

Minutes
Niagara River Greenway
New York State Parks Standing Committee 24th Meeting
April 11, 2024 – 10:30 AM
DeVeaux Woods State Park
NYS Parks’ Director’s Office

Attendees

Mark Mistretta, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Lou Paonessa, New York Power Authority
Greg Stevens, Niagara River Greenway Commission
Angela Berti, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Vince Iacovitti, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Nancy Busch, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Introduction and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Mark Mistretta called the meeting to order at 10:30 am. Greg Stevens requested the minutes of the October 11, 2023, meeting be amended to reflect Greenway monies for the Joseph Davis State Park site improvements to be used toward Greenway elements only (i.e. signage, trails, playground, disc golf) and not parking. Lou Paonessa moved to have the amended minutes approved; Mark Mistretta seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Comment on Agenda Item

No public comment.

Funding Request

The following project was deemed consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan as determined by the Niagara River Greenway Commission on March 12, 2024:

Niagara Falls State Park Crow’s Nest Stair Extension Project:

FUNDING REQUEST.....\$1,000,000.00

The Crow’s Nest Stair Extension Project location is at Prospect Point in Niagara Falls State Park. Nancy Busch presented the project goals:

- Create an opportunity for more people to experience the lower Niagara gorge area
- Create a direct, non-powered access to the edge of the Falls
- Respect the historic and natural character of the unique site

The project will connect existing Crow’s Nest stairway to access above without reliance on an elevator, be sensitive to visual impacts and create new experiences and viewing opportunities. Budget and funding sources were reviewed along with the project timeline. Lou Paonessa inquired whether the project was supported by the Maid of the Mist (MOTM). Mark Mistretta noted the MOTM is in full support of the project as it will help move more people through their attraction. On a question by Lou Paonessa, Mark Mistretta explained getting people down from the top will be a managed operational issue. It was suggested that AEDs be placed near the stairs as the climb will require some physical exertion. The Crow’s Nest will be closed during the 2025 season and reopen in June 2026.

- Requesting NYS Parks Greenway funding be approved for the project.
- Lou Paonessa motioned to approve NYS Parks Greenway funding for the project.
Seconded by Mark Mistretta. The vote was unanimous.
Lou Paonessa – approve Mark Mistretta – approve

Next Meeting

The remaining Niagara River Greenway NYS Parks Standing Committee 2024 meeting dates are as follows:

June 12, 2024 11:00 AM
September 11, 2024 11:00 AM

Adjournment

Lou Paonessa motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mark Mistretta. The meeting adjourned at 11:01 am.