

HISTORIC NEW BRIDGE LANDING REVISED DRAFT MASTER PLAN



Historic New Bridge Landing
Park Commission

HISTORIC NEW BRIDGE LANDING PARK COMMISSION
Steuben House, 1209 Main Street,
River Edge, New Jersey 07661

March 1, 2010

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Statement of powers and duties of the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission

The Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission was established by legislation (P. L. 1995, Chapter 260) to coordinate and implement governmental and private development policies and other activities incidental to the preservation, maintenance, restoration and interpretation of the historic riverfront village surrounding New Bridge, so as to optimize its educational and recreational benefit to the public. Public Law 2009, CHAPTER 45, approved April 23, 2009, revised jurisdiction of the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission, and transferred administration of Historic New Bridge Landing State Park from the Division of Parks & Forestry to the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission.

P.L. 2009, CHAPTER 45, defines the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission as a body corporate and politic with corporate succession, created in the Department of Environmental Protection. The commission is an instrumentality exercising public and essential governmental functions. Exercise by the commission of the powers conferred by this act is deemed to be an essential governmental function of the State.

The Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission consists of nine members appointed and qualified as follows: (1) the Commissioner of Environmental Protection or the commissioner's designee; and (2) eight residents of the State, who shall be recommended by their respective governing body and appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, among whom shall be one representative each from the County of Bergen, the Blauvelt-Demarest Foundation, River Edge Borough, and New Milford Borough; and two representatives each from the Bergen County Historical Society and Teaneck Township.

Each member in office on the effective date of P.L. 2009, CHAPTER 45, approved April 23, 2009, shall serve for the term of the appointment and until a successor shall have been appointed and qualified.

Each member appointed by the Governor shall serve for a term of five years; provided, however, that of the members first appointed, the representative from the County of Bergen shall serve a term of four years, one representative from Teaneck Township shall serve a term of three years and one shall serve a term of four years, one representative from the Bergen County Historical Society shall serve a term of four years and one shall serve a term of five years, the representative from the Blauvelt-Demarest Foundation shall serve a term of five years, and the representatives from River Edge Borough and New Milford Borough shall each serve an initial term of three years. Each member appointed by the Governor may be reappointed upon completion of the term.

Each member shall serve for the term of the appointment and until a successor shall have been appointed and qualified. Any vacancy or reappointment shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

Members of the commission shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. The members of the commission shall elect annually a chairman and vice-chairman from their number, and a secretary and treasurer who need not be members of the commission. The same person may be elected to serve both as secretary and treasurer. The chairman of the commission shall be its presiding officer and the vice-chairman shall serve as chairman in the absence of the chairman. The commission shall organize and adopt procedures for the conduct of its business. Five members of the commission shall constitute a quorum and the concurrence of five members of the commission shall be necessary to validate all acts of the commission.

c. Any member of the commission may be removed by the Governor, for cause, after a public hearing.

d. Each member of the commission, before entering upon the member's duties, shall take and subscribe an oath to perform the duties of the office faithfully, impartially, and justly to the best of the member's ability. A record of the oath shall be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State.

e. The commission shall prepare, adopt, and implement a master plan for the physical development of the property under the commission's jurisdiction, hereby designated as the Historic New Bridge Landing State Park, or a portion thereof; review State and local actions that impact on the park to insure that these actions conform as nearly as possible to the commission's master plan; and coordinate and support activities by citizens' groups to promote and preserve the park.

f. On or before December 31 in each year the commission shall make an annual report of its activities for the preceding calendar year to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52: 14-19.1), to the Legislature. The report shall set forth a complete operating and financial statement covering its operations during the year. The commission may, in addition, at any time request the Governor and the Legislature to appropriate funds for commission purposes.

g. The commission shall cause an audit of its books and accounts to be made at least once in each year and the cost thereof shall be treated as one incurred by the commission in the administration of this act, and a copy thereof shall be filed with the State Treasurer, the State Comptroller, and the State Auditor.

h. (1) No member, officer, employee, or agent of the commission shall be financially interested, either directly or indirectly, in any project or any part of a project area, other than a residence, or in any contract, sale, purchase, lease, or transfer of real or

personal property to the Department of Environmental Protection for inclusion in the Historic New Bridge Landing State Park.

(2) Any contract or agreement knowingly made in contravention of this section is voidable.

(3) Any person who shall willfully violate any of the provisions of this section shall forfeit his office or employment and shall be guilty of a crime of the fourth degree. (cf: P.L.1995, c.260, s.1)

2. Section 2 of P.L.1995, c.260 (C.13: 15B-2) is amended to read as follows:

2. a. The Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission shall coordinate and implement federal, State, county, municipal, and private development policies and other activities relating to the historic preservation and recreational use of the property under the commission's jurisdiction.

b. The commission has jurisdiction over the area in Bergen County known as New Bridge Landing, in the Borough of River Edge, between Main Street and Hackensack Avenue and extending into Teaneck Township², excluding Block 1002, Lot 2,² 29 and the Borough of New Milford, the area being situated along the banks of the Hackensack River. The jurisdiction of the commission shall extend to all publicly-owned lands, buildings, and structures: fronting the Hackensack River at the former village of New Bridge; fronting on Hackensack Avenue and fronting on Main Street, east of Hackensack Avenue and north of Coles Brook, in the Borough of River Edge; fronting on Old New Bridge Road, on Steuben Place in the Borough of New Milford; lying south of Riverview Avenue, east to River Road in Teaneck Township; and fronting on the Hackensack River within two tenths of a mile of New Bridge Landing and the 1889 iron swing bridge.(cf: P.L.1995, c.260, s.2)

3. Section 4 of P.L.1995, c.260 (C.13: 15B-4) is amended to read as follows:

4. a. The Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission has the specific power to contract for the construction, reconstruction, restoration, or maintenance of all lands, buildings, landscaping, bridges, docks, and facilities under its jurisdiction including the maintenance, restoration, and reconstruction of the Steuben House, the Demarest House, the Campbell-Christie House, the Westervelt-Thomas Barn and the construction and operation of a visitor center, library, mill site, curator's residence, parking area, and other appropriate structures. The Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission also has the specific power to agree to indemnify and hold harmless any local government unit against claims arising from the use of property leased from that local government unit by the commission.

b. Upon an annual determination by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection that the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission has fulfilled all conditions required pursuant to section 1 of P.L.1995, c.260 (C.13: 15B-1) and following the

commissioner's approval of the master plan required pursuant to section 4 of P.L., c.: (1) the commission shall administer the Historic New Bridge Landing State Park, including but not limited to the Steuben House; and (2) any State funds appropriated to the Department of Environmental Protection or the Division of Parks and Forestry in the department specifically for, or related to the administration of, the Steuben House or the Historic New Bridge Landing State Park shall be reallocated to the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission for the purposes of the administration of the Historic New Bridge Landing State Park.

c. In addition to any other powers pursuant to P.L.1995, c.260 (C.13: 15B-1 et seq.), the commission shall review and approve all proposed changes, developments or improvements to publicly owned lands, buildings, and structures within its jurisdiction to prevent or mitigate any adverse impact upon pre-historic or historic resources that have a significant potential to add to the knowledge and appreciation of the story of Historic New Bridge Landing and its vicinity or to enhance its preservation as a Revolutionary War site. (cf: P.L.2000, c.158, s.2)

a. The Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, and, after a public hearing, or public hearings, adopt a master plan or portion thereof for the physical development of the Historic New Bridge Landing State Park, or amend the master plan. The master plan shall consist of a general management plan and an interpretive plan. The master plan may include proposals for various stages in the future development or preservation of the park. The master plan shall include a report presenting the objectives, assumptions, standards and principles, which are embodied in the various interlocking portions of the master plan. The master plan shall be a composite of the one or more written proposals recommending the physical development and expansion of the park either in its entirety or a portion thereof, which the commission shall prepare after meetings with the governing bodies of the affected municipalities and counties, and any agencies and instrumentalities thereof.

b. In preparing the master plan or any portion thereof or amendment thereto the commission shall consider existing patterns of development and any relevant master plan or other plan of development, and shall insure widespread citizen involvement and participation in the planning process.

c. The commission shall act in support of local suggestions or desires to complement the park master plan. Consultation, planning, and technical expertise shall be made available to local planning bodies that wish to implement land-use policy to enhance the park area. The commission shall act on or refer complaints by citizens' groups or private residents who discover hazardous situations, pollution, or evidence of noncompliance with use regulations.

d. Upon completion, the commission shall submit the master plan or any amendment to the master plan to the Commissioner of Environmental Protection for review and approval. The commissioner shall approve or disapprove the master

plan or any amendment thereto within 90 days of receipt thereof. The commissioner may, for cause, disapprove the master plan or any amendment thereto. In the event that the commissioner fails to take action on the master plan or any amendment thereto within the 90-day period specified herein, then the master plan or amendment, as appropriate, shall be deemed to have been approved.

5. This act shall take effect immediately.

Legislative Intent

New Bridge Landing is the site of a pivotal bridge crossing the Hackensack River, where General George Washington led his troops in retreat from British forces in November 1776. According to former Governor Jon Corzine, Historic New Bridge Landing, located in portions of New Milford, River Edge and Teaneck in Bergen County, is “a key piece of our history.” “This is a site we must preserve for future generations,” Governor Corzine said. “The bill I am signing grants oversight to a local organization best positioned to address the preservation needs of Historic New Bridge Landing State Park. Through this legislation, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission will now have jurisdiction to manage the restoration of this historical site so critical to the birth of our nation.”

Senator Loretta Weinberg (D-Bergen), one of the primary sponsors, explained, “This new law gives the Commission more authority over administering the funds that are allocated within the State budget for the Park. Historic New Bridge Landing State Park is a piece of New Jersey’s history, and it’s good to have this funding where it belongs.” Senator Gerald Cardinale (R-Bergen), another primary sponsor, said, “It is vitally important that we take all necessary steps to protect and preserve our historic sites.” He further explained, “George Washington’s escape from a British trap, with his army intact, at New Bridge landing in November of 1776 gave him the opportunity to defeat the Hessians and British at Trenton and Princeton only a month later. These battles were essential to ultimate victory in the revolution and the founding of the United States.” “This new law will allow the New Bridge Landing State Park Commission to act in the best interest of the park, without the added red tape brought on by having to secure the funding from the DEP,” said Senator Gordon, D-Bergen. “This law will allow the park to receive the funding it needs in a timely manner.” The Senators’ measure, S-1644, reallocates any State funding appropriated for Historic New Bridge Landing State Park to the Commission, which will, in turn, distribute the money as needed. Previously, all funding for the Park was administered through the Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) Division of Parks and Forestry. The law also clarifies the Commission’s jurisdiction, which extends to all publicly owned lands, buildings and structures within the park, including the Steuben House. The full Senate approved the measure on November 24, 2008.

This legislation enlarges upon the powers and duties originally assigned to the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission by public law in 1995, which empowered the Commission to coordinate and implement all development policies and other activities relating to the historic preservation and recreational use of the property, including but not limited to the Steuben House. In addition, the new law creates a board of directors charged with preparing a master plan for the site, requiring an annual report and an audit. The bill also reallocates any State funds appropriated to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) or the Division of Parks and Forestry in the DEP specifically for, or related to the administration of, the Steuben House or Historic New Bridge Landing State Park to the commission,

following the commissioner's approval of the master plan adopted by the commission. The bill's sponsors were Senators Loretta Weinberg (D-Bergen) and Gerald Cardinale (R-Bergen) as well as Assemblywomen Valerie Vainieri Huttle (D-Bergen), Joan M. Voss (D-Bergen), Connie Wagner (D-Bergen), Charlotte Vandervalk (R-Bergen) and Assemblyman Gordon M. Johnson (D-Bergen).

The legislation received unanimous bipartisan support in both houses of the legislature. Legislators agreed upon their understanding of the importance of their actions. "This bill will increase the commission's authority over this local historic treasure, ensuring the people who know the site best are the ones protecting it," said Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri Huttle (D-Bergen). "Greater local oversight here is the right thing to do." Explaining her support of the measure, Assemblywoman Joan Voss (D-Bergen), said, "Local historic sites should be in the hands of the residents who best know their significance and importance," said. "It's essential to protecting the past so that future generations can learn from it and appreciate how our state grew."

"Putting local landmarks under local control can ensure that timeless and invaluable treasures are properly taken care of when a natural disaster strikes," said Assemblywoman Connie Wagner (D-Bergen). "New Jersey played a pivotal role in our state's and nation's fight for independence, and Steuben House is part of that grand history."

"This place is noteworthy for many reasons, from George Washington having used it as a refuge to its Jersey Dutch and Native American heritage," said Assemblyman Gordon Johnson (D-Bergen). "It is a local treasure and should be run by local people who know best how to protect the site and its artifacts."

"The transfer of the administration of the Historic New Bridge Landing State Park from a department located in Trenton to the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission will be a plus for all Bergen County residents," said Assemblywoman Charlotte Vandervalk, (R-Bergen). "Our county is one that is rich in history and who better to administrate our historic sites than our local residents who have an intimate knowledge of the park and all issues related to the park."

"Together both actions on the part of the Governor will help us to celebrate this historic site and to attract more visitors to the area," said Senators Loretta Weinberg (D-Bergen) and Bob Gordon (D-Bergen).

The Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission was actually created in 1995 with broad powers to coordinate and implement planning for the site, which has informally been run as a public/private partnership since 1939 when the Steuben House first opened to the public. Previous to the 2007 flood, this State Historic Site displayed museum collections of the Bergen County Historical Society, a 107-year-old non-profit group that purchased the adjoining 7 acres in 1944 to protect and enhance the small state-owned property. It was the Society that donated a right-of-

way in 1955 to move a proposed highway bridge away from the Steuben House; it was also the Society that donated land to the state of NJ to build a parking lot for visitors. The Society has funded all programming at the site since its opening. It also provides volunteers to supplement the single state interpreter on the site---a position vacant since February 2008.

The new legislation transfers administration of the state-owned parcels, including the Steuben House, to the commission, which is an administrative entity within the DEP. So this is technically an internal transfer of jurisdiction, much like a piece of public land being transferred from the jurisdiction of Fish & Wildlife to Parks & Forestry. The new law does not relieve the state of the cost of running the state-owned lands and buildings; it simply transfers the administration of all funding and appropriations relating to the Steuben House to the commission's control. The new law also redefines the jurisdictional boundaries of the commission to protect this last fragment of the Jersey Dutch countryside and a significant Revolutionary War battleground from inappropriate intrusions. The Commission has made significant strides under its original powers, most notably securing a \$1.1 million Federal grant to acquire and cleanup the old auto salvage yard. Once this project is finished, the historic park will finally be visible from the 40,000 vehicles that pass daily on Hackensack Avenue-New Bridge Road.

