

HUDSON RIVER VALLEY GREENWAY
Combined meeting of
Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc.,
Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council,
and
Greenway Heritage Conservancy HRV, Inc.
December 8, 2021
Via Telephone and WebEx
MINUTES

Attendance

Conservancy Members Present

Brown, Kristin Cole, Conservancy Member
Burke, Kevin, Conservancy Chairman
Daniels, Jane, Conservancy Member
Jacks, Betsy, Conservancy Vice-Chair
Lanzetta, Cindy, Conservancy Member
McLaughlin, Jayne, Conservancy Treasurer
Olson, Sarah, Conservancy Secretary
Weiss, Daniela, Conservancy Member
Williams, Jeanne, Conservancy Member
Yarabek, Stefan, Conservancy Member

Conservancy Members Present by Proxy

Murray, Dennis, Conservancy Member

Members Present

Aldrich, J. Winthrop, Acting Chair
Altieri, Vincent, Rockland County Council Member
Carlquist, Jennifer, Putnam County Council Member
Castillo, Carla, Council Member
Downey, Margaretta, Dutchess County Council Member
Elliott, Robert, Westchester County Council Member, Meeting Chair
Ensinger, Lori, Council Member
Galef, Sandra, NYS Assemblymember
McNamara, Mary, Ulster County Council Member
Piscitelli, Anthony, New York City Council Member
Schiafo, Richard, Greene County Council Member
Schneid, Matthew, New York City Council Member
von der Heide, Linda, Rensselaer County Council Member

Delegates Present

Dunwell, Fran, Joint Co-Delegate for Commissioner, NYS Department of Environmental
Conservation Historic Preservation
Ethier, Jaime, Joint Deputy Delegate for Secretary of State
Leo, Christian, Joint Delegate for Commissioner of NYS Office of General Services

Wolfanger, Jason, Joint Co-Delegate for Commissioner, NYS Department of Transportation
Wrafter, Eoin, Delegate for Marcus Molinaro, Conservancy Member

Advisory Members Present

Bicking, Andy, Scenic Hudson

Greenway Staff Present

Arana, Cody, Assistant Event Coordinator

Beers, Andy, Empire State Trails Director

Campochiaro, Beth, Trails and Community Outreach Director

Day, Shannon, Director of Operations

Jeanson, Daniel, Project Director

Keller, Scott, Executive Director

Call to Order

Chairman Kevin Burke called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. Executive Director Scott Keller called the roll.

Agenda Review

Chairman Burke called for any comments on the agenda. No comments were made.

Minutes of October 13, 2021 Combined Meeting of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council, Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc., and Greenway Heritage Conservancy HRV, Inc.

Chairman Burke then asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the October 13, 2021 Greenway Joint Meeting. On a motion from Jane Daniels, (Jeanne Williams second) the minutes of the October 13, 2021 Combined Meeting of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council, Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc., and Greenway Heritage Conservancy HRV, Inc. were unanimously approved.

Minutes of December 13, 2021 Meeting of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Grants Committee

Chairman Burke called for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2021 meeting of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Grants Committee. On a motion from Bob Elliott (Sarah Olson second) the minutes of the December 3, 2021 meeting of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Grants Committee were unanimously approved.

Appointment of Barnabas McHenry as Founding Chairman

Chairman Burke, Meeting Chair Aldrich, and Executive Director Scott Keller announced that Council Chairman Barnabas McHenry has retired from the Board. In light of Chairman McHenry's long dedication to the work of the Greenway, and his important input on matters relevant to the Greenway, it was suggested that he should be named to the Advisory Board in the newly created position of Founding Chairman. On a motion

from Stefan Yarabek (Meg Downey second) the Boards unanimously and enthusiastically appointed former Chairman McHenry as Founding chairman.

Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council

Call to Order

Meeting Chair Wint Aldrich called the Council meeting to order.

