

## Minutes

### **The Fourteenth Meeting Of the Niagara River Greenway Commission Beaver Island State Park Grand Island, NY February 27, 2007 7:00 pm**

#### **Call to Order and Introduction of Commission Members and guests**

Commission Chairman Robert Kresse called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m. The Commission Secretary was directed to call the roll and the following Commissioners or their designated representatives were in attendance:

Robert Kresse, Chairman  
Paul Leuchner, Commissioner  
Paul Dyster, Commissioner  
Louis Ciminelli, Commissioner  
Ron Moline, Commissioner  
Brett Sommer, Commissioner  
Abby Snyder, NYS DEC  
Ron Hayes, NYS DOT  
Tom Zyskowski, NYS DOS  
Elise Cusack, NYPA  
Dominic Jacangelo, NYSOPRHP  
Rob Belue, Executive Director NRGC  
Mark Mistretta, Wendel Duchscherer, Consultant to the Commission

#### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the February 27, 2007 meeting of the Niagara River Greenway Commission (NRGC) were reviewed. A motion was made by Ron Hayes to approve the minutes and, seconded by Ron Moline. Dominic Jacangelo noted that the date of the meeting should have read January 16, 2007 instead of 2006. The minutes were approved as corrected.

#### **Comments from the Chairman**

Robert Kresse reported that the Commission is looking forward to the acceptance of the Draft Niagara River Greenway Plan at this meeting. He noted that the plan will help us to think like a region and that today marks the beginning of a dialogue that will lead all of us to a shared vision of the future.

#### **Event Committee**

Event Chairman Paul Leuchner reported that Paddles Up Niagara 2007 will be held on July 28, 2007 at Beaver Island State Park. The river paddling event will follow a different and shorter course that will provide better protection from the wind and a greater diversity of

river landscapes. A picnic following the paddling event may be offered but no details are available at this time the event is now listed on the event calendar sites maintained by Seakayaker Magazine and [www.paddling.net](http://www.paddling.net). The Paddles Up Trail brochure has been completed in draft and should be released to the public in the next couple of months.

### **Niagara River Greenway Plan Status Update**

The Plan Management Committee (PMC) report was made by Dom Jacangelo on behalf of Chairman John Giardino. He reported that the (PMC) had reviewed the 128 written and verbal comments received on the draft Niagara River Greenway Plan. He noted that the comments were quite useful providing constructive criticism and sound advice. In response to the comments minor changes were made to the draft plan. The PMC members were thanked for the many hours of assistance they provided during and after the public comment process.

Dominic Jacangelo introduced Mark Mistretta of Wendel Duchscherer and asked him to go over the changes that were incorporated into the final version of the Draft Niagara River Greenway Plan and DGEIS. He went over three separate documents the Comment and Response Section, the Summary of Changes to the Niagara River Greenway Plan and Draft GEIS, and the Text Changes to the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

At the request of the Commission Chairman Paul Leuchner read the motion recommended to the Niagara River Greenway Commission by the Executive Committee:

“That the Executive Committee accepts all of the changes represented in the following three documents:

- Summary of Changes to the Niagara River Greenway Plan and Draft GEIS dated February 27, 2007;
- Text Changes to the Niagara River Greenway Plan, February 2007;
- Comments and Responses;

and advances them to the full Commission with a recommendation that they adopt a preliminary draft final Niagara River Greenway Plan and Generic EIS.

Elise Cusack put the recommendation in the form of a motion which was seconded by Abbey Snyder. Ron Moline pointed out that the changes made to the plan would not raise concerns amongst the municipalities that have already approved the plan and that those communities who have not yet approved should find their concerns addressed. The Commission Chairman called for a vote. Dominic Jacangelo recused himself since the plan would be forwarded to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for review and approval. The vote was taken and the motion was adopted with all Commissioners voting in favor of the measure and Commissioner Louis Ciminelli abstaining.

The preliminary final draft Niagara River Greenway Plan was approved. Dominic Jacangelo noted that the plan would now go to the Commissioner of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for review and completion of the required consideration period.

### **New Business**

Paul Dyster reported on the passing of environmentalist Bruce Kerschner and recommended that the Niagara River Greenway Commission forward a letter of condolence to his family commending him for his unceasing efforts to protect the environment. He also recommended that the Niagara River Greenway Commission adjourn this meeting in his memory. Paul Dyster then put these recommendations into the form of a motion which was seconded by Paul Leuchner. The motion passed unanimously.

Robert Belue reported on the status of the presentations to the municipalities and noted that six approvals of the plan had been received to date.

At the request of the Commission Chairman, Paul Leuchner read the following letters of support into the record:

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- 2/23/07-Letter of Support from Peter McMahon, Supervisor, Town of Grand Island
- 2/23/07-Letter of Support from Larry Soos, Mayor of the City of North Tonawanda
- 2/23/07-Letter of Support from Ron Pilozzi, Mayor of City of Tonawanda
- Letter of Support from Neil Riordan, Mayor of the Village of Youngstown

Ron Moline read the Town of Tonawanda letter of support for the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

### **Public Comment**

The Commission Chairman opened the public session of the meeting and comments were made by the following:

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- **Monica Pellegrino** representing NYS Assemblyman Sam Hoyt spoke in support of the Niagara River Greenway Plan
- **Margaret Wooster** representing the Buffalo/Niagara Riverkeeper-thanked everyone who worked on the plan and stated that everyone must work hard to insure that upstream projects are compatible with downstream projects.
- **Thomas Frank**-resident of Amherst, New York-congratulated the Commission on reaching this point in the process.

**Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m. in memory of Bruce Kerschner.

Respectfully submitted,

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Paul Leuchner, Secretary  
Niagara River Greenway Commission