

Minutes

The 30th Meeting Of the Niagara River Greenway Commission Beaver Island State Park Grand Island, NY September 15, 2009 3:00 pm

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Kresse at 3:10 pm. Executive Director Rob Belue, filling in for the secretary, 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, Commission Chairman
Tom DeSantis representing Paul Dyster, Commissioner, and Chairman Citizens
Advisory Committee
Ed McDonald, Commissioner
Alice Roth, Commissioner
Mark Thomas, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Abby Snyder, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Ray Witzleben, Empire State Development
Rob Daly, NYS Power Authority
Rob Belue, Executive Director Niagara River Greenway Commission

Absent: John Giardino, Commission Treasurer
Ron Pilozzi, Commissioner and Chairman Local Government
Advisory Committee
NYS-DOS
NYS-DOT

Executive Director Belue noted for the record that he had received proxies with voting instructions from NYS-DOS and NYS-DOT.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the July 28th, 2009 meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Mark Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Alice Roth. The meeting minutes were approved unanimously as submitted.

Comments from the Chairman

Chairman Robert Kresse welcomed all to the meeting.

Public Comment- Current Agenda

Margaret Wooster spoke on behalf of the Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition. She read a letter to the Commission and it stated the following: “We support the City of Buffalo LaSalle Park proposal and the Buffalo Friends of Olmsted Parks Front Park and Riverside Park Restoration proposals. Although we appreciate and encourage marketing local agricultural products, we do not support the City of Lockport’s wine emporium proposal for Greenway dollars as it is far outside the widest Greenway boundary. If the rationale is to fund projects along connector routes to the Niagara River like the Erie Canal, we could be funding projects to Albany and beyond, diluting the project focus of Greenway funds. Similarly, although we endorse the marketing of green products in the Go Green marketing proposal, the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, League of Women Voters, Niagara Frontier Wildlife Habitat Council and Sierra Club do not see clear enough links to the specific goals of the Niagara Greenway to justify the \$1.8 million requested. We recommend that you determine this project to be not consistent.” There were no further public comments.

Committee Reports

Nominating Committee/Vote

Chairman Kresse gave the report from the nominating committee on the slate of officers for the up-coming term; Vice-Chairman Paul Dyster, Treasurer John Giardino and Secretary Alice Roth. A motion to approve these nominations was made by Commissioner Mark Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Ed McDonald followed by a unanimous vote for election by the Commission.

Financial Report

Executive Director Rob Belue stated that as of June 30th, the balance for the Greenway is \$221,084.21. A motion to approve the report was made by Commissioner Mark Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Ed McDonald.

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.

City of Buffalo- First Impressions Plan for LaSalle Park

The project did not have any presenters. Chairman Kresse called for a vote and members were unanimous in their finding that this project is consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

Buffalo-Olmsted Parks Conservancy- Front Park Shelter & Porter Ave.

The project presentation was made by Thomas Herrera-Mishler. Tom DeSantis asked what the parking lot capacity was. Mr. Herrera-Mishler was unsure but said at least 100 spaces. Chairman Kresse called for a vote and members were unanimous in their finding that this project is consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

Buffalo-Olmsted Parks Conservancy- Riverside Park Central Concourse Restoration

The project presentation was made by Thomas Herrera-Mishler. Commissioner Mark Thomas asked what the dollar amount was for this project. Mr. Herrera-Mishler said it was \$1.5 million spread out in phases. 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 Lockport- Canalside Wine Emporium

The presenters were Harry Sicherman and Margo Bittner. Commissioner Mark Thomas asked who had ownership in this project. The City of Lockport has the ownership. Chairman Kresse called for a vote and there was no majority on this vote resulting in a non-determination.

Green Trade Marketing- gogreenway.org

The presenters were Maria Burrage and Gina Siepierski. Rob Daly wanted to know if this is a privately owned company, which it is. Abby Snyder wanted to know what the focus area is. It will, for now, just focus within the Greenway with a potential to branch out in the future. The overall consensus was they were in the wrong place for approval and funding, but it is a good concept and something that should be done. Chairman Kresse called for a vote and the members found that this project is not consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

Public Comment- Open Topics

Margaret Wooster, Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper: Ms. Wooster read a letter to the commission. She had two key points in the letter. One was, "if you make consistency determinations on conceptual plans, please make clear to project proponents that this does not extend to actual projects which would require a new review. And, help us as members of the public; ensure the Lewiston Trail final design is as good as the Niagara Greenway deserves by being coordinated with Robert Moses Parkway planning, beginning with a meeting between consultants on both projects in the near future."

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 Ed McDonald. The meeting adjourned unanimously at 4:00 pm.

Alice Roth, Secretary
Niagara River Greenway Commission