Election of Vice Chairman to Serve as Acting Chairman

Executive Director Scott Keller explained that while the Conservancy has always had elected officers beyond the appointed Chairman, and a mechanism in their bylaws defining who serves as Chairman in the event of a vacancy or vacancies, the Council has never had a vacancy in the Chairmanship, nor does it have other elected officers or bylaws. Unlike the Conservancy, the Council has no daily fiduciary oversight, because its finances are handled by NYS and therefore beyond control of the Board. As such Council leadership never saw a need for either elected officers or bylaws. However, we are now without a Chairman and in discussing this with Wint, the other Governor's appointment to the Council, and Kevin, it was agreed that the Council should have a Vice Chairman to serve as Chairman now and in the event of a future vacancy.

Meg Downey nominated Wint Aldrich, (Linda von der Heide second). No other nominations were made, and the Board unanimously elected Wint Aldrich, who accepted the appointments as Vice Chair and assume the duties of Acting Chairman.

Communities Council Grants

Mr. Keller reviewed the grant applications that had been received for the Communities Grant Program.

The Town of Gardiner, Ulster County is seeking, and the Grants Committee recommends, \$10,000 to prepare a plan which would establish priorities for open space, and historic and agricultural preservation.

The Town of Hebron, Washington County is seeking, and the Grants Committee recommends \$10,000 for a Community Vision and Strategy.

Communities Council Compact Grants

Mr. Keller reviewed the grant applications that had been received for the Compact Grant Program.

The Town of Ossining, Westchester County is seeking, and the Grants Committee recommends \$10,000 for an Open Space Preservation Plan.

The Town of Yorktown, Westchester County is seeking, and the Grants Committee recommends \$15,000 for a Watershed Inventory.

Acting Chair Wint Aldrich called for a vote on the Greenway Communities and

Compact grants recommended by the Grants Committee. On a motion from Bob Elliott (Fran Dunwell second), the grants were approved unanimously.

Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc.

Call to Order

Chairman Burke called the Conservancy meeting to order.

Update on Empire State Trail

Andy Beers, Empire State Trail Director, gave an update on the Empire State Trail (EST).

- Empire State Trail Map. The map has now been printed. Copies were mailed to all board members. Response from the public has been very strong – in the four weeks since the map was printed, slightly more than 2,000 individual members of the public have requested the map via the EST website, of which roughly 75% are from other states and countries. State Parks is managing bulk distribution of the map to Tourism Promotion Agencies, Visitor Centers, etc.
- NY Times Article. A link to the extremely positive November 5th EST story was emailed to all board members. In October, normally at this time of year we expect about 600 visitors per day to the EST website. In the five days after the NY Times story ran, 47,000 people visited the website.
- Resurfacing Projects. HRVG is tracking a roster of 13 projects that are resurfacing a total of 52 miles of older, deteriorated EST sections. Of the 13 projects, four are complete, four more are under construction, and the remaining five are in design for 2022 construction.

Water Trail Designation

Scott Keller announced that he Town of Esopus is seeking designation of Lighthouse Park on River Road as a Water Trail launch and day use site. This designation will bring the total number of water trail sites to 118 and the number in the Town of Esopus, both publicly and privately owned, to four.

Trail Designation

Mr. Keller also announced that the Winnakee Land Trust is seeking designation of the one-half mile long Summit Trail in Drayton Grant Park at Burger Hill as part of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Trail. This is a natural surface trail open to walkers, cross country skiers and pets. This designation will bring the Greenway to a total 888 miles of designated land trails.

Greenway Conservancy Trail Grants

Mr. Keller reviewed the applications for Greenway Conservancy Trail Grants which had been recommended for funding by the Grants Committee.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Putnam County, Putnam County is seeking, and the Grants Committee recommends, \$10,000 for a for a Hike Putnam: Bringing Land-use, History, & Invasives into Focus.

The Franklin D. Roosevelt Hyde Park Foundation, Dutchess County is seeking, and the grants committee recommends, \$10,000 for a Realizing a More Abundant Life: Enhancing Interpretation of the NPS. Kevin Burke recused himself from the vote on this grant.

The Thomas Cole NHS, Greene County is seeking, and the Grants Committee recommends, \$75,000 for a Connector Trail Between Hudson River Skywalk and Cole Center. Betsy Jacks recused herself from the vote on this grant.

