

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

February 8, 2024

A meeting of the Citizens Advisory Council, Palisades Interstate Park Commission, New Jersey Section, was held on February 8, 2024 at the Alpine Headquarters and via Zoom.

1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order by Chair Daniel Chazin at 1:30 p.m. Participating were CAC members Daniel Chazin, Tony Martin, Alan Zimmerman, Deborah Davidson, and Peter Michalos, PIP NJ Superintendent Steve Shallop, and member of the public Andrew Mikesch.

2. Minutes. The January meeting minutes were accepted with a spelling correction noted.

3. Chairman's Report. Chair Daniel Chazin reported the following:

a. Hikes in the Park. None to report since our last meeting. He plans to do a geocaching hike with the Boy Scouts in the area south of Stateline Lookout.

b. Feb 12 Commission Meeting. Chair noted that the next Commission meeting would be on Zoom and that the only New Jersey item on the agenda was that the PIPC would join in the Bergen County Police Mutual Aid Plan. As an aside, he noted that on a recent drive he observed how the Palisades cliffs extend well south of the George Washington Bridge but are obscured by development atop and below the cliffs. He noted the great value of the preservation of the Palisades north of the GWB.

c. NY-NJ Trail Conference Maps. Responding to the question from prior CAC meetings, Supt. Shallop said he'd discussed with the manager of SLL the sale of the maps and that they would be available for sale at SLL by the start of the season in April. Chair Chazin will let the Trail Conference know to expect a maps order.

4. Members' Reports. -- None

5. Staff Reports and Items for Discussion:

a. Sending CAC minutes to the PIPC Commissioners. Chair Chazin will contact Liz Van Houten to put in place the distribution of the minutes.

b. Repairs to Park Headquarters in Alpine. Supt. Shallop is pressing for the project to be at the punch list stage by the end of February.

c. Fort Lee Historic Park. Chair Chazin noted that the signage presentation at our last meeting was very informative and helpful. Supt. Shallop said no major projects are planned for FHLP but there will be further minor improvements.

d. Damage to Park from Tropical Storm Ida. The contract for the initial A&E (architecture & engineering) project is under attorney review. The project should start by the end of February: six months to plan (A&E) and 12 to 18 months for construction.

e. Maintenance of hiking trails in the New Jersey Section. Chair Chazin referred the contact information discussed at our last meeting to the Trail Conference. Supt. Shallop expects the new arrangement of responsibilities for maintenance and volunteers to work well.

f. Proposed Bike Path along 9W; Northern Valley Greenway. A. Mikesch reported the NVG is working with consultants to develop their strategy.

g. New Jersey Camp Alpine (Northern New Jersey Council. Supt Shallop has spoken with a park strategist/planner, but the stakeholder process has not yet started. Chair Chazin asked that the CAC be included in the process and that he'd like to discuss further at the March meeting.

h. Proposed Bike Trails West of Parkway. No report. Chair Chazin intends to consolidate this with agenda item (g) Camp Alpine for future meetings.

i. Guardrail replacement along Parkway. There are still a few open items from Phase 1. The contractor will start on new items soon. Chair Chazin commented that the color of the new guardrails doesn't appear to match those that were replaced. Supt. Shallop has already contacted the contractor to check that the repairs meet the contract specification with respect to appearance.

j. Staffing of New Jersey Section. The Civil Service Commission promised to post by March two NJ Section positions: 1) HR and 2) Engineering. Supt. Shallop considers the HR position the highest priority.

k. Palisades Park Conservancy. No report. Chair Chazin will contact Remy S. to see if we can get a report for the next meeting.

l. 1993 Master Plan for New Jersey Section. No Report.

m. Filling Vacancy on CAC. (CAC members excused other meeting attendees to discuss this item privately). Alan Zimmerman suggested Alan J., known both to him and CAC member Michalos, who is an avid hiker and birdwatcher. We also discussed recruiting a member active with the historical re-enactment activities in the park.

n. Other items for discussion. Deb Davidson noted that the last CAC minutes posted to the PIP website were from September 2023. Chair Chazin will reach out to Eric Nelsen. Deb D. also reported: 1) the Meerwald would return to Alpine for sails on July 12-14, 2024; 2) Tenaflly Nature Center (TNC) would host its annual trail race on April 7th - 5k and 10k routes; 3) she shared information on TNCs upcoming event in March.

Chair Chazin asked about gas station performance. Supt. Shallop noted that the gas stations sell about 10 million gallons per year, down from 20 million several years ago, and that this has had a substantial impact on park finances.

6. Public Comment. none

7. Date of Next Meeting. The next CAC meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. on March 7, 2024 at the Alpine Headquarters and via Zoom.

8. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Martin
Recording Secretary