The new legislation grew out the reaction to the consequences of the severe flooding at Historic New Bridge Landing on April 15-16, 2007, when the artifacts belonging to the Bergen County Historical Society, which displayed its museum collections in the Steuben House since 1939 at the invitation of the State of New Jersey, suffered damage. Governor Jon Corzine, NJDEP Commissioner Lisa Jackson, Senator Loretta Weinberg met with the HNBLPC Chairman, M. Trepicchio, Vice-Chairwoman, M. Donohue, Treasurer, J. Bellis and Secretary K. Wright on March 19, 2008. Jeanne Mroczko, Acting Director of the Division of Parks & Forestry and Deborah Powell, President of the Bergen County Historical Society, also attended. The Governor was not personally aware of Historic New Bridge Landing and listened to an overview. It was a productive, focused discussion, mainly centered upon the relationship of the commission and site to the NJDEP. Topics included planning documents, alternative management scenarios, the purpose and powers of the commission as envisioned in the original legislation and as described in a recent Attorney General's opinion, recent interior work on the Steuben House and proposals for its future use, and hopes and plans for fundraising. The Governor was not previously aware that the Steuben House had been closed since the April 2007 flood.

Based upon the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission's resolution of February 2008, Chairman M. Trepicchio asked the Governor's support for transferring administrative control of the state-owned buildings and land to the HNBLPC, together with moneys previously budgeted for, or relating to, the Steuben House. Senator Weinberg agreed to introduce legislation to effect this change and also to clarify the boundary description and powers of the original 1995 enabling legislation. She said she would ask the other Bergen County legislators to co-

sponsor the bill. Secretary K. Wright brought the February Resolution of the Bergen County Board of Freeholders, supporting the plans and actions of the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission in developing the site and a museum, to the Governor's attention. The County's ongoing and unwavering support, especially in time of great need after the flood, was gratefully acknowledged. BCHS President D. Powell and Chairman M. Treppichio noted the Bergen County Historical Society was the largest landowner at Historic New Bridge Landing, running the site with volunteer staff, contributing the display of their unique and irreplaceable artifact collections, while underwriting all programming—a contribution estimated at \$500,000 over the past 26 years—which includes funding all programming at the state-owned Steuben House.

Between 1987 and 2004, Historic New Bridge Landing achieved an annual attendance peak of 18,713 visitors in Fiscal Year 2003 (July 2002 through June 2003), although 13,825 is the average annual attendance over the span of fifteen years (1990-2004), the difference from year to year being the frequency and success of special events. This number seems to represent a plateau, defined by the existing limitations on infrastructure and staffing. The attendance was the highest for any of the singular State Historic Sites. Owing to relevant subject matter in their curricula, fourth through sixth graders comprise a sizable majority of school visitors. High school history clubs and some college classes (mainly from neighboring FDU) are occasional visitors. Thirty-seven schools from nineteen Bergen County municipalities sent students to the Steuben House during the school year between September 2003 and June 2004. Those municipalities and the number of schools represented are: Bergenfield (1), Dumont (1), Demarest (1), East Rutherford (3), Englewood (5), Fairlawn (1), Garfield (5), Hackensack (2), Hillsdale (91), Leonia (1), Lodi (1), New Milford (2), Oradell (1), Paramus (1), Ridgewood (5), River Edge (3), Teaneck (1), Tenafly (1), and Waldwick (1). The list includes public, private and charter schools. Up until 2000, when the Steuben House closed for a year to accommodate the installation of a new heating system and roof, it was not uncommon for the school groups to completely book the Steuben House for morning and afternoon sessions on every weekday the museum was open between January and June. Fall attendance was also fairly steady.

In a letter addressed to DEP Commissioner Mauriello in September 2009, Senator Loretta Weinberg states, "Since the passing of the new legislation, the Historic New Bridge Landing Commission has made several attempts to coordinate their new standing within the State with help from the NJDEP. As the author of the law, I, along with the HNBL Commissioners, interpret the legislation as a mandate to re-open this important piece of our history to a broad audience, especially to school children, and to develop a new model for public/private partnerships in historical education and heritage tourism."

Master Plan Elements

P.L. 2009, CHAPTER 45, approved April 23, 2009, authorizes the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission to prepare and adopt a master plan or portion thereof for the physical development of the Historic New Bridge Landing State Park, or to amend the master plan. The master plan consists of the general management plan and the interpretive plan. It may also include proposals for various stages in the future development or preservation of the park. The master plan shall include a report presenting the objectives, assumptions, standards and principles, which are embodied in the various interlocking portions of the master plan. The master plan shall be a composite of the one or more written proposals recommending the physical development and expansion of the park either in its entirety or a portion thereof which the commission shall prepare after meetings with the governing bodies of the affected municipalities and counties, and any agencies and instrumentalities thereof.

b. In preparing the master plan or any portion thereof or amendment thereto the commission shall consider existing patterns of development and any relevant master plan or other plan of development, and shall insure widespread citizen involvement and participation in the planning process.

c. The commission shall act in support of local suggestions or desires to complement the park master plan. Consultation, planning, and technical expertise shall be made available to local planning bodies that wish to implement land-use policy to enhance the park area. The commission shall act on or refer complaints by citizens' groups or private residents who discover hazardous situations, pollution, or evidence of noncompliance with use regulations.

d. Upon completion, the commission shall submit the master plan or any amendment to the master plan to the Commissioner of Environmental Protection for review and approval. The commissioner shall approve or disapprove the master plan or any amendment thereto within 90 days of receipt thereof. The commissioner may, for cause, disapprove the master plan or any amendment thereto. In the event that the commissioner fails to take action on the master plan or any amendment thereto within the 90-day period specified herein, then the master plan or amendment, as appropriate, shall be deemed to have been approved.

General Management Plan for Historic New Bridge Landing

After several years of hard work, consultation with local and County officials, and a public hearing, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission adopted a General Management Plan in August 2003. Its conclusions and recommendation were based on public input.

The Alternatives to Consider Presented in 2000 to the Public and to Official Governing Bodies of the adjacent Municipalities and to the County of Bergen

INTRODUCTION

Great progress has been made in discovering the past at Historic New Bridge Landing, but we must now make time to consider its future — agreeing upon objectives, framing practicable choices, and building upon a common wisdom. To do so, we must first inform public opinion and then be informed by it. This is the process upon which we are engaged, knowing that the outcome must be determined by a collective will and not the aspirations of a few.

We know that Historic New Bridge Landing has much to recommend it to a wide audience: interesting associations with historic persons and events, especially with the Revolutionary War; a treasury of historic artifacts and architecture evident of vanished folkways; scenic river views and open space amidst suburban congestion. Unfortunately, no infrastructure presently exists to accommodate that audience. To date, the natural and cultural assets of the site have been managed—if at all—by a neighborly confusion of public and private agencies. Inauguration of the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission concentrates our efforts and concerns, and articulates them through this *General Management Plan*. If our past efforts have been publicized, sampled and enjoyed by a diverse audience, our concerns have not.

And our concerns are many. Natural forces continually abrade our cultural heritage, either imperceptibly through the subtle agency of high humidity, air pollution, insect pests, and even sunlight, or by the infrequent and sudden havoc wreaked by fire or flood. Our “historic house museums” were built as private homes before the invention of such modern conveniences as central heating, indoor plumbing, and electric lights. Through casual circumstances and the very best of intentions, the largest artifactual remainder of the material culture of the Jersey Dutch in the public domain has accumulated at Historic New Bridge Landing, sheltered in a sandstone dwelling, over two centuries old, standing on the banks of a tidal river, at a ground-floor elevation of only four and a half feet above sea level. Inundation by supernormal tides threatens its very existence. Installation of the environmental control and safety systems needed to protect artifacts is not only expensive, but also so intrusive and destructive of architectural fabric as to counter the very purposes for preserving the structure as a product of its time. Space is so limited that basic public accommodations, such as rest rooms, parking, water fountains, benches, telephones, and gift shops, cannot be provided without further intrusion and distraction.

With these and other concerns in mind, we have drafted three alternatives for your consideration. These *Alternatives* are not mutually exclusive and a *Preferred Alternative* may blend elements of each and every one. They are first outlined in tabular form and then explained in greater detail. Simply stated, the choices pose the question whether or not to expand the present historic park and, if so, how.

FIRST ALERNATIVE

Seek the best use of the existing buildings and land

Develop an overall plan of historic interpretation; Reconstruct important missing historic buildings, structures, architectural features, sites and objects; Quantify needs for public facilities; Acquire right-of-way for dead-end of Main Street, River Edge

Interpret the site through a variety of historical interpretive techniques and activities

SECOND ALTERNATIVE

Acquire one or more properties, convenient to Historic New Bridge Landing, where extant structures or sites can be adapted for visitor services

Study, design and encourage implementation of improvements to public and private properties that would make them aesthetically compatible to a New Bridge historic district.

Interpret the site through a variety of historical interpretive techniques and activities.

Explain natural history of the river and human impact upon it.

THIRD ALTERNATIVE

Construct a visitors' center, museum gallery, library, rest rooms, and meeting space for general orientation, special programs, and use by compatible groups and organizations

Conduct economic feasibility study and demographics assessment; Study traffic patterns, neighboring land use, topography and environment to determine suitable site; Determine space and staffing requirements; Construct appropriate facility; Relocate significant historic artifacts and restore historic buildings as artifacts of their time.

Interpret the site through a variety of historical interpretive techniques and activities.

Explain natural history of the river and human impact upon it.

Offer visitors a larger sense of historic context through thematic exhibits in a museum setting

Provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy river walks and encourage passive recreational uses.	Provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy river walks and encourage passive recreational uses.	Provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy river walks and encourage passive recreational uses.
Archaeological investigation of site of tidal gristmill.	Include archaeological work as a significant element of interpretation and public education. Identify prehistoric and historic archaeological resources and do appropriate archaeological excavation and study	Include archaeological work as a significant element of interpretation and public education. Identify prehistoric and historic archaeological resources and do appropriate archaeological excavation and study
Protect scenic values and aesthetic qualities of the Hackensack valley at New Bridge.	Protect scenic values and aesthetic qualities of the Hackensack valley at New Bridge.	Protect scenic values and aesthetic qualities of the Hackensack valley at New Bridge.
	Restore and maintain wetlands along the river.	Restore and maintain wetlands along the river.

FIRST ALTERNATIVE:

Concept:

It may only be possible to make the best of a difficult situation and to accept the inherent limitations of the present historic park by segregating its various functions into existing spaces as efficiently as possible and by developing emergency plans for the evacuation and safe storage of cultural artifacts during supernormal tides. This *FIRST ALTERNATIVE* seeks the best use of the existing buildings and land. Under this scenario, the museum village would perhaps better serve its audience but would not be capable of accommodating significantly larger numbers of visitors.

Developments:

Restore, maintain the Ackerman-Zabriskie-Steuben House, Demarest House, Campbell-Christie House, Westervelt-Thomas Barn, and 1889 Iron Swing Bridge, according to professional recommendations and standards. Investigate tidal flooding of site and develop short-term and long-term plans of action.

Develop an overall plan of historic interpretation for these several historic sites, so as to encourage both consistency and variety in their presentation to the public.

Promote the care, protection and meaningful display of artifact collections, so as to provide visitors with a complete and authentic experience of past life.

Where there is sufficient documentation, it may be necessary to reconstruct important missing historic buildings, structures, architectural features, sites and objects that existed in the period of significance, in order to fully restore the interpretive value of Historic New Bridge Landing and to achieve a more complete or accurate depiction of the past. Such missing elements include: outhouses and outbuildings, bake house and out-kitchen, tidal gristmill, schoolhouse, river landing and bulwark, fences and pathways, blacksmithy, barns, and river craft.

Quantify needs for public facilities, including rest rooms, parking, safe museum storage and exhibit space and gift shops. Investigate appropriate sites and undertake construction or renovation to meet needs.

Increase staffing to provide greater public accessibility to existing historic buildings, to allow for the simultaneous operation of its various functions, and to develop and implement educational programming.

Acquire right-of-way for dead-end of Main Street, River Edge, between entrance to PSE&G substation and iron swing bridge, repairing and restoring section of road in front of Steuben House for pedestrian and park use, and incorporating remainder into parking lot and park entrance roadway.

Lay out or improve “lane” through park (approximately paralleling Main Street), to recreate the original relationship of the Campbell-Christie and Demarest Houses to roads on their original sites. Improve all pathways to provide safe use by visitors and improve pathway to Westervelt-Thomas Barn.

Wherever feasible, remove, relocate or conceal modern intrusions within historic park, according to professional recommendations.

Information/Education:

Illustrate and explain the five periods of historic interest through historic buildings, structures and cultural landscape (such as ornamental plantings, orchards, gardens, fences and fields). Interpret the site through a variety of historical interpretive techniques and activities, including period impersonations (that is, “living history”), period clothing, historic craft demonstrations, military reenactments, guided tours by knowledgeable docents, special exhibits, publications and signage.

Provide visitors with opportunities to learn more about the natural and cultural history of the river and cooperate in the development of river pathways to provide visitor access for study and recreation.

Recreation:

When feasible, provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy river walks. Where continuous river pathways are not possible, especially in the narrow confines of the valley north of New Bridge, it may be feasible and appropriate to provide water-borne access by canoes or other passenger craft through embarkation facilities in the park.

Encourage passive recreational uses in a densely populated region. Provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy the scenery, wildlife, aesthetic character and tranquility of the site through passive outdoor pursuits, such as walking, biking, and picnicking that have a minimal impact on the park's cultural and natural resources.

Cultural Resources:

Professional exploration, study, interpretation, restoration and maintenance of extant historic buildings, architectural features, structures and artifact collections shall be encouraged and pursued.

Handling, exhibition, interpretation, storage and recommendations for conservation of artifacts in museum and archival collections should be supervised by qualified historic interpretive or museum specialists.

Conduct archaeological investigation of site of tidal gristmill at confluence of Cole's Brook and Hackensack River.

Natural Resource Management:

Protect, restore, or maintain the natural and cultural landscapes (such as ornamental plantings, orchards, gardens, pathways, fences and fields) of Historic New Bridge Landing.

Protect the scenic values and aesthetic qualities of the Hackensack valley at New Bridge so as to maintain and extend one of the few spots in the valley wherein visitors can enjoy unspoiled vistas with minimal modern intrusion.

SECOND ALTERNATIVE:

Concept:

To better illustrate the five periods of historic interest and to effectively segregate various functions of a historic museum village into appropriate spaces and

buildings, it may be feasible to identify and acquire one or more properties, convenient to Historic New Bridge Landing, where extant structures or sites can be adapted for visitor services such as museum exhibit and storage space, gift shop, offices, rest rooms or additional parking, or interpreted, in their own right, as historic sites.

Developments:

Identify, inventory, document and designate any historic buildings, structures, sites or objects that contribute to a New Bridge historic district. Study, design and encourage implementation of a program of improvements to public and private properties, such as roads, utilities, signage, parking, and historic buildings, that would make them aesthetically compatible with the museum village and its setting.

Selection criteria for acquisition of additional historic buildings or properties may include:

1. Convenience of location to existing facilities.
2. Interpretive value and historic integrity of building, structure, or site and its ability to illustrate one or more of the five periods of historic interest, especially if, through its architectural style or past use, it offers an opportunity to meet visitor-experience objectives and to develop interpretive themes of Historic New Bridge Landing, not otherwise possible.
3. Availability of building, structure or site and cost of acquisition, restoration or adaptive re-use, and maintenance.
4. Compatibility of proposed use with existing land use and traffic patterns.

Where there is sufficient documentation, reconstruct or replace with authentic facsimiles any missing architectural elements, buildings, structures or objects that would contribute significantly to a more complete or accurate depiction of the past at New Bridge. The list might include: road beds, river landings, mills, barns, sheds, bake houses and other out buildings, hay or grain barracks, school house, gardens, meadows, plow land, orchards, fencing, and river craft.

Information/Education:

Archaeological work should be included as a significant element of interpretation and public education. Provide educational and research opportunities through active exploration and study of historic and archaeological resources at Historic New Bridge Landing.

Include a natural resource component in museum exhibits to explain natural history of the river and human impact upon it.

Recreation:

Provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy river walks. Where continuous river pathways are not possible, especially in the narrow confines of the valley north of New Bridge, it may be feasible and appropriate to provide water-borne access by canoes or other passenger craft through embarkation facilities in the park.

Encourage passive recreational uses in a densely populated region. Provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy the scenery, wildlife, aesthetic character and tranquility of the site through passive outdoor pursuits, such as walking, biking, and picnicking, that have a minimal impact on the park's cultural and natural resources.

Cultural Resources:

Handling, exhibition, interpretation, storage and recommendations for conservation of artifacts in museum and archival collections should be supervised by qualified historic interpretive or museum specialists.

Several significant archaeological sites, capable of greatly enlarging public knowledge of the past in New Jersey, have been documented at New Bridge, several on the east side of the river. Investigate, survey and identify prehistoric and historic archaeological features and resources and, where identified as significant, do appropriate archaeological excavation and study. Professional exploration, study, interpretation, restoration and maintenance of extant historic buildings, architectural features, structures and artifact collections shall be encouraged and pursued.

Natural Resource Management:

Protect, restore, and maintain the natural and cultural landscapes (such as ornamental plantings, orchards, gardens, pathways, fences and fields) of Historic New Bridge Landing.

Restore and maintain the brackwater marshes or meadows along the Hackensack River with particular consideration for restoration of the former wetlands along the river in Brett Park, including the cove known as the Old River, by removal, if feasible, of twentieth century fill and re-establishment of native flora and fauna.

Protect the scenic values and aesthetic qualities of the Hackensack valley at New Bridge so as to maintain and extend one of the few spots in the valley wherein visitors can enjoy unspoiled vistas with minimal modern intrusion.

Cooperate in the development of river pathways to provide visitor access for study and recreation.

THIRD ALTERNATIVE:

Concept:

Since antique dwellings, especially those situated within the tidal flood plain, cannot serve as safe or effective artifact museums or places of public assembly, it may be preferable to construct a visitors' center, museum gallery, library, rest rooms, and meeting space for general orientation, special programs, and use by compatible groups and organizations. This would allow historic artifacts to be displayed or stored in a controlled environment, for their own safety, and for their more meaningful public presentation and enjoyment. Display of artifacts in a protective museum environment would provide historical context for visitors, in conjunction with tours of historic buildings. Such a new facility would also provide the opportunity to segregate various functions of the historic site into appropriate spaces and buildings.

Developments:

Conduct economic feasibility study and demographics assessment to determine potential audience and sources of income.

Study traffic patterns, neighboring land use, topography and environment to determine suitable site for construction of a visitors' center.

By professional study, determine space and staffing requirements for museum gallery, collections storage, library, archives, meeting space, parking, rest rooms and other public accommodations.

Construct appropriate facility. Relocate significant historic artifacts and other materials to galleries or storage in the safe environment of a visitor center and elsewhere.

Having removed extraneous uses, restore historic buildings as artifacts of their period of significance.

Information/Education:

Offer visitors a larger sense of historic context by thematic exhibits of artifacts in a museum setting. Include a natural resource component in museum exhibits to explain natural history of the river and human impact upon it.

Illustrate and explain the five periods of historic interest through historic buildings, structures and cultural landscape (such as ornamental plantings,

orchards, gardens, fences and fields). Interpret the site through a variety of historical interpretive techniques and activities, including period impersonations (that is, “living history”), period clothing, historic craft demonstrations, military reenactments, guided tours by knowledgeable docents, special exhibits, publications and signage.

Provide visitors with opportunities to learn more about the natural and cultural history of the river and cooperate in the development of river pathways to provide visitor access for study and recreation.

Recreation:

Provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy river walks. Where continuous river pathways are not possible, especially in the narrow confines of the valley north of New Bridge, it may be feasible and appropriate to provide water-borne access by canoes or other passenger craft through embarkation facilities in the park.

Encourage passive recreational uses in a densely populated region. Provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy the scenery, wildlife, aesthetic character and tranquility of the site through passive outdoor pursuits, such as walking, biking, and picnicking that have a minimal impact on the park’s cultural and natural resources.

Cultural Resources:

Handling, exhibition, interpretation, storage and recommendations for conservation of artifacts in museum and archival collections should be supervised by qualified historic interpretive or museum specialists.

Several significant archaeological sites, capable of greatly enlarging public knowledge of the past in New Jersey, have been documented at New Bridge, several on the east side of the river. Investigate, survey and identify prehistoric and historic archaeological features and resources and, where identified as significant, do appropriate archaeological excavation and study. Professional exploration, study, interpretation, restoration and maintenance of extant historic buildings, architectural features, structures and artifact collections shall be encouraged and pursued.

Natural Resources:

Protect, restore, and maintain the natural and cultural landscapes (such as ornamental plantings, orchards, gardens, fences and fields) of Historic New Bridge Landing.

Promote river walks and environmental education. Provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy river walks and to learn more about the natural and cultural

history of the river. Where continuous river pathways are not possible, especially in the narrow confines of the valley north of New Bridge, it may be feasible and appropriate to provide water-borne access by canoes or other passenger craft through embarkation facilities in the park.

Encourage passive recreational uses in a densely populated region. Provide visitors with opportunities to enjoy the scenery, wildlife, aesthetic character and tranquility of the site through passive outdoor pursuits, such as walking, biking, and picnicking that have a minimal impact on the park’s cultural and natural resources.

Restore and maintain the brackwater marshes or meadows along the Hackensack River with particular consideration for restoration of the former wetlands along the river in Brett Park, including the cove known as the Old River, by removal, if feasible, of twentieth century fill and re-establishment of native flora and fauna.

Protect the scenic values and aesthetic qualities of the Hackensack valley at New Bridge so as to maintain and extend one of the few spots in the valley wherein visitors can enjoy unspoiled vistas with minimal modern intrusion.

Cooperate in the development of river pathways to provide visitor access for study and recreation.

Distribution List FOR Historic New Bridge Landing General Management Plan

HNBLPC Mailing List (including Legislative delegation)	50
Bergen County Historical Society	15
Blauvelt-Demarest Foundation	15
Friends of Historic New Bridge Landing	25
County of Bergen, Board of Chosen Freeholders	15
County of Bergen, County Executive	5
County of Bergen, Historic Sites Council	15
Borough of River Edge, Mayor and Council, Borough Administrator	15
Borough of River Edge, Planning Board	10
Borough of River Edge, Historic Preservation Advisory Commission	10
Borough of New Milford, Mayor and Council	15

Borough of New Milford, Planning Board	10
Borough of New Milford, Historical Society	10
Township of Teaneck, Mayor and Council, Township Manager	15
Township of Teaneck, Planning Board	10
Township of Teaneck, Historic Preservation Advisory Commission	10
Township of Teaneck, Library	10
River Edge Free Public Library	10
Borough of New Milford Library	10
Public Request	25
Total:	300

Resolution in Support of the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission’s General Management Plan submitted to Governing Bodies of Represented Municipalities and the County of Bergen

Whereas, Historic New Bridge Landing preserves a significant fragment of the Jersey Dutch countryside, famed for its compelling role in the Revolutionary War,

And, *Whereas*, we hereby recognize that its distinctive antique dwellings, artifact collections and scenic landscapes are uniquely reminiscent of a vanished folk culture and are worthy of perpetuation for the enlightenment of present and future generations,

And, *Whereas*, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission has a statutory obligation to coordinate and implement government and private development policies and other activities incidental to the preservation, maintenance, restoration, and interpretation of the historic riverfront village surrounding New Bridge, so as to optimize its educational and recreational benefit to the public,

And, *Whereas*, (the name of the municipality) is represented on the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission,

Therefore, we hereby endorse the conceptual framework development of a major historic park as outlined in their General Management Plan and support the formulation of a Preferred Alternative that fully addresses the Visitor Experience Objectives stated in the Historic New Bridge Landing General Management Plan, so as to encourage the planning, funding, and development of such facilities as are needed for a full range of visitor services; to allow for the protection, restoration, and interpretation of extant historic buildings, structures and features; to fund the purchase of land and other buildings for visitor orientation, public facilities, and

storage; to protect and display artifacts in a protective museum environment; to explore and study significant archaeological resources; to provide opportunities for public education, research, and enjoyment of the site's natural and cultural resources; and to encourage preservation, protection, and passive recreational uses of the river and the surrounding landscape.

Alternatives To Consider Become Conclusions and Recommendations

Since the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission offered several Alternatives to Consider in a public hearing on its General Management Plan on March 2, 2000, at 7 PM in the River Edge Public Library, 685 Elm Avenue, River Edge, NJ. Gregory Marshall, director of the NJDEP's Division of Parks and Forestry organized this hearing. The Commission sought public comment and support for a conceptual framework to best preserve the Revolutionary War battleground known as Historic New Bridge Landing that surrounds the Steuben House in River Edge, New Milford and Teaneck. Based upon public comments received either at the meeting or by subsequent communication, the Alternatives were translated into the following conclusions and recommendations.

Overall Concept:

The General Management Plan seeks to preserve Historic New Bridge Landing for the purposes of public education and enjoyment, by implementing a varied program of heritage interpretation. The setting of a museum village will provide visitors of different age groups and levels of interest, with an authentic historical experience. The component tasks inherent in this objective are:

- Maintain and enhance the historically significant dwellings, structures and scenic landscapes that make up this historic village.
- Develop the interpretive aspects of the site by displaying, interpreting and preserving museum collections to tell the story of the Jersey Dutch, a vanished folk culture.
- When necessary and feasible, acquire properties that contribute to the historical interest and public use of the park.
- Build the infrastructure needed for a meaningful public presentation and enjoyment of the site.
- Operate visitor facilities.
- Protect one of the few unspoiled vistas in the Hackensack valley from modern intrusions.
- Preserve open space and protect fragile riparian environments.
- Instill in the visitor a respect for the historic resources of Historic New Bridge Landing.
- Encourage an interest in and foster an understanding of Historic New Bridge Landing and its role in shaping the history of the region, the State of New Jersey, and the Nation.

Developments:

- Construct a visitors' center, including a permanent exhibit gallery, library, classrooms, meeting space, storage facility, rest rooms, and museum store.
- Exhibit and store museum objects in a secure and climate-controlled environment.
- Provide historical context and general orientation for visitors, in conjunction with tours of historic buildings and riverscape surroundings.
- Designate and use appropriate spaces and buildings for the various functions of a historic museum village.
- Design and place a Revolutionary War Battle Monument on the site.
- Provide a vital link to our historic past through educational programs and activities.

To accomplish these goals, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission recommends:

- Investigating tidal flooding of the site and developing short-term and long-term plans of action.
- Acquiring land and constructing appropriate infrastructure for a historical park of national significance.
- Placing the primary visitor and administrative facilities along Hackensack Avenue, flanking the Main Street entrance to the existing historical park.
- Recreating a nineteenth-century streetscape on the east side of the iron swing bridge in New Milford. In so far as it is practicable, restoring it to the appearance it had in 1889 when the extant iron swing bridge was opened to public use. Acquiring and restoring the Demarest-Cole General Store property to broaden the scope of historical interpretation and to develop a historically appropriate space for a museum store and a second, ancillary orientation center for visitors arriving on the east side of the Hackensack River.
- Restoring historic buildings according to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*. Restoring and maintaining the 1889 Iron Swing Bridge.
- Reconstructing documented historic outbuildings, fences, structures, wings, and architectural or site features, to achieve a more complete and accurate depiction of the past. These should include: out-houses, kitchen wings, bake houses, barns, sheds, stoops, dormers, paths, gardens, roadways, and river landings. When necessary, acquire reproduction items for use in interpretive programs.
- Relocating museum objects and other materials to exhibit galleries or storage in a secure, climate-controlled environment.
- Designing a new entrance, roadway and parking lot adjacent to the Steuben House, utilizing vacated section of Main Street, River Edge.
- Laying out or improving a "lane" through the park (approximately paralleling Main Street) to recreate the original relationship of the Campbell-Christie and Demarest Houses to roads that were on their original sites.
- Designing and laying out appropriate pathways in and around existing structures and features that highlight and emphasize the importance of the natural landscape and environment to the history and development of the New Bridge area.

- Improving all pathways to provide safe use by visitors, according to Americans with Disabilities Act standards, and improving pathway to Westervelt-Thomas Barn.
- Removing, relocating or concealing modern intrusions associated with the historical park, according to professional recommendations.
- Conducting an economic feasibility study and demographic assessment to determine potential audience and sources of income. Study traffic patterns, neighboring land use, topography and environment.

Heritage Interpretation:

- Develop an overall plan of historical interpretation and implement a variety of historical interpretive techniques, activities, wayside exhibits, and period craft demonstrations.
- Promote the care, protection and meaningful exhibit of artifact collections.
- Develop historical context through thematic exhibits.
- Develop a natural resource component to explain the natural history of the Hackensack River and human impact upon it.
- Cooperate in the development of river pathways providing public access for study and recreation.
- Include archaeological work as a significant element of interpretation and public education. Provide educational and research opportunities.

Educational Services:

- Maximize educational use and public enjoyment of the site.
- Develop a program of services and activities that enrich and animate the learning experience for students of all ages and levels of ability.
- Integrate the interpretive program into college, secondary and primary school educational curricula, reflecting existing curriculum frameworks and standards.
- Provide programs, tours, services and materials to teachers and students.
- Promote Historic New Bridge Landing as a “living” classroom, offering a multi-dimensional appreciation and understanding of the past.

Outdoor Recreation:

- Provide access to existing river walks and consider other appropriate designs that provide public access to the riverfront.
- When feasible and appropriate, provide recreational opportunities on the Hackensack River.
- Encourage passive outdoor recreational uses that have minimal impact on the park’s cultural and natural resources.

Cultural Resources:

- Encourage professional study, interpretation, restoration and maintenance of historic buildings, architectural features, structures, landscape and museum collections.
- Continue the practice of having qualified specialists supervise the handling, exhibition, interpretation, and storage of museum objects and of making recommendations for their conservation.
- Investigate, survey and identify prehistoric and historic archaeological resources. Do appropriate archaeological excavation and study.

Natural Resource Management:

- Protect the scenic values and aesthetic qualities of the Hackensack River Valley at New Bridge from modern intrusion and inappropriate uses.
- Protect, restore, and maintain natural and cultural landscapes.
- Restore and maintain brackwater meadows and re-establish native flora and fauna, where possible.
- Promote river pathways and environmental education.
- Educate the public to promote awareness and appropriate use of the site.

Staffing:

- Employ additional professional staff and further expand the volunteer interpretive program to provide greater accessibility to historic buildings and an enhanced program of visitor services.
- Employ qualified staff to investigate and apply for potential sources of funding and to administer grants that might be received in the implementation of this General Management Plan.
- Determine space and staffing requirements necessary to implement this General Management Plan.

Approval of Conclusions and Staff Components from the Minutes of the Meeting of August 3, 2000

Resolved, that pending a two-day comment period via e-mail for any corrections, the HNBL Park Commission approves the final draft of the Conclusions and Staff component to the HNBL General Management Plan, as amended at their meeting of July 6, 2000. Motion: Sandra Loft; Second; Mary Donohue. **Motion carried.**

The Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission adopted a General Management Plan on August 3, 2000. At the meeting of November 2, 2000, Secretary K. Wright reported he would send out corrections and illustrations to complete final draft of the HNBL General Management Plan to Amy Cradic in Trenton before next Commission meeting, so that it could be printed. On December 7, 2000, Commissioner G. Marshall gave Chairman R. Griffin a copy of corrected final draft of the HNBL General Management Plan for his consideration and approval. On January

4, 2001, Commissioner Gregory Marshall recommended that Chairman R. Griffin write a cover letter and mail copies of the HNBL General Management Plan to all parties. Chairman R. Griffin acknowledged indebtedness to Secretary K. Wright for work on the GMP, which has become a model for similar situations, and also thanked Amy Cradic for her work on format and publication. On April 5, 2000, Chairman R. Griffin passed around copies of a draft cover letter and received comments and suggestions. He requested each municipal representative to compile a listing of names and addresses of municipal officials who should receive the final GMP.

Historic New Bridge Landing Comprehensive Interpretive Plan

Immediately upon completion and formal adoption of the General Management Plan on August 3, 2000, HNBLPC Chairman R. Griffin pointed out that development of a HNBL Interpretive Plan was the Commission's next priority. Commissioner G. Marshall, Director of the NJ Division of Parks & Forestry, distributed copies of *Batsto Village Interpretive Plan* as a model.

Chairman R. Griffin and Secretary K. Wright met with Schuyler Warmflash, Chairman of the Bergen County Historic Preservation Advisory Board, on July 11, 2001, to review County projects at HNBL, to tour the site, and to discuss the HNBL Interpretive Plan.

On October 4, 2001, Secretary K. Wright outlined the impending first draft of the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan, which was nearing completion. The first draft suggested breaking the park down into units for interpretive purposes, namely: the Hackensack Avenue Gateway Unit, the Society Lands Unit, the Historic New Bridge Core Unit, and the Brett Park Upland. Commissioner G. Marshall offered to have Trenton staff print and bind copies of the plan for circulation. On November 1, 2001, Secretary K. Wright passed out copies of the first draft of the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan and explained its relationship to the General Management Plan. He noted some minor adjustments to the core statements of the GMP are suggested, particularly in developing the Interpretive Themes into narrative form. He emphasized that this is only a first draft of the CIP and we will incorporate concerns and suggestions from the private and governmental entities represented on the Commission. The draft should be regarded as talking points to elicit discussion of Historic New Bridge Landing's future shape and direction.

On January 1, 2002, Chairman R. Griffin read the text of a proposed cover letter to be sent with copies of HNBL General Management Plan and the first draft of the (Comprehensive Interpretive Plan).

Resolved, the HNBLPC approves the cover letter, as read and submitted by Chairman R. Griffin, for transmission with copies of HNBL General Management Plan and the first draft of the HNBL Interpretive Plan. Motion: T. Adriance; Second, S. Loft. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Starting in February 2002, Secretary K. Wright read the HNBL Interpretive Plan to the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission, noting all comments, corrections, suggestions and recommendations as he proceeded. On April 4, 2002, he continued reading the HNBL Interpretive Plan, noting all comments, corrections, suggestions and recommendations. He agreed to send out revisions to the Statement of Purpose before the next meeting for review. On May 2, 2002, Chairman R. Griffin gave written comments from various Teaneck officials and groups to Secretary K. Wright for inclusion in the HNBL Interpretive Plan. On July 17, 2002, at a meeting held at Once Bergen County Plaza in Hackensack, Secretary K. Wright again read through a portion of the HNBL Interpretive Plan and noted all comments, corrections, and suggestions for revisions.

On August 18, 2002, Chairman Griffin led a walking tour of HNBL consisting of about twenty Friends of the Hackensack River Greenway in Teaneck. While conducting the group through the neighborhood, several residents of Old New Bridge Road expressed interest and some anxiety as to how Historic New Bridge Landing's plans might eventually affect them. Chairman Griffin was largely able to assuage their concerns. Ann Subrizi, HNBLP Commissioner representing New Milford will follow up and contact them.

In September 2002, Chairman R. Griffin, Secretary Wright and Commissioner M. Donohue met with the Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders to provide them with an oral update report on progress at HNBL. On September 10, 2002, Chairman Griffin, Secretary Wright and Commissioner Guggenheim appeared before the Teaneck Mayor and Council to provide them with a similar report. Both reports were well received. Commissioner M. Donohue reported that letters have been sent to the River Edge Planning and Zoning Boards asking for similar update meetings with them. At the meeting of October 3, 2002, another several pages of the HNBL Comprehensive Interpretive Plan were read aloud and comments and changes noted.

Commissioners S. Loft and S. F. Guggenheim submitted a draft memorandum to be submitted to the Nylema Nabbie, Teaneck Planning Board Chairperson, regarding HNBLPC interest in the Advisory Board Workshop for the Teaneck Master Plan, which was held at 7 PM, November 13, 2002, in the Richard Rodda Community Center, at the south end of Votee Park. The memorandum recommended that the Teaneck Master Plan recognize and address three primary concerns regarding HNBL: (1) that management of Brett Park should recognize the significance of its subsurface and take care to preserve it for future archaeological investigations. (2) The presence of the DPW on the shore of the Hackensack River, within the view shed of the Steuben House, is a concern. If another site for the DPW is not found, then suitable buffering and shielding landscape should be planted. (3) The Historic New Bridge Landing Comprehensive Interpretive Plan addresses a principal interpretive objective to memorialize Tantaqua, the last great sachem of the Hackensack Indians. The details of the memorial as provided in the CIP should be

recognized and incorporated in the Master Plan as a significant passive use for this section of Brett Park.

Chairman R. Griffin suggested that the Master Plan should note and incorporate an existing Teaneck ordinance prohibiting removal of prehistoric and historic artifacts from Brett Park. The Teaneck Commissioners provided copies of the HNBL General Management Plan and Comprehensive Interpretive Plan to the Advisory Board for the Teaneck Master Plan.

Commissioners Loft and Guggenheim attended the Advisory Board Workshop on November 13, 2002 and presented their recommendations. They also reported that the Teaneck Township clerk had found the ordinance covering the dominion over artifacts in archaeological findings. A copy will be submitted for reference in the Master Plan.

The final sections of the *HNBL Comprehensive Interpretive Plan* were read aloud on November 7, 2002, and comments and changes noted. On March 11, 2002, Secretary K. Wright reported he had incorporated all changes and corrections to the draft of the HNBL Comprehensive Interpretive Plan and would include a copy (minus the appendices) with his mailing of the Minutes. On April 3, 2003, Secretary K. Wright handed out the revised draft of the HNBL Interpretive Plan, incorporating all comments and corrections received to date, but minus the appendices, for review and final comments. He requested any further suggestions or corrections.

At the meeting of July 10, 2003, the Historic New Bridge Landing officially adopted the *HNBL Comprehensive Interpretive Plan*:

Resolved, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission officially recognizes and adopts the final draft of the Historic New Bridge Landing Comprehensive Interpretive Plan, as submitted by Secretary Kevin Wright. Motion, M. Donohue; Second, S. Loft. **Motion carried.**

On September 2, 2004, Secretary K. Wright reported he had not only completed illustrating the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan, but he had also updated attendance figures and added other relevant information, such as population densities and the history of the former tide mill. He requested 25 copies be made in Trenton, so that we can immediately provide copies to the NJ Historic Trust for our grant application and to the Township of Teaneck for consideration in regards to their draft Recreation Master Plan. He distributed the remaining copies to the HNBLP commissioners for their review and approval of the updated information.

On October 7, 2004, Secretary K. Wright passed out copies of the HNBL CIP and thanked the Trenton staff of the Division of Parks and Forestry for getting it printed so promptly. So far, they had only printed twenty-five copies to meet immediate needs and he asked the Commissioners to read through the updated portions of it, including attendance figures, population densities, and the history of the former tide

mill, to see if it meets with their approval. Once we have made final corrections, then he will request a larger printing for distribution to the various private boards, state, county and municipal officials.

At the meeting of September 7, 2006, Thomas Laverty reported that the division of Parks & Forestry was printing 50 copies of the Historic New Bridge Landing Interpretive Plan. We need not only to mail copies of both plans to local officials, but also to make presentations and update on our progress. On November 2, 2006, Secretary K. Wright reported he had received 50 copies of the *HNBL Comprehensive Interpretive Plan* from Tom Laverty. The Commission again agreed that it was advisable not only to mail copies of both plans to local officials, with a cover letter from Chairman R. Griffin, but also to make presentations and update on our progress.

At the meeting of February 1, 2007, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission *Resolved*, that Chairman Griffin be authorized to draft a cover letter for *HNBL Comprehensive Interpretive Plan* and send with copies to Planning Boards, Mayors and Councils, to Town Managers, to the Board of Chosen Freeholders, to the County Executive, to the DEP Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners and to the Governor. Motion, J. Bellis; Second, M. Donohue. Motion carried.

On April 5, 2007, Chairman Griffin reported he had drafted a cover letter for *HNBL Comprehensive Interpretive Plan* to send with copies to Planning Boards, Mayors and Councils, Town Managers, the Board of Chosen Freeholders, the County Executive, the NJDEP Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners and to the Governor.

Implementation Plan

Work on the Implementation Plan began in April 2003 as work on the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan was concluding. Chairman R. Griffin spoke with Michael Mills, who in turn spoke with archaeological consultant Richard Hunter, about submitting a bid for implementation plan. Chairman Griffin also began to contact other qualified firms. Chairman R. Griffin and Secretary K. Wright met Michael Mills and Richard Hunter, of Hunter Research, at the Steuben House on Friday, May 9, 2003. At the meeting of June 5, 2003, Chairman Griffin explained the need for professional advise on an implementation plan, which will be based upon the HNBL Interpretive Plan. He had not yet received a proposal from Michael Mills and Richard Hunter. Shortly thereafter, Ford, Farewell, Mills submitted a proposal for developing an Implementation Plan to the Blauvelt-Demarest Foundation for their consideration. Commissioner J. Bellis emphasized his interest in developing a large detailed map of HNBL as part of the proposal. On February 5, 2004, a proposal for developing an Implementation Plan was received from Ford Farewell et al. Archaeologist Richard Hunter received an update on the status of their proposal on January 16, 2004.

At the meeting of July 1, 2004, Vice-Chairwoman D. Fisk, who submitted the application for a New Jersey Historic Trust grant for the HNBL Implementation Plan, reported we need Letters of Assurance from all property owners at HNBL. Commissioner S. Loft read the response from Teaneck Township, dated June 23, 2004, which states that the Council had reviewed the application and supports the grant.

On May 4, 2005, Chairman R. Griffin, D. Fisk and K. Wright met with consultants Tim Marshall of ETM Associates; Michael Mills of FMG Architects; and Richard Hunter, Jim Lee, and Chuck Ashton of Hunter Research, who were going to be working on the Implementation Plan. Items discussed include pathways, lighting, landscaping and signage. It was anticipated that the work would take six months from start to completion. At the meeting of September 1, 2005, Tim Marshall, Chuck Ashton and an intern made a preliminary presentation of their work to date on the HNBL Implementation Plan to Chairman R. Griffin, Vice-Chairwoman D. Fisk and Secretary K. Wright. Their suggestion for combining the proposed museum and visitor center into one building on the north side of Main Street, reserving the former Pizza Town property for parking, was favorably received, especially since it would prevent a duplication of services for two separate buildings. Their idea of a brochure inclosing a DVD presentation for distribution to interested parties was also favorably received. The next presentation will be scheduled after Labor Day.

On July 7, 2005, Vice-Chairwoman D. Fisk stated she was reviewing the draft contract between ETM Associates and the Bergen County Historical Society. On November 5, 2005, the Commission viewed the updated DVD program on the Implementation Plan. There is general agreement that Historic New Bridge Landing's status as a new urban state park needs to be emphasized and that the area on the east side of the bridge is underrepresented. The NJ Historic Trust and the Blauvelt-Demarest Foundation need to be credited as grant providers. Vice-Chairwoman D. Fisk will talk to Tim Marshall from ETM regarding these concerns.

At the meeting of December 1, 2005, Commissioner M. Donohue reported that Tim Marshall, from ETM Associates, made a very successful Power-Point presentation of the HNBL Implementation Plan to the River Edge Mayor and Council on November 28, 2005. All those in attendance were greatly impressed. Commissioner M. Donohue, Vice-chairwoman D. Fisk, Secretary K. Wright and his wife Deborah represented the HNBLPC. Mayor Watkins later called Commissioner M. Donohue and said she enjoyed the presentation and expressed her willingness to cooperate in any way she can.

Commissioner S. Loft said she spoke with Teaneck Mayor Jacqueline Kates, who requested the Power-Point presentation so that the Teaneck Council could see what was envisioned for HNBL.

On February 2, 2006, Vice-chairwoman D. Fisk reported that BCHS had received \$16,500 check from the NJ Historic Trust to pay second installment on bill to the

consultants for the Implementation Plan. One more payment was due. The Commission was awaiting revisions to Power Point presentation. On April 6, 2006, Vice-Chairwoman D. Fisk reported that she had sent a copy of the revised CD to Secretary K. Wright for review of requested revisions. Once approved, BCHS will make final payment to ETM Associates. At the subsequent meeting of June 6, 2006, Secretary K. Wright reported he had returned his comments and corrections on the Plan to Vice-Chairwoman D. Fisk so that the final revisions could be made. She would then process final payment and get final copies of plan.

At the meeting of September 7, 2006, Secretary K. Wright reported that the consultants had received final payment on the \$27,000 grant for the Implementation Plan and recognized the NJ Historic Trust and the Blauvelt-Demarest Foundation for their funding of the project. Commissioner A. Strobel reported that the County of Bergen was making copies of the Implementation Plan for distribution and that a cover letter should credit the County for reproduction costs.

Cover Letter submitted in January 2002 with Copies of the HNBL General Management Plan and the First Draft of the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan to the Governing Bodies, Planning Boards and other Interested Commissions and Agencies of the Represented Municipalities and the County of Bergen

At the completion of our fifth year of work, and in this season of light and renewed hope, we may be justly proud of the progress we have made together at Historic New Bridge Landing. With your input and through your cooperation, the New Bridge Landing Park Commission finalized its General Management Plan (GMP) in August 2000. This concludes the first stage in our ongoing planning process, providing a set of common goals, articulated through statements of purpose and significance. Its also sets forth basic interpretive themes as well as resource management guidelines. A copy is enclosed with this letter.

We now proceed to the next step in our planning process. To achieve greater definition and specificity, we ask your assistance in developing a much more detailed assessment of the site and its resources, called a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan. Building off of the GMP, the first draft of our Interpretive Plan suggests dividing the site into four distinct units for interpretive purposes, namely: 1) The Historic New Bridge Core Unit, 2) The Brett Park Upland, 3) The Society Lands Unit, and 4) The Hackensack Avenue Gateway.

For each of these units, very specific recommendations will be drawn to ensure that the park's resources are connected to those larger key ideas, meanings, and values (interpretive themes) that they best illustrate. The visitor-experience goals that were established in the GMP will provide the structure for the more detailed planning that will now take place.

To begin this process, we have prepared a working draft. A copy of this document is also enclosed with this letter (additional copies are available upon request). We urge you to read through this document and to give us your feedback. The ideas we have presented are intended to stir your imagination and your thoughtful consideration. We want and need your advice.

We would also like an opportunity to update you in person on our progress at Historic New Bridge Landing, in raising the necessary funds for carrying through on our plans and on other recent developments. Recognizing the changes that take place in all organizations, we want to establish an ongoing communications program to keep you up-to-date and well informed on our progress. A representative from HNBL will be in touch with you to schedule a convenient time to meet.

Historic New Bridge Landing holds the promise of becoming a premier historic park in central Bergen County. The dark shadow of recent events only increases the importance of preserving and explaining the site of the first *American Crisis*. Already we have welcomed visitors seeking a memorable, meaningful experience and a measure of reassurance from the past that American courage can meet and overcome the greatest of challenges. We hope you will continue your interest in and support of our efforts, and will share in the excitement and satisfaction of seeing our plans take shape.

Indemnification power

On December 7, 2000, Commissioner Gregory Marshall, Director of the NJ Division of Parks & Forestry reported that Senate Bill 834 (Cardinale/McNamara), which permits the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission to indemnify local government units from which it leases property, was signed into law on December 1, 2000 as P. L. 2000. Chapter 158.

Save America's Treasures

Historic New Bridge Landing received official designation as a "Save America's Treasures" Site in August 2001.

Historic New Bridge Landing Designated One of New Jersey's Three Urban State Parks

On October 21, 2004, Governor James E. McGreevey today announced the designation of three new state parks at historic destinations in Paterson, Trenton and River Edge. The urban state park at Historic New Bridge Landing was to include the state-owned Steuben House and the historic pony-truss swing bridge, as well as a new visitor's center, an interpretive center and additional open space. "Trenton, Paterson and River Edge have natural and historic treasures that are pathways to New Jersey's history - from the Dutch settlements at River Edge, to the pivotal Battle of Trenton, to the advent of the industrial revolution in Paterson," said Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bradley M. Campbell. "New parks in

these cities will be centerpieces of community renewal in areas that are underserved by our parks system."

Master Plan

In keeping with P.L. 2009, CHAPTER 45, approved April 23, 2009, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission may prepare a master plan as “a composite of the one or more written proposals recommending the physical development and expansion of the park either in its entirety or a portion thereof....” We hereby submit for your consideration, a composite of the Historic New Bridge Landing General Management Plan, Comprehensive Interpretive Plan and Implementation Plan, covering the state-owned portion of Historic New Bridge Landing, which is transferred to the administration of the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission.

Statement of park purpose

The purpose of Historic New Bridge Landing Park is to preserve and interpret an historic and scenic fragment of the Jersey Dutch countryside, strategically situated at the narrows of the Hackensack River and famed for its compelling role in the Revolutionary War. To this end, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission shall coordinate and implement governmental and private development policies and other activities incidental to the preservation, maintenance, restoration and interpretation of all historic buildings, structures, cultural landscapes and natural features, artifacts and objects within its statutory boundaries and jurisdiction.

Consistent with their preservation, the distinctive antique dwellings, artifact collections and cultural landscapes at New Bridge shall offer visitors an authentic experience and appreciation of a vanished folk culture, the Jersey Dutch, which depended upon the tidal river as a commercial artery and self-renewing source of nourishment and industrial power. In reaction to bureaucratic indifference to its irreplaceable museum collections, displayed at the Steuben House since September 1939, the Bergen County Historical Society purposes to preserve, store and display its museum collections to the greatest possible advantage in making the site a premier heritage destination by building a museum on its own lands.

In all its actions and endeavors, the Commission will respectfully treat the core area surrounding the bridge and old river landing, including the Zabriskie-Steuben House, tidal gristmill, tavern sites and riverfront lands as a battleground, where Americans fought and died. Because of significant associations with the indigenous Hackensacks and Tappans, New Bridge shall appropriately interpret and memorialize the First Peoples, particularly the great Hackensack sachem, Tantaqua. In fulfillment of its responsibilities, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission shall make every effort to remove anachronisms and prevent such modern intrusions as detract from the historical integrity, prehistoric record and natural attraction of the setting. The Commission shall preserve all cultural and natural resources within its jurisdiction for their inherent value and in such a way as to optimize their educational benefit to present and future generations.

Statement of park significance

Inhabited since at least Middle Archaic times (c. 3500 BP), the prehistoric features of the site may include a seventeenth-century Lenape “castle” or fort. Small tributaries entering the Hackensack River at New Bridge defined the familial territories of the indigenous peoples, known to history as the Hackensacks and Tappans. These prehistoric boundaries continued as property lines when the neighborhood was first settled by colonial farmers after 1677 and are perpetuated in the present civil boundaries of the four municipalities that intersect at New Bridge. The Hackensack sachem, Tantaqua, and his kin, inhabited the land surrounding the river narrows, which was partly known as Tantaqua’s Plain. In October 1679, the Labadist missionary Jasper Danckærts included Tantaqua’s verbatim account of world creation and human genesis in his journal.

As it was technologically infeasible to bridge the wide marshes and meadowlands lying south of the river narrows, the “new bridge” remained the nearest span across the Hackensack River to Newark Bay for a half century after its construction in 1745. Consequently it was a node in the earliest network of roads leading from the Hudson River landings, opposite Manhattan, into the interior of the continent.

The Jersey Dutch sandstone architecture at New Bridge Landing, augmented by extensive artifact and archival collections of the Bergen County Historical Society and the Blauvelt-Demarest Foundation, convey a vivid sense of the distinctive regional folk culture, known as the Jersey Dutch. Including numerous associations with persons and events of transcendent historic significance to the Nation, New Bridge Landing is capable of conveying an appreciation of New Jersey’s pivotal role in American history, progressing from the most culturally diverse colony to the most densely populated State.

Owing to its strategic location at the narrows of the Hackensack River and its proximity to Manhattan, the principal base of British operations throughout the war, the site has numerous associations with the American Revolution. Historic New Bridge Landing will therefore be respectfully treated and preserved as an American Revolutionary War battleground, the site of several skirmishes, military encampments and headquarters for both armies. The Zabriskie-Steuben House is the only extant house along the route of the British invasion and Washington’s Retreat of November 1776 through Bergen County. General Washington established his headquarters in the Zabriskie dwelling in September 1780 during the Steenrapie encampment of the Continental army.

Having literally been the “Crossroads of the American Revolution,” New Bridge prospered for more than a century after the war as a commercial crossroads, situated where a major overland thoroughfare of travel and trade intersected the head of sloop navigation on the Hackensack River. The extant iron swing bridge, manually operated, was erected in 1889 to speed the passage of schooners and testifies to the importance of commercial river traffic at that date. The New Bridge is

listed on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places as the oldest highway swing bridge in the State of New Jersey.

The Zabriskie-Steuben House is a memorial to Major-General Baron von Steuben, Inspector-General of the Continental troops, who received it as a gift from the State of New Jersey in 1783 and who, by his own advertisement, thoroughly rebuilt the dwelling during his six years of ownership.

Interpretive themes

The Hackensack River changes with each tide, yet remains a constant. It binds hundreds of generations and their many stories to this place. Here people have long come to cross, to ride, to harness, or to harvest the tides. The story of human activities centered upon the narrows of the Hackensack River, as recorded in changes to natural and cultural resources over time, is the primary interpretive theme of Historic New Bridge Landing Park.

At the head of a broad alluvial plain, formed largely upon the drained bed of Proglacial Lake Hackensack, Historic New Bridge encompasses the tidal race of the Hackensack River. Brackwater meadows, clay flats, mud islands, and sandy terraces fringe the stream, which is tightly enclosed by loamy ridges to the north. Diversified habitats supported a rich diversity of plant and animal life. Human strategies progressed over several millennia from hunting and gathering, through horticultural, agricultural and industrial exploitation of resource opportunities.

Through a process of conflict and accommodation, the Bergen Dutch achieved a complex multicultural society, blending significant contributions from the indigenous Lenape, Netherlanders, Angolan Africans, English, Germans, French Huguenots, Scots, Scots-Irish, Scandinavians, Polish Silesians, and others, into a distinct regional folk culture. This process of “creolization” is evidenced in the development of a Jersey Dutch dialect, folk architecture and material culture, including distinctive styles and traditions of furniture, tools, utensils, and decorative objects.

Historic New Bridge Landing surrounds the narrows of the Hackensack River, at the point where its gathering headwaters emerge from the hills and nourish the broad tidal meadows of its ocean-fed estuary. The wind and tides propelled sail craft to and from this natural constriction in the river, where a drawbridge was first built in 1745. Remaining the nearest span to Newark Bay until 1790, New Bridge carried a major road leading from the Hudson River ferries, opposite Manhattan, to the interior country. Prior to the ascendancy of mechanical transportation after 1870, New Bridge Landing occupied a commercial and strategic gateway to the fertile shale Piedmont and iron-rich Highlands.

This point and passage gained special significance during the American Revolution. The British Army occupied Manhattan Island as their principal power base, maintaining fortified forage outposts atop the Palisades throughout the war.

Washington's army commanded the Highlands and interior roads, defending their principal line of communication and supply between New England, the Hudson River forts, Philadelphia, and the Southern States. New Bridge remained the principal point of conflict between the two main opposing armies and served continually as an intelligence-gathering post, an encampment ground, a military headquarters and the scene of several battles and skirmishes.

Visitor experience goals

The principal visitor-experience objectives of Historic New Bridge Landing are to:

1. Provide opportunities for visitors to make meaningful and memorable connections with significant historic and natural resources, either independently or through an organized group experience.
2. Provide visitors with safe, satisfying and memorable encounters with a variety of interpretive media, techniques and activities, such as period impersonations, period clothing, historic craft demonstrations, military reenactments, guided tours by knowledgeable docents, special exhibits, publications and signage.
3. Provide necessary historic and natural context through professional displays of artifacts in a protective museum environment. Broaden public appreciation of the site and encourage repeat visits through periodically changing thematic exhibits.
4. Provide educational and research opportunities through active exploration and study of historic and archaeological resources. Several significant archaeological sites, capable of greatly enlarging public knowledge of the past in New Jersey, have been documented within the bounds of Historic New Bridge Landing. Encourage professional exploration, study, and interpretation of these sites, and of extant historic buildings, architectural features, and structures.
5. Provide opportunities for visitors to learn more about the natural and cultural history of the river through a program of natural interpretation. Where continuous river pathways are not possible, especially in the narrow confines of the valley north of New Bridge, Historic New Bridge Landing will provide water-borne access by canoes or other passenger craft through river landings in the park.
6. Provide opportunities to enjoy the scenery, wildlife, aesthetic character and tranquility of the site through passive outdoor pursuits, such as walking, photography, painting, picnicking, and other such appropriate activities that minimally impact the park's cultural and natural resources. Provide opportunities for visitors to experience solitude, if they so desire. Make every

attempt to limit excessive artificial light that interferes with the view and appreciation of the night sky.

Visitor and audience profiles

Historic New Bridge Landing Park is centrally located within Bergen County, with its largely suburban population of 884,118 (2000 Census). More importantly, it is also centrally situated within the Greater New York Metropolitan Area, the nation's most populous, which stretches from northeastern Pennsylvania to western Connecticut, encompassing a population of over twenty million people. Five of the United States' ten most densely populated municipalities are located in northeastern New Jersey, namely, Union City, Passaic City, East Orange, Paterson and Jersey City. Only nine miles from the George Washington Bridge, New Bridge Landing is convenient to most major arteries of travel, including State Routes 4 and 17, Interstate 80, the Palisades Interstate Parkway, the Garden State Parkway and the New Jersey Turnpike. The historic park is only two blocks distant from major rail and bus lines. Travel time to Liberty/Newark Airport is about 45 minutes. Hotels, restaurants, a shopping mall, and other visitor amenities are literally within walking distance.

New Bridge spans four adjacent municipalities having a total population of 109,283 residents within 14.4 square miles and an average population density of 7,589 residents per square mile. These statistics exceed the criteria for "Densely Populated Municipalities" in the 2001 *Parks for People* initiative.

- River Edge has a population (2000) of 10,946 in 1.9 square miles, or 5,761 per square mile.
- New Milford has a population (2000) of 16,400 in 2.3 square miles, or 7,130 per square mile.
- Teaneck has a population (2000) of 39,260 in 6.1 square miles, or 6,436 per square mile.
- Hackensack has a population (2000) of 42,677 in 4.1 square miles, or 10,409 per square mile.

Bergen County is New Jersey's most populous county. It is also the nation's most "boroughized" county, boasting seventy municipalities within a land area of only 234.17 square miles. Consequently there are 275 public and private schools within its territory. New Bridge Landing is well situated to serve as a unique educational resource to this large school population.

Bergen County's population density of 3,775.5 residents per square mile is thrice the State average of 1,134.4 persons per square mile. Only Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset and Sussex Counties surpass Bergen County's median family income of \$65,241. This means that Bergen County sends the largest amount of tax revenues to Trenton. Bergen County also occupies six of New Jersey's forty legislative districts.

Since the Steuben House, a State Historic Site, was opened in September 1939, it has developed a core following among “traditional” audiences, who come from near and far. For example, the name and personage of Major-General Steuben, professional founder of the American army and an exemplar of the German contribution to American life, is a proven attraction to generations of visitors. Compelling and numerous associations with the American Revolution draw a continuing and growing audience to the site. Making Historic New Bridge Landing an “anchor site” at the northeast gateway to the proposed Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area will further attract an audience interested in the stories and places associated with the revolutionary struggle for American independence and the founding of the world’s first and oldest democratic republic.

The Bergen Dutch stone houses have long inspired artists as well as admirers of American colonial architecture. Acquired by the State of New Jersey in 1928, the Steuben House is the best-known example of this regionally distinct folk architecture and was the inspirational model for the Dutch Colonial Revival, a picturesque suburban style that quickly spread from coast to coast. Antique collectors come repeatedly to broaden their knowledge, often in a specific category of interest, be it chairs, pottery, quilts, or toys. Many visitors return with their children or grandchildren to share a pleasant memory from their own past and to reconnect with a local landmark that exudes a strong sense of place. Most visitors come to enjoy an outing with friends or family.

Having seventy municipalities within its boundaries, Bergen County is the most “boroughized” county in the Nation’s most densely populated State. It contains 190 elementary, middle and junior high schools; and 40 high schools. Five colleges provide opportunities for higher education. Generations of young visitors have come to the Steuben House on class trips, with camp or scout groups, and individually with parents in tow to obtain extra credit or to research term papers.

With its increasing attraction as an urban park and open space, Historic New Bridge Landing is developing new audiences. Noontide “office refugees” and mall workers have discovered a rare neighborhood green spot to eat lunch and to relax in quiet shade. Retirees, lawyers, and private contractors, who regularly purchase their meals in local eateries, park at Historic New Bridge to briefly idle in the serenity of the place. Some visitors walk their dog, push strollers, or pass through on a walk or jog. New Bridge will become an important terminus and access point for the Teaneck Greenway.

Eco-tourists are frequently sighted and their numbers will increase as the river and its broad meadowlands recover from past abuses. Bird-watchers keep their vigil, delighting in glimpses of the Great Blue Herons, American Egrets and Lesser Yellow-legs who inhabit the morning mists along the river. New Bridge Landing has long been popular with anglers.

Valid visitor experiences will be accommodated and, if necessary, enhanced, or at least channeled to avoid conflicts with other park users. But nearly all visitors (including most casual or accidental intruders) express an intellectual curiosity and emotional attraction to the underlying significance of so unexpected a place. The site's greatest attraction is to heritage tourism. In this aspect, it can draw not only a regional audience, but also a national one.

In short, visitation has grown in scope and diversity of interest to reflect regional and national trends. The core interpretative messages relevant to the site must therefore adapt in delivery methods, media, and density of content to accommodate a variety of visitor needs, expectations and attention spans.

Studies show that most recreational travelers respond to a mixture of excitement and relaxation, enjoying opportunities to socialize in beautiful surroundings, to get a break from their normal pattern of activity; and to meaningfully connect with interesting places through heritage interpretation. Tourist destinations therefore must offer a full, dynamic range of leisure experiences to meet the expectations of their audience.

According to Desmond Jolly, Cooperative Extension agricultural economist and director of the University of California Small Farm Program, most vacationers seek opportunities to:

- Renew and strengthen family relationships;
- Actively participate in outdoor activities that improve health and one's sense of well being;
- Seek self-renewal and inspiration through rest and relaxation;
- Have exciting emotional experiences;
- Change one's routine through exposure to a healthier climate, grander scenery, a slower pace of life, or quieter surroundings;
- Learn something about one's self through the exploration and discovery of history or nature, especially through direct contact with the unfamiliar or unknown;
- Reminisce or retrace a sentimental journey, create new memories of lasting value, or celebrate special anniversaries.

Between 1996, and 2006, total expenditures generated by New Jersey's tourism industry grew from \$24.6 billion to \$37.6 billion. Overall visitation reached 71.1 million with visitors from other states accounting for 69% of expenditures. One out of every nine NJ workers is now employed in a tourism-related job and tourism presently generates \$4.3 billion in tax revenues.¹ Despite such phenomenal growth, increasing competition for shorter attention spans and less leisure time in a marketplace dominated by more "thrilling" competitors, translates into a declining audience for some traditionally popular destinations. Visitation at

¹ Press release, March 29, 2007, "New Jersey's Tourism Engine Steams Forward"
www.state.nj.us/travel/2007_releases/p2007-0329b.htm

Shenandoah National Park, for example, declined 38% from 1.75 million in 1995 to barely a million in 2005.² At Colonial Williamsburg, admissions dropped from a high of 1.3 million in 1976 to 730,000 in 2003. In the same period, attendance at Old Sturbridge Village was cut in half. In 2006, a Nature Conservancy survey showed “a correlation between the decline in visitors and the rise of electronic entertainment media.” As Jayne Clark writes in *USA Today*, “In an age of Xbox and MTV, traditional living history activities — say, dipping tapers in Ye Olde Candle Shoppe — are less likely to inflame interest than they once did.”³ Depicting declining attendance at historic sites over the past 20 years as “part of a national phenomena,” James P. Vaughan, Vice President for Stewardship at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, believes that the public, by their absence, is “telling us that the experiences we provide are not very relevant or important to their lives.”⁴ To renew and grow their audience, history museums must create more meaningful visitor experiences and historic site interpreters must “spend less time lecturing and more time in guiding visitors to making their own discoveries.”⁵

While Atlantic City casinos and the Jersey shore are perennial big draws, a majority of NJ attractions draw fewer than 10,000 visitors per year. According to the *New Jersey Tourism Master Plan*, “smaller attractions tend to have fewer resources for marketing and promotion and limited staff resources to support collaborative marketing efforts.” To promote growth in all sectors of the tourist economy, the *New Jersey Tourism Master Plan* (August 1997) calls for a commitment to providing a quality visitor experience; for a concerted effort to strengthen the State’s image and leverage unique assets, which competitors cannot offer, by promoting an appreciation for what is uniquely New Jersey; and to build an industry which effectively pools resources for collaborative promotion while also providing choices and value for the consumer. Tourists universally demand a “quality experience” and are willing to pay for it.⁶

Heritage tourism

The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines heritage tourism as “*traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present.*” According to Cheryl M. Hargrove, the Trust’s first heritage-tourism director, it is “one of the fastest growing niche market segments in the travel industry.” A 1996 U. S. Travel Data Center survey shows 45% of American adults who planned a pleasure trip said that they intended to visit a historic site while on vacation; 41% of leisure travelers also planned to visit a cultural site. *Museum Facts*, published by the American Association of Museums,

² Karen Finigle, “Inside the Box, National parks lose ground to electronic entertainment,” *AMC Outdoors*, June 2007.

³ Jayne Clark, “Putting life back into living history,” *USA TODAY*, April 15, 2004.

⁴ James P. Vaughan, “Historic Houses in the 21st Century, Preserving Historic Houses Today,” a lecture at Christ Church in Philadelphia, PA on Feb. 1, 2006, www.heritagephila.org/legacy/20th_houses.html

⁵ “The Changing Scene, Farm animals now rule the roost at Old Sturbridge Village,” *The Berkshires Week*, May 27, 2004, www.berkshiresweek.com/052704/default.asp?id=article09

⁶ Rebecca L. Riedl and Dr. Hans Vogel song, “The Potential Influence of Privatization on Quality Tourism,” *Proceedings of the 2002 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium*, Syracuse, NY: State University of New York, 2002, p. 253

include the following visitor data: (1) A 1996 survey shows that museums rank in the top three family vacation destinations; (2) A 1999 study shows that Americans from all income and education ranges visit and value museums; (3) Tourists who visit museums spend nearly twice as much on their travel as those who do not; and (4) For every 50 cents of public money invested, museums generate \$1 in private support.

Studying the economic impacts of heritage tourism in partnership with the New Jersey Historic Trust and the Center for Urban Policy Research, the Task Force on New Jersey History found that just under five million heritage day-trippers visited New Jersey annually between 1993 and 1995, spending \$56 per adult on average. This group alone accounted for an annual expenditure of about \$276,600,000. The Task Force also reported that about 658,000 overnight heritage tourists visited annually between 1993 and 1995, spending on average \$101 per adult. This contributed over \$66 million annually to the State's economy. Visitors to historic sites tend to stay longer and to travel in larger groups than other overnight tourists. They also are more likely to be repeat visitors. According to Task Force surveys, 68% of historic-site administrators named motor-coach travelers, primarily 65 years of age or older, as their primary growth market. About 50% identified school groups as a primary growth market; 46% identified family groups; and 45% named senior citizens.

As Cheryl Hargrove points out, "The American heritage traveler is older, better educated, and more affluent than other tourists." Baby Boomers particularly like to "experience history through travel." Professor David Listokin, of the Center for Urban Policy Research, concurs, noting aging Baby Boomers "have a greater interest than their parents in things historic and in preservation." They also have greater financial resources and therefore opportunities for leisure activities. One in three international visitors can also be expected to visit a historic attraction.

Most researchers agree: whether alone or in groups, visitors are not so much attracted to destinations per se as they are to certain "experiences," which they associate with certain types of destinations. Therefore, the first step in building an audience is to understand why a visitor seeks out a particular experience and how it gives that person meaning. Survey responses show most visitors trying to satisfy a need for self-discovery through the stimulation of an inspirational experience; a sense of connection with one's roots in history; pure excitement, or relaxation through a refreshing change of scenery or an escape from daily routine. Most tourists also seek destinations where they can interact with friends or family. Studies of tourism at the national monuments in Washington D. C. suggest that tourists "do not primarily seek knowledge or learning—although interpreters and educators sometimes view learning as the visitor's primary motivation." If learning were their main objective, visitors could obtain relevant information off site through other media. Instead, visitors come to *experience* the resource and to connect intellectually and emotionally with a place or set of artifacts evocative of a significant personage, time period or historical event. Because of the transactional

nature of “meaning-making,” most visitors want their on-site experience to be facilitated. While visitors may be aware that the resource has meaning—they know there is something powerful there—they may lack the knowledge or background experience to connect to those meanings or interpret what they are seeing.⁷ High-quality interpretation is therefore integral to the visitor experience: an accurate and well-told story is a key to success. Above all else, interpretation should stimulate self-discovery, going beyond the informational to the inspirational. Using appropriate delivery strategies, effective interpretation leaves visitors with insight of lasting value. To do this, interpreters must possess specialized subject knowledge and an interactive sense of their audience.

Interpretive themes should emphasize what is uniquely compelling about the resource. Studying agricultural heritage attractions in Michigan, researchers discovered that “typical experiences of everyday life ... are easier for visitors to relate to, and ultimately, tell the unique stories of a community that become the basis for its authentic agricultural heritage appeal.”⁸ David Listokin of the Center for Urban Policy Research believes the visiting public is increasingly sophisticated and knowledgeable and “they have to be sold on what is particularly unique about the site.” Several studies indicate that historical authenticity adds uniqueness and drawing power to heritage attractions.⁹

A recent study on projected visitor trends in the northeastern United States notes that the programmatic and experiential aspects of park visitation “will become increasingly important in visitor satisfaction and ***the creation of memorable experiences will become the most important variable in determining the level of visitor satisfaction.***”¹⁰ Meeting this challenge not only requires more interpretive programs, but also ones that address an aging, better-educated and more diverse audience. This is due largely to aging Baby Boomers, who are increasingly staying put and renewing a sense of communities of place. Since women are gaining steadily as income producers and decision makers, the interpretation at National Park Service sites will place greater emphasis upon “family history and cultural history more than they currently do, while not excluding military, political and natural history.” Ongoing demographic shifts also place new demands upon service providers of all kinds. The Pennsylvania University study on projected park visitation in the northeastern United States concludes: “Visitors will pursue a common pattern of onsite behavior regardless of ethnicity.” Successful

⁷ Ibid, pp. 22-23

⁸ Craig Wiles, Terry Shaffer, and Gail Vander Stoep, “Michigan’s Agricultural Heritage: Using Historical Data to Develop Authentic Heritage Attractions,” *Proceedings of the 2002 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium*, Syracuse, NY: State University of New York, 2002, p. 114

⁹ See Craig Wiles, Terry Shaffer, and Gail Vander Stoep, “Michigan’s Agricultural Heritage: Using Historical Data to Develop Authentic Heritage Attractions,” *Proceedings of the 2002 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium*, Syracuse, NY: State University of New York, 2002, pp. 113-117

¹⁰ *The Northeastern United States in the Next Two Decades — Implications for the Northeast Region of the National Park Service* by Geoffrey Godbey, Gordon DeJong, Vinod Sasidharan, Careen Yarnal, Pennsylvania State University, August 2001

programming must be culturally inclusive. D. J. Chavez emphasizes the need to “invite, include, and involve” ethnic groups in leisure activities.¹¹

Image definition and communication

Tourist attractions are defined as “the collection of resources that attract visitors to an area or region.”¹² Primary attractions are defined as “stand-alone destinations” that serve a mass audience. Secondary and tertiary attractions represent “collections of smaller attractions that complement a primary attraction” These are usefully viewed as “potential clusters of attractions linked together by a common thematic story that could become a primary attraction for visitors...”

The establishment and management of a specific, unique place identity or image is a major concern in destination marketing.¹³ It is “generally recognized that accurately assessing the destination image is of vital importance to a successful imaging strategy.”¹⁴ Scholarship indicates that the destination image is “far more than simply a slogan or some pictures,” it is “a communication channel and a way of expression.”¹⁵ The three most important “image vehicles” are: (1) slogan, theme, and positioning; (2) visual symbols; and (3) special events. Major image-promotion tools are: advertisements in television, radio, print and outdoor media; promotional materials such as brochures, maps, posters, videotapes, CD-ROMS and DVDs; creative public relations, including press conferences and special events; attending or hosting exhibitions, travel and tourism conventions; and, last but not least, the Internet.¹⁶ A systematic promotion strategy integrates the use of all these tools.

Eco-tourism

Interest in eco-tourism is growing. Besides a general, traditional desire for an outdoors experience, it diverges into a wide variety of specialized interests. For example, in 1996, the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation reported that Americans spent approximately 31 billion dollars observing, feeding and photographing wildlife. Trip-related expenditures accounted for more than 9 billion (33%) of that total. The Survey also reported that 63 million Americans over the age of 16 participated in wildlife watching in 1996. Eleven million wildlife watchers visited public parks and 23.7 million said that they traveled more than one mile from their homes to do so.

¹¹ Chavez, D. J. “Invite, include, involve!: Racial groups, ethnic groups, and leisure.” In M. T. Allison and I. E. Schneider, Editors, *Diversity and the recreation profession: Organizational perspectives*, State college, PA: Venture Publishing, 2000, pp. 179-194

¹² See Craig Wiles, Terry Shaffer, and Gail Vander Stoep, “Michigan’s Agricultural Heritage: Using Historical Data to Develop Authentic Heritage Attractions,” *Proceedings of the 2002 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium*, Syracuse, NY: State University of New York, 2002, p. 113

¹³ Robert Li Xiang and Hans Vogelsong, “A Model of Destination Image Promotion with a Case Study of Nanjing, P. R. China,” *Proceedings of the 2002 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium*, Syracuse, NY: State University of New York, 2002, p. 194

¹⁴ Several studies noted in Robert Li Xiang and Hans Vogelsong, *op cit.*, p. 194

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 194

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 195

A 1989 study by Paul Kerlinger and David Wiedner, of the Cape May Bird Observatory, entitled “The Economics of Birding at Cape May, New Jersey,” quantifies the benefits of another specialized form of eco-tourism:

- The average age of survey respondents was 45 years for males and 46 years for females.
The incomes of birders were mostly in the middle and upper middle brackets. Birders came to Cape May from a wide geographic area, listing 32 states and 7 foreign countries as home. Most of those who came from out of state were from the eastern United States. New Jersey residents accounted for 45.3% of survey respondents.
Nearly 70% of respondents paid for lodging: 43.3% stayed in motels/hotels, 9.7% in bed and breakfasts, 9.1% in campsites and 7.6% in rental houses. The average stay was four nights.

The study concluded that birding is a low overhead activity, requiring little supervision (e.g. life guards, game wardens, law enforcement officers), which contributes significantly to the local economy, especially in the non-peak tourist season. The income derived from this form of tourism greatly offset the primary cost of maintaining open space. The survey data helps to show “that birding and other outdoor activities are economically better alternatives than many sorts of development ...”

People watching and feeding birds spent an estimated \$87.5 million in New Jersey during 1991 (*The Bottom Line, How Healthy Bird Populations Contribute to a Healthy Economy*). Almost 100,000 birders visited Cape May, New Jersey, (south of the Canal) in 1993 and spent an estimated \$10 million dollars.

Historic New Bridge Landing as a heritage destination

Given its location, ease of access, and significant resources appealing to heritage and ecological tourists, Historic New Bridge Landing holds great audience potential. Limits on staffing, operational funding, infrastructure, and publicity have heretofore made Historic New Bridge Landing one of New Jersey’s “hidden gems” or “best kept secrets.” But few historic “pocket” parks are more historically deserving, more scenically endowed, or better positioned in a heavily populated metropolitan area, to provide a range of meaningful experiences to so wide and interested an audience.

Bergen County needs and deserves a premier historic park of National significance and interest, to claim and to honor its unique cultural identity, and to serve as a catalytic attraction for a whole host of other worthy and diverse tourist destinations

The Staffing Needs and Capital Improvements Committee of New Jersey’s 225th Anniversary of the American Revolution Celebration Commission assessed the capital and staffing needs of geographically diverse State-owned sites. They identified regional American Revolutionary War Visitor Centers to act as “anchors”

for visitation. Information, brochures and maps of sites in the region will be distributed at these centers to increase awareness and heritage tourism. Their report, published in December 2001, not only designated Historic New Bridge Landing as an “anchor site,” but also ranked it first by priority.

On January 3, 2001, Bobbie Greene, Director, informed the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission that Historic New Bridge Landing had been designated an Official Project of *Save America's Treasures*, a partnership program between the White House Millennium Council and the National Trust for Historic Preservation dedicated to the celebration and preservation of our nation's threatened cultural treasures.

The Need for Local History and the Inclusion of Heritage Destinations in the Educational Curriculum

The broad stream of history runs in our midst. The English historian Winterbotham, writing a history of the United States shortly after the Revolution, described New Jersey as “the seat of the war for several years during the contest between England and America. Her proportionate loss of men and property was greater than any other of the thirteen colonies. While Washington was retreating through New Jersey, almost forsaken by all others, her militia were at all times obedient to his orders and, for a considerable length of time, composed the strength of his army, and the military achievements performed by New Jersey soldiers gives this State one of the first ranks among her sister states in a military way and entitles her to share praise that bears no proportion to her size.”

Despite a large and growing investment in our schools, ignorance is rapidly eroding this proud heritage. In 1997, the Task Force on New Jersey History administered a 15-question, multiple-choice test to 371 eleventh and twelfth graders enrolled in six public and private schools throughout the State. Few of the students who took the test were able to answer correctly half the questions. Of the 371 students who took the examination, 326 were unable to arrange in chronological order some of the major chapters in the nation's military history from the American Revolution to World War II. Over 50% could not identify the Revolution as the nation's first military conflict and 70% did not know that the Battle of Monmouth was fought in the eighteenth century. *A Heritage Reclaimed: The Report of the Task Force on New Jersey History* (June 1997) concluded that: “The performance of students of all backgrounds and regions revealed a distressingly low level of knowledge of the most basic information about New Jersey history.”

Existing Conditions in the Historic New Bridge Core Unit

The HISTORIC NEW BRIDGE CORE UNIT encompasses the historic buildings, structures, roadway and grounds fronting the Hackensack River, where the history of New Bridge is preserved in place and where modern intrusions are minimal or largely reversible. The Historic New Bridge Core Unit includes the State-owned Zabriskie-Steuben House and its grounds, the County-owned 1889 New Bridge, the site of the Zabriskie gristmill and river landing, which the Bergen County Historical Society owns, the privately-owned New Bridge General Store on Old New Bridge Road, and the streetscapes and roadways approaching the historic 1889 bridge from east and west, including riparian marshlands and the lower part of Clarence Brett Park in Teaneck.

Main Street

When a “new bridge” was constructed at the narrows of the Hackensack River in March 1744, road surveyors laid out a four-rod road, following the present course of Main Street, River Edge, running *“on the Land of the Widow of Johannis Ackerman Deceased Beginning at the Road of Stien Rabi & on the said Land along the house of the deceased as the Road goes to the Mills of the deceased, about an East Course, and then Northerly along the Creek about Ten yards above an old Stump where the Bridge is to be Built.”*

The former right-of-way of Main Street preserves the 1745 road, later followed by Washington’s troops and their British pursuers on the 1776 Retreat. The roadway is an important historic feature of the site. While it needs to be accessible to emergency vehicles, it will otherwise be restricted to treatment and use consistent with its eighteenth-century character and significance to the site.

The Borough of River Edge vacated the dead-end of Main Street, running from the entrance to the PSE&G substation to the west end of the old bridge, in May 2001. Surveyors immediately began marking out a new parking lot for the Steuben House, which occupies the former west lane of the street for parking slots, thereby increasing the facility from 16 to 21 parking spaces. Drainage problems were also addressed in this area through curbing and re-grading. The portion of Main Street extending from the entrance of the new parking lot to the bridge, and fronting the Steuben House, was given an appropriate new surface and restricted to pedestrian use (and emergency vehicles). The former Pizza Town property at the intersection of Main Street and Hackensack Avenue was acquired for parking and the extant parking lot will no longer be needed once a pathway allows visitors to park along Hackensack Avenue and walk down into the historic core area.

Historic Swing Bridge

In July 1888, the County of Bergen awarded contracts for erecting an iron bridge at New Bridge to the King Iron Company for a low bid of \$3,990 and for the stonework to Joseph W. Stagg for \$3,994. In August 1888, Joseph Stagg removed the old bridge and began laying stone for the abutments. The new iron swing bridge was opened on Monday, February 4, 1889. At their monthly meeting on that same date, the

Board of Chosen Freeholders were presented a bill for \$100 in favor of Joseph Stagg for building a temporary foot-bridge across the Hackensack River at Cherry Hill, which apparently served the citizens of New Bridge during the six months that they waited for the iron bridge to be installed.

The 1889 iron truss swing bridge stands at the historic core of New Bridge, spanning the narrows of the Hackensack River, and occupying the very place of an earlier oak draw-bridge where the Continental army crossed in November 1776. The oldest highway swing bridge to survive in New Jersey, it has achieved significance in its own right. It was listed on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places for its centennial in 1989.

The extant historic New Bridge also deserves interpretation in its own right and not merely as the site of the earlier *Bridge That Saved A Nation*. The Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders awarded a contract to the Progressive Machine Company in June 2001 for inspection services in order to ascertain the deteriorated areas of the historic New Bridge as part of a plan and program of repair and restoration. The goals of the historic bridge rehabilitation project were: to strip, prepare and paint the bridge; to repair/replace broken and missing structural steel components; to repair/reconstruct connections, joints and rivets; to clean the operating mechanism and to paint and stabilize the bridge; to stabilize masonry embankments; to repair/replace wood decking and re-attach as required; and to remove all loose fender material not to be replaced. As part of the adjacent roadway improvements, the existing metal curbs blocking vehicular access at the approaches were replaced with removable wooden bollards. The County of Bergen completed a restoration of the bridge in November 2002.

New Bridge Landing

The extant river landing at New Bridge is a bulkhead that probably dates to about 1910, when industrialist Charles W. Bell had the Hackensack River and Coles Brook, near the Steuben House, dredged to allow barges to reach the site of his proposed cardboard mill (later the American Ink Factory). At the mouth of Coles Brook, the dredging machine unearthed an ancient millstone from Zabriskie's tide mill. Another millstone and shaft were left imbedded in the mud. Spoils from the dredging operation apparently were used to fill the old millpond at the outlet of Coles Brook and perhaps the mill site itself, which stood somewhere in the vicinity of the parking area of the PSE&G substation on Main Street, River Edge.

Before 1910, the river landing was built with a ship-shaped notch that could cradle a schooner when the tide was out, its main mast being lashed to a tall pole fixed in the ground. An embankment about four feet in height stood at the edge of the road, in front of the Steuben House. The boat "cradle" lay at the bottom of this embankment, outlined by horizontal slanting boards that framed the bulkhead. When resting in this cradle, the schooner's deck would have corresponded with the road level, facilitating loading and unloading. A path led directly from this ship's-cradle to the front door of the house across the road. The landing needs extensive restoration or

replacement and interpretive signage.

Since the river is the visual and interpretive focal point of the core historic unit, the date of the bridge and the earlier river landing (1889) will be used as the terminal date in determining the interpretive relevance of all other features — that is to say, that features which predate 1889 would be considered for restoration, replacement or reconstruction, while those postdating the opening of the bridge would be considered for removal. Since every feature must be evaluated for significance in its own right as a product indicative of its own time, the terminal date is only an important “consideration,” and not an arbitrary finality. This does not mean that the historic core unit will be singularly focused on the year 1889, as each building and feature will be fully interpreted according to its own significance and story. Using this guideline, however, the former Arrow Canoe Club building, built in 1913, will be demolished and the earlier river landing alongside the General Store reconstructed.

The State of New Jersey only owns that portion of the landing directly in front of the Steuben House. The remainder is the property of the Bergen County Historical Society.

PSE&G Equipment Yard

The PSE&G equipment station, standing opposite the exit of the Steuben House parking lot on Main Street, is a salient modern intrusion. In response to a request from the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission, PSE&G installed vinyl strips in the chain-link fence in August 2001, helping to camouflage the equipment. The company also agreed to allow the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission to include the 10 to 12 feet of roadside property lying outside the fence in front of substation in its overall landscape design for the park. Former Commission Chairman Robert Griffin also received estimates for the removal of the power poles and power lines along Main Street in front of the Steuben House (approximately \$630,000 to reroute around Hackensack Avenue and across the 1956 bridge and roadway; or approximately \$370,000 to bury the lines between the substation and Old New Bridge Road). The equipment yard was severely flooded in April 2007 and required extensive replacement of its equipment.

Zabriskie-Steuben House

The Zabriskie-Steuben House should be counted among the five “great houses” of colonial Bergen County, built in the purest imitation of English countryseats to spread the gospel of architectural refinement. In this important sense, it is not typical of Bergen Dutch sandstone houses, but rather it is exceptional in certain crucial respects.

The architectural development of the Zabriskie-Steuben House was commonly misunderstood or misinterpreted prior to scientific architectural investigations undertaken in 1977 by John D. Milner on behalf of the Division of Parks and Forestry (*Architectural Research and Schematic Design Report, Restoration of Von Steuben House, 1977*). Archeological explorations, paint and mortar analysis, and careful

detective work, conclusively demonstrated that the original dwelling was a stone saltbox (45' front and 35'-10" deep), with front rooms flanking a center hall and three narrow rooms at the back of the house, comprising a kitchen, a milk-room and a root cellar, under a shed extension of the gable roof. He also made the interesting and significant observation that the string of rafters framing the west slope of the original gable roof show no evidence of lath or nail holes and therefore are replacements. Milner also found the incomplete framing for a clipped gable or hip roof at the south end, concealed by the later brick gable infill.

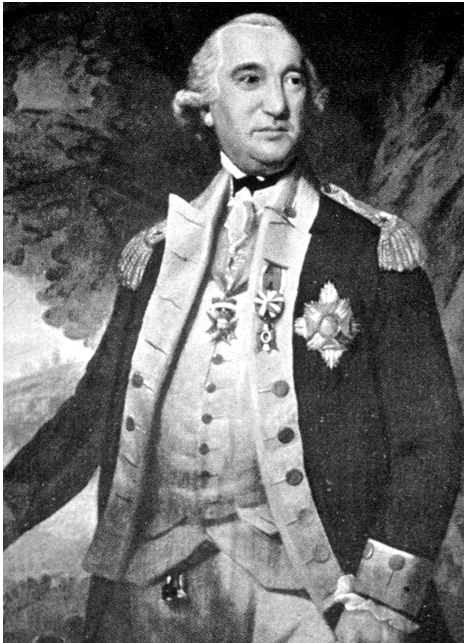
Jan Zabriskie built the oldest part of the Steuben House in 1752. A sandstone lozenge or date stone, set in the south gable end, depicts the waterwheel of the mill. John Milner and his associates also proved that the five-room house grew to its present size by a single enlargement, whereby the three-bay north block (21'-3" by 35'-10") and the second floor along the rear (west elevation) were added at the same time. Milner conservatively reported that the Zabriskie mansion had reached its present size by 1784, citing a compensation claim filed on January 24, 1784, by John J. Zabriskie, "now a refugee in the City of New York" for his former homestead at New-Bridge which was "possessed under this Confiscation Law." Mr. Zabriskie described his estate as: "One large Mansion House, seventy feet long and forty feet wide, containing twelve rooms built with stone, with Outhouses consisting of a bake House, Smoke House, Coach House, and two large Barns, and a Garden, situated at a place called New Bridge (value £850); also One large gristmill containing two pair of stones adjoining said Mansion House (£1200); Forty Acres of Land adjoining said Mansion House consisting of Meadow Land and two orchards."

It is most improbable that the Zabriskies undertook such a substantial construction project during the Revolutionary War. The Zabriskies grew wealthy from increased trade brought on by the French and Indian War (1756-1763). Internal evidence suggests that the house was enlarged about the time of the marriage of Jan Zabriskie, Jr., to Jannetje Goelett on November 21, 1764, in order to create a double house with separate quarters for two generations of the family.

Many visitors expect to see General Steuben's house at New Bridge, as this landmark was saved due to its association with him. For this and other good reasons, the interpretation of the interior of the house will begin with the years 1783 through 1788, when General Steuben owned the property. Its earlier history will be more fully explained in the visitor facility.

General Philemon Dickinson informed Steuben that he could satisfy the requirements of the Legislature "by keeping a bed & Servants there & visiting the premises now & then..." Thus, when owned by Steuben, the Zabriskie mansion at the Hackensack New Bridge was partly occupied by his aide-de-camp, Capt. Benjamin Walker, and partly leased to the son and namesake of its former owner, the Loyalist Jan Zabriskie. The tax assessments for 1786 list Walker & Zabriskie as merchants. On December 4, 1788, the Honorable Major-General Frederick Wm. Baron de Steuben of New York City conveyed his Jersey Estate, comprising 49 acres at New

Bridge formerly belonging to John Zabriskie, to John Zabriskie, Jr., of New Barbados Township for £1,200.