The Town of Esopus, Ulster County is seeking, and the Grants Committee recommends, \$10,000 for an Ecological and Historical Interpretation Project to purchase materials and construct kiosks, design and install interpretive panels and purchase picnic tables for Sleightsburgh, Freer, and Lighthouse Parks, all of which are now designated WT sites.

Chairman Burke called for a vote on the Water Trail and Land Trail designations, and Conservancy Trail Grants. On a motion from Kitty Brown (Jeanne Williams second), the audit and grants were unanimously approved. Sarah Olson recused herself on the Land Trail designation.

Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area

Call to Order

Chairman Burke and Acting Chair Aldrich called the National Heritage Area (NHA) meeting to order.

National Heritage Area Heritage Development Grants

Mr. Keller reviewed the grants that had been reviewed and recommended by the Grants Committee.

Bard College at Montgomery Place, Dutchess County is seeking, and the Grants Committee recommends, \$5,000 for a Seasonal Arts Festival at Montgomery Place.

Musicians of Ma'alwyck, Inc., Columbia County is seeking, and the Grants Committee recommends \$2,500 for a Dutch Heritage Shorts Series: Luykas van Alen House.

The Putnam History Museum, Putnam County is seeking, and the Grants Committee recommends, \$5,000 for a Beyond the Museum Walls, History is Alive Outdoors: Self-guided Programs for Families and Individuals.

Thomas Cole NHS, Greene County is seeking, and the Grants Committee recommends, \$5,000 funding for a Full House: Women's Histories and the Hudson River School. Betsy Jacks recused herself from the vote on this grant.

Chairman Burke called for a vote on the Heritage Development Grants. On a motion from Stefan Yarabek (Meg Downey second), the grants were unanimously approved.

Update on Preservation League of NYS Technical Assistance Grants (TAG)

Scott Keller noted that the Heritage Area has partnered with Preservation League of NYS since 2018 to provide \$10,000 a year to help fund these awards. Other funding comes from the NYS Council on the Arts and a Long Island non-profit. TAG's provide funding for building condition surveys, structural and engineering analyses, feasibility studies, handicapped accessibility surveys, and conservation studies. Several grants are awarded of up to \$4,000 each. The League selects a review committee and invites funders to sit in and contribute, but not participate in the scoring each year. During our four-year participation, over \$100,000 have been awarded to Hudson Valley heritage sites. So, for every dollar invested by the NHA, there are \$1.60 in other funds awarded. This appears to have resulted in more application coming into the program from the Hudson Valley than in the past.

Update on Funding Authorization Sunset

Scott Keller announced that there was no new information on the most recent continuing resolution, but the initial continuing resolution did waive our expiration and provide funding through December 3rd. The Senate Natural Resources Committee recently passed out of committee an appropriations bill that would extend the NHA's funding authorization until 2036 and increase the HRVNHA's funding cap to \$17 million. This was viewed a non-controversial by the committee, passed without objection, but not unanimously.

NHA Expansion

Scott Kelle announced that Congresswoman Elyse Stefanik recently introduced legislation in the House (HR-5670) calling for the geographical extension of our Heritage Area to cover all of Saratoga and Washington counties, as well as removing the geographical restrictions related to the former 22nd congressional district. The bill would set in law that the Heritage Area covers the entirety of all of the counties bordering the river from Saratoga and Washington, south to Westchester and Rockland.

Prior to introduction, Mr. Keller discussed this bill with both Erie Canalway NHC and Lake Champlain Partnership, whose NHAs already cover this geographical area. Both expressed support for expanding our NHA area as we all work well together and currently are not seeing conflicts among our programs, even though Greenway planning and trails already overlap in this area. It seems everyone views this as a way to get more resources into two counties which can use them. Congresswoman Stefanik's office also expressed firm support for extending our funding authorization.

Executive Director's Report

Scott Keller gave his Executive Director's report. Mr. Keller thanked the staff, noting in particular the effort by all hands on the EST map mailing. He also acknowledged Shannon Day's effort over a full weekend putting the EST map mailing list together and her work on determining archival documents.

Future Meetings

The 2022 Joint Board meetings are scheduled for

Wednesday, March 9, 2022

Wednesday, June 8, 2022

Wednesday, October 12, 2022

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m. by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Campochiaro
Meeting Secretary