State Development  
Rob Belue, Executive Director Niagara River Greenway Commission  
Angela Berti, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

### Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the September 18, 2007 meeting of the Niagara River Greenway Commission (NRGC) were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mark Thomas and seconded by Ron Moline. The minutes were approved unanimously.

### Comments from the Chairman

Chairman Kresse noted that the long awaited day to begin the process of reviewing projects to determine consistency with the approved Niagara River Greenway Plan has arrived. The deadline for public comment has been extended to December 22, 2007. At the January 15, 2008 meeting of the Niagara River Greenway Commission members will vote on project consistency. The Chairman also reported that Commissioner Ron Moline had submitted a letter of resignation which takes effect on December 31, 2007. He thanked Commissioner Moline for his years of dedication and service. Recognition for his dedicated years of service was noted.

## Committee Reports

### Financial Report

Rob Belue provided an update on the budget on behalf of Treasurer John Giardino (see attached). The total budget for the 2007-2008 fiscal year was reported to be \$160,000 with expenses to date totaling \$27,451.62.

### Executive Director

The Executive Director reported that he had made presentations to the following: New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (Regional Commission Meeting)

- LaSalle Pride
- Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper (Conference on Buffalo's Other Waterfront)
- Greenway Project Sponsors
- NYPA Protocol Meetings

He also noted that the approved Niagara River Greenway Plan had achieved professional recognition receiving awards from the American Planning Association and the American Society of Landscape Architects.

The procedures for the review of projects by the Niagara River Greenway Commission have been finalized and are posted on the official web site. Rob Belue noted that a few projects had been submitted and the rest must be received by the deadline of midnight November 20, 2007. He also advised that guidance on project submissions can be obtained Monday through Friday during normal business hours.

A consistency determination for each project is expected to be made by the Commission at the next regular meeting scheduled for January 15, 2008.

The public will have an opportunity to comment on all projects that are posted on the official commission website. All such comments due on December 15, 2007 will be considered and then forwarded as received to the appropriate standing committee along with the consistency findings of the Niagara River Greenway Commission. There will be no additional opportunity for public comment during any regular meeting of the Niagara River Greenway Commission where a vote is taken on project consistency.

Executive Director Belue noted that each Commissioner was provided with checklists that can be used during the project review process. He warned that the checklists are only intended for personal use and if submitted with official comments they will become a part of the public record. He also provided a brief summary on the procedural steps that will be followed once a project is submitted for review. Projects will only be evaluated in terms of their relationship to the Niagara River Greenway Plan and its corresponding vision, principles, goals and criteria. Numerical scoring will not be used as a means to rate projects.

### Old Business

None.

## **New Business**

State actions pursuant to Article 39.19 must be reviewed to determine consistency with the approved Niagara River Greenway Plan. Each agency was asked to develop the procedures for this review and to report progress at the next meeting.

Commissioner Paul Dyster reported on the progress of Federal legislation that would establish the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area.

## **Public Comment**

- Julie Barrett O'Neil, Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, Noted that the real money for projects is at the government agency level and that they have an obligation to insure that their actions are consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan. Ms. O'Neil also expressed concern about the possibility of water diversion from the Great Lakes. She stressed the importance of exercising proper stewardship over these water resources through proper management and conservation.
- Ben Bidell-Niagara County Development- suggested use of the SEQR checklist as a way for agencies to address the consistency requirements set forth in Article 39.19

## **Meeting Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Lou Ciminelli and seconded by Chris Schoepflin. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Paul Leuchner, Secretary  
Niagara River Greenway Commission