

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
PALISADES INTERSTATE PARK
NEW JERSEY SECTION

April 20, 2017

A meeting of the Citizens Advisory Council, Palisades Interstate Park Commission, New Jersey Section, was held on April 20, 2017 at the Park Headquarters, Alpine, N.J. The meeting was called to order by Chair Kevin Tremble at 1:43 p.m. Present were CAC members Geoffrey Browne, Daniel Chazin, Susan Gordon, Martha Lieblich and Kevin Tremble, Assistant Superintendent Chris Szeglin, and member of the public John McKenna.

1. Minutes. The minutes of the March 9th meeting were approved as submitted. Daniel Chazin stated that he would send a copy of the approved minutes both to Chris Szeglin, so they may be posted on the Park's website, and to Liz Van Houten, so that they may be forwarded to the Commissioners.

2. Chairman's Report. Kevin Tremble reported on the following items:

a. Fort Lee Historic Park. Kevin Tremble reported that he has received an offer from the Crossroads of the American Revolution Association to donate a sign that could be placed at the entrance to the Fort Lee Historic Park, with the Crossroads of the American Revolution logo on a red plank, to replace a sign that has fallen because its base has rotted. Chris Szeglin commented that there is a standard that all signs in the Park should have a brown background, and he also stated that the sign should include additional wording. He discussed considerations regarding the location of the sign and noted that various other signs at the Fort Lee Historic Park will also need to be replaced. Kevin Tremble stated that he would talk to the Crossroads group regarding Chris Szeglin's concerns.

Chris Szeglin stated that little progress has been made on the map for the Visitor Center at the Fort Lee Historic Park. He stated that if the contractor does not make some progress soon, he will have no alternative but to terminate the contractor. Kevin Tremble stated that he knows of a vendor at the Morristown National Historical Park that would be qualified to produce this map. It was noted that this project originated eight or nine years ago, in the course of which inflation has reduced the value of the amount of the grant.

b. Ramapo College Pilot Program. Kevin Tremble reported that the

Palisades Park Conservancy has awarded a \$5,000 grant to hire an intern to develop the field study program under the supervision of Ramapo College. In addition, a \$2,000 grant was requested from the National Environmental Education Foundation to fund professional assistance in the development of the program. He noted that Leonia and Edgewater have already signed up for a full-day program for this year.

c. Parkway. Kevin Tremble reported that, at the recent Commission meeting, he commented on an incident where a woman whose car had hit the terminal section of a guardrail was killed when the guardrail speared into her car. Chris Szeglin commented that the standards for the terminal section of guardrails are constantly being reevaluated and that the Park is pleased with the current design that it is using, known as Fleet 350, which is a 37.5-foot assembly with metal posts. He noted that the Park formerly used a wooden post terminal design, and that many of these terminal sections are still in place along the Parkway.

Chris Szeglin also commented that while the Commission has discussed increasing the speed limit on the Parkway to 55 miles per hour in New York south of Exit 11, the same reasoning could be used to increase the speed limit along the Parkway in New Jersey.

3. Members' Reports. The following reports were presented:

a. Tallman Mountain Library Display. Geoff Browne noted that the display of the Tallman Mountain exhibit at a meeting room of the Fort Lee Public Library was taken down, as scheduled, on March 31st. He stated that the exhibit had generated much interest from the public. Kevin Tremble noted that he had suggested at the Commission meeting that the Commission provide additional exhibits that could be displayed in local libraries.

Geoff Browne reported that the Tallman Mountain display will be shown in the main Paramus Library during the months of June and July. Martha Lieblich stated that she would send an e-mail to Matt Shook requesting him to include this exhibit in the catalog of events that he produces.

b. Rock the River. Martha Lieblich noted that the Rock the River event will be held on Sunday, May 7th. Chris Szeglin stated that CAC members who agree to staff a table at this event would have to arrive no later than 7:00 a.m. (and possibly earlier). It was pointed out that, at this event, the CAC would be distributing information about the Park and the Crossroads of the American Revolution Association. Martha Lieblich stated that the CAC would need three passes for this event.

c. Sailings of A.J. Meerwald. Martha Lieblich reported that the *A.J. Meerwald* will be visiting the Park this year on July 13-16, and she distributed a flyer promoting the sailings.

d. Garden Club of Englewood. Susan Gordon reported that the Garden Club of Englewood has spoken with Eric Nelsen about possibly helping with the plantings at the Kearney House.

4. Quarterly Progress Report. It was agreed that this progress of the various capital projects in the Park would be put on the agenda for the May CAC meeting.

5. Boat Basins. Chris Szeglin reported that, to date, only seven boaters have signed up for slips at the Alpine Boat Basin. He noted that, last year, about 30 slips were rented.

6. Reconstruction of Alpine Approach Road. Chris Szeglin reported that the contractor is still hoping to finish the work of reconstructing a section of the Alpine Approach Road by May 1st. He stated that the most difficult work has been completed and that the remaining work is going smoothly. Kevin Tremble commented that, following the recent Commission meeting, Jim Hall stated to him that finding appropriate stone to use for the project proved to be a challenge. Chris Szeglin explained that the contractor was unable to use stones from the existing stone wall because the wall had collapsed on the first day of construction, with all the stones having fallen to the base of the cliffs. He stated that the stones being used by the contractor have not been shaped to the extent that stones used in the original wall built in the 1930s were, but that the wall looks good and appears to be quite solid.

Chris Szeglin also reported that the parapet stones will be placed on a concrete band about 4 to 6 inches high that will provide greater stability for the parapet stones. He noted, however, that a stone gutter will not be installed at this time, due to the cost involved. Chris Szeglin pointed out that the collapse of the wall changed the entire nature of the project, and he stated that the Park incurred additional costs for change orders, including for the transportation of stone from elsewhere, as a result. He noted that the bid submitted by the contractor was significantly below his own estimate and that the final cost of the job should approximate his original estimate.

7. Budget. Kevin Tremble noted that, at the recent Commission meeting, Jim Hall stated that the Park has obtained, for the fiscal year 2017, the second installment of funds that formerly came from the Corporate Business Tax, with the

total amount of such funds received for the fiscal year being \$525,000. He also noted that Jim Hall stated that he had a commitment from the Governor's Office that the Park would be provided with the same funding for the fiscal year 2018. Kevin Tremble also commented that the Commission budget for 2017-18 presented at this meeting appeared to show an excess of revenue over expenses.

8. Gas Stations along Parkway. Kevin Tremble noted that, at the recent Commission meeting, Jim Hall reported that sales at the two gas stations in Englewood Cliffs along the New Jersey Section of the Parkway are continuing to show about a 17% decrease from prior levels and that the contractor is considering using capital funds to expand the size of the gas station building on the southbound side of the Parkway. Kevin Tremble questioned whether the proposed expansion of the building would have to be reviewed by the State Office of Historic Preservation. In response, Chris Szeglin said that he was not sure but that in any event the Park would ensure that any changes to the exterior of the building would be compatible with the existing structure.

9. Park App Map. Chris Szeglin reported that the app has been tweaked a little and that Sean Donato has received a number of comments from staff. Chris Szeglin also stated that Sean Donato has nearly completed his work on the Android version of the app, which will probably be made available to the public in May. Chris Szeglin showed the draft version of the app on his phone to the members of the CAC and discussed the changes that have been made to the app as a result of the comments received. Chris Szeglin also agreed to provide a link to the app to all CAC members with Apple phones. He discussed the increasing use of social media by the Park and commented that the use by the public of social media has increased visitation to the Park.

10. Date of Next Meeting. The next CAC meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 11th.

11. The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel D. Chazin
Secretary