Interpreting the years of Steuben ownership opens an interesting “bridge in time” that spans the causes and consequences of the Revolutionary War, not only to the house itself, but also to its occupants. The story of the Zabriskies’ return as lessees of their own family homestead will also include the circumstances of that family’s construction and enlargement of the house in the years prior to the war, as well as to their wartime experience. This opens the discussion of their Loyalty to the Crown.

The Zabriskie-Steuben House was enlarged around 1767 into conjoined houses occupied by two generations of the Zabriskie family. The Walker & Zabriskie joint-occupancy will address its unique architectural development as a “double-house.” The dwelling was “thoroughly

rebuilt lately,” according to General Steuben’s 1788 advertisement of the property for sale, and this time period will also preserve and interpret its post-Revolutionary War reconstruction. Lastly, the only detailed inventory of the contents of Jan Zabriskie’s household and store stock was prepared at the time of his death in 1793, offering an exact and comprehensive guide to the material culture of that time and place. Therefore, the inventory will be used as the principal guide document in restoring and interpreting the interior.

Old New Bridge Road

A TEA-21 grant, initiated by the Borough of New Milford, funded \$400,000 worth of streetscape improvements to Old New Bridge Road, restoring the eastern approach to the historic 1889 swing-bridge to an approximation of its turn-of-the-century appearance. Appropriate period lighting, curbing, sidewalks, fencing, and road surfacing was included in the project design.

Former Canoe Club

The Arrow Canoe Club occupies a riparian grant from the State of New Jersey for a parcel of river bottom, located along the east shore of the Hackensack River, which James Natalo purchased for \$120 on January 22, 1913. The bounds of this riparian lot begin where the high water line on the east shore of the Hackensack River intersects the north line of (Old) New Bridge Road and extends 65 feet to a point in the west face of the guard or piling placed in connection with the bridge across the River. The boundary continues north along the west side of the guard (which is the “exterior Line for Solid Filling”) 120 feet, to the outlet of French Brook, thence northeast 41.5 feet to the high water line on the east shore of the River and the

center of French Brook, thence southeast along the east shore to the beginning.

James Natalo constructed the extant barnlike wooden structure on concrete pilings placed in the Hackensack River at this location in 1913. Rented canoes sailed in and out from beneath the building, the canoeists using a set of trap-door stairs that extended from the middle interior of the building to a small floating platform on the river. At sometime shortly before he sold the premises to Frederick K. Straub in 1925, James Natalo built a two-story addition to the front of the original building for use as an ice-cream store and small residential apartment. The front room at street level was equipped with a soda fountain counter; two show cases, twelve chairs, and four enamel-topped tables.

An antique shop occupied the premises for many years, despite recurrent flooding. The floor sagged after a particularly bad flood and the property was sold to a lawnmower-repair business. They built a raised floor in the rear section of the building and attached a shed along the riverside to extend their storage capacity.

With funding from the State of New Jersey Open Space and Historic Preservation Trust Fund, the Division of Parks and Forestry acquired the Saw Shop property (originally the Arrow Canoe Club, 1 Old New Bridge Road, New Milford) on October 28, 2000. The purchase recognizes the historical significance of the eastern side of the Hackensack River to the future design and operations of the historic park. Beyond repair, the old Arrow Canoe Club was demolished in January 2010. This restores the original riverfront along Steuben Avenue.

Hackensack Avenue Gateway

The HACKENSACK AVENUE GATEWAY encompasses newly acquired properties along the east side of Hackensack Avenue, at or near the intersection of Main Street, River Edge, where the greatest opportunity exists for the development of visitor facilities.

Green Acres purchased the Sutton & Lys house, standing on south tip of the triangular lot of land, framed by Hackensack Avenue, the jug-handle, and Main Street, in September 2001. The adjacent Pizza Town property was acquired in October 2001. This property is paved and provides parking during special events. The former BACPO property, an auto salvage yard, was acquired in December 2005 through a \$1.1 million federal grant to the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission. Remediation of the site is expected to conclude in December 2009.

The extant buildings on these lots have no historical or architectural value and were demolished. Green Acres coordinated its purchases with the County of Bergen, allowing the County to acquire an additional strip of land along Hackensack Avenue to provide for construction of turning lanes at the Main Street intersection.

Cultural resource management guidelines

All buildings, structures, and features shall be maintained and restored according to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation*.

Cultural landscapes shall be preserved to reflect the history of the site.

All leases must recognize and promote the public interest in the site.

Historic furnishings and artifacts shall be conserved and displayed according to accepted museum practices.

Natural resource management guidelines

Mowing regimes shall be adjusted to maintain and improve habitat for grassland-nesting birds. Methods of wetland management shall emphasize environmental benefits, especially in the preservation of wild game species, water conservation and consumer health.

The Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission advocates and encourages the restoration of the river and its wetlands and floodplains to a healthy natural condition as free as possible from human intrusions deleterious to wildlife and their habitats.

Only recreational activities that do not conflict with wildlife preservation, the conservation of natural and historic features, the aesthetic quality of the setting and all other resource management goals, shall be permitted on public lands under parameters set by the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission.

Staffing

Development of a well-trained and enthusiastic volunteer docent program is a priority. There will also be opportunities created, outside of the civil service system, to employ good interpreters of different ages and proven abilities, including students and senior citizens, especially for part-time or summer employment.

A professionally qualified and compensated staff will be required to provide curatorial, administrative, educational, secretarial and maintenance services. Training and evaluation will be provided on an ongoing basis. In order to provide the kind of broad-based, but well researched interpretive programs necessary to inform and educate the visiting public about the history and significance of Historic New Bridge Landing, Historic New Bridge Landing Park will strive to:

- Rely upon documented facts, qualified experts, and the highest standards of scholarly research in developing good and sufficient information necessary to the fair, open-minded and inspired interpretation of the historic and natural resources under our stewardship.
- Be accurate and not merely entertaining or agreeable to popular preconceptions and honestly identify gaps in our knowledge.
- Provide interpreters with the necessary communications skills and background knowledge to satisfy visitors' curiosity and enrich their experience of the

resource. Encourage interpreters to share their enthusiasm for what they do with the public.

- Employ a variety of interpretive strategies, methods and media, to reach the broadest possible audience.
- Address varying levels and fields of visitors' interest and experience.
- Honor and promote respect for the resource for what it truly is, imparting an appreciation of its significance and respect for the value of its preservation.
- Acknowledge disagreements and different points of view as helpful to the process of understanding.
- Evaluate visitor responses to the content and effectiveness of all elements of our interpretive program and make appropriate corrections or adjustments, as needed.

With the development of facilities and attractions, Historic New Bridge Landing will generate income through admissions and other sources to offset operational overhead. The Bergen County Historical Society will continue to organize and train volunteers and will hopefully build an endowment to sustain and grow its operational capacity. At the outset, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission is entitled to capture funding previously appropriated for, or relating to the Steuben House and other state lands at New Bridge, including personnel costs including supervisory, maintenance, administrative assistance, park police, interpretive and professional support staff. For the immediate future, the park will require:

- An executive director
- A qualified administrative assistant or equivalent, assigned to the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission and available on an as-needed basis
- Qualified maintenance staff, assigned to the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission and available for regular maintenance and cleaning of the Steuben House and grounds
- Park police assigned to the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission and available on an as-needed basis.
- Funding for three part-time (20 hours per week) interpretive staff to open the park to visitors on Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays or as required for programs and special events.

Other publicly owned lands or buildings subject to the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission's jurisdiction

- Clarence Brett Park, Township of Teaneck
- The Demarest House Museum, owned and operated by the Blauvelt-Demarest Foundation
- The Campbell-Christie House. Under the 50-year ground lease, the County of Bergen pays utilities, maintains mechanical systems and provides structural

repairs. The Bergen County Historical Society occupies the structure and determines its use and historic restoration. The Historical Society requires the consent of the Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders construct a wing, which permission was obtained in 2001. The structure will become the property of the Bergen County Historical Society at the expiration of the ground lease in 2027.

- The Westervelt-Thomas Barn. This English-style barn, built around 1889, originally stood on Ridgewood Road in Washington Township, but was moved to its present site, northwest of the Demarest House, in 1954-55.

Eliminating or preventing modern intrusions: river pathway and parking lot adjacent to the Steuben House

In keeping with the goal of eliminating modern intrusions, whenever possible, or preventing their introduction to the core historic area, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission approved the following resolution at its meeting on November 5, 2009, expressing its opposition to any proposed river pathway and bridge crossing Cole's Brook:

Resolved, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission does not support, approve or authorize construction of any paved or lamp-lit path or walkway within the view shed under the Commission's jurisdiction and does not support, approve or authorize any bridge, pedestrian or vehicular, across Coles Brook or the Hackensack River on lands or properties that fall under, or may in future come under, the Commission's jurisdiction. **Motion carried.**

Upon further deliberation at its meeting on December 3, 2009, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, that the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission, acting in good faith, conceptually approves the removal of the parking lot adjacent to the Steuben House as a modern intrusion and its replacement with a turn around to accommodate emergency vehicles. Motion, W. J. Oddie; second, A. Subrizi. **Motion carried.** Commissioner A. Strobel voted nay.

Desired acquisitions

The old Demarest-Cole General Store at 79 Old New Bridge Road occupies the foundation and site of the Cornelius Hoogland's stone tavern house, known as the Black Horse Inn during the American Revolution. The oldest portion of the extant building (apart from the sandstone foundation) was probably built between 1825 and 1838. The building probably reached its present dimensions and style around the time of the railroad's arrival in 1870. Barney Cole's house and store property

encompassed scales, outhouses, coal and lumberyard and dock on the east side of the Hackensack River.

The New Bridge General Store, situated on the north side of Old New Bridge Road, near the bridge, is the interpretive key to the east side of the river. The appropriate portion of the building will be restored as a general store and gift shop, offering high-quality craft merchandise of educational value. The adjacent residential wing will be restored as the storekeeper's dwelling and an orientation station. If and when property acquisitions proceed, consideration will be given to limited parking (especially for Disabled Americans) on the north side of the road, adjacent to the Store.



The Hussey property at the dead-end of Steuben Lane should be acquired and added to the park so as to eliminate Steuben Lane as a public right-of-way.

What are the Alternatives?

Planning anticipates the potential for conflict by building agreement upon common fundamental goals and resource-management objectives. This makes it possible to fashion solutions without compromising principles.

The Zabriskie-Steuben House

The **First Alternative** envisions raising the Steuben House at least 30 inches to raise the lowest floor level above the century flood level. To restore the original appearance and relationship of the house to the surroundings landscape, this would require appropriately contoured filling around the house. The Steuben House could then be furnished with either state-acquired artifacts or high-quality reproductions, based upon a Period Furnishing Plan.

The **Second Alternative** envisions restoring the Zabriskie-Steuben House as an artifact of its period of significance, removing modern intrusions. It will be furnished with appropriate reproductions, suggestive of the uses of the different rooms, according to a researched Furnishing Plan.

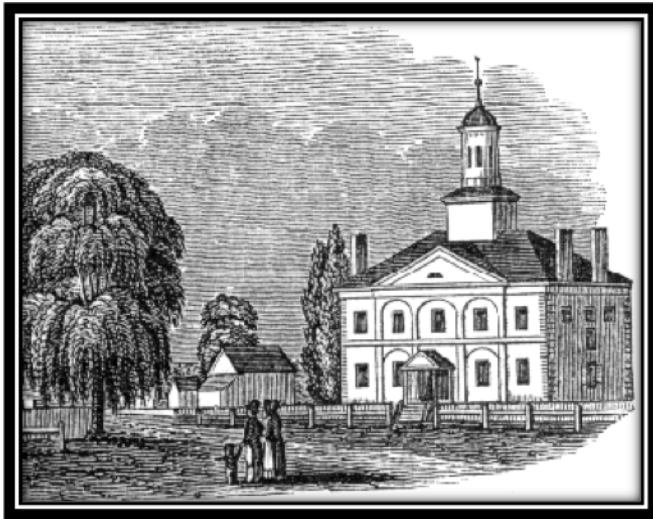
The Bake House of the Steuben House, demolished in 1931, will be reconstructed for interpretive purposes. The old four-seat Outhouse (well documented in old photographs) will also be reconstructed at its original location in the backyard.

The **Third Alternative** offered the course of “no action.” The “no action” alternative would result in a steady erosion and loss of historic resources.

Visitor Facilities at the Hackensack Avenue Gateway

The **First Alternative** envisions construction of a modern facsimile of the 1819 Bergen County Court House for the visitor center on the former BAPCO auto salvage yard. One of its most important functions will be visitor orientation to Historic New Bridge Landing. A topographically accurate model of New Bridge in 1776 (based upon period maps and deeds) may be a centerpiece, orienting visitors to what existed then and allowing them to visualize and understand the changes that have occurred. Archaeological collections from New Bridge will be displayed here in combination with a variety of interpretive exhibits. Some collections of the Bergen County Historical Society, particularly relating to the American Revolution or to New Bridge, may also be incorporated into these exhibits. The proposed orientation center will provide a public assembly room suitable for programs that has the architectural ambiance of an antique interior space, interpretive space for exhibits, a cafeteria or restaurant facility, a gift shop, restrooms and offices. An elevator will be located in a rear-projecting pavilion for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access. A parking lot may be located adjacent to the visitor center.

The former Pizza Town property will primarily be developed for visitor parking. Besides exhibit galleries, the building will include a meeting room.



This woodcut from John Barber's and Henry Howe's *Historical Collections of the State of New Jersey*, shows the 1819 Court House facing the Hackensack Green. The Bergen County Historical Society has the original bell and front step from this building in its collections.

The replica of the 1819 Court House should face a small village green, complete with cannon and Liberty Pole. The bell from this Court House (donated to the Bergen County Historical Society in 1912) will be hung in the belfry and used to announce events as they occur in the historic park. The original stepping-stone to the entrance of the 1819 court House, presently located at the front entrance to the Steuben House, will be used again for its original purpose. An elongated shed will be constructed close to the museum building for storing large museum objects, such as antique wheeled vehicles and or agricultural equipment, and to provide a screen between the parking area and the visitor center.

The ***Second Alternative*** envisions a second building on the southeast corner of the intersection of Hackensack Avenue and Main Street, River Edge to serve as classrooms for educational purposes related to the site and its museum collections.

The ***Third Alternative*** offered the course of “no action.”

New Bridge Battle Monument

The ***First Alternative*** envisions construction of a New Bridge Battle Monument as a figurative representative of a Liberty Pole — a slender column standing atop a square pedestal, surmounted by the figure of Liberty, armed and vigilant, wearing the Liberty Cap (based upon the figure depicted in the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey). Her shield will bear the plow and horse head from the Great Seal. An inscription on a frieze band near the head of the column will identify this figure as “THE SPIRIT OF THE JERSEYS.”

On the face of the base facing Hackensack Avenue, the opening paragraph of Thomas Paine's *American Crisis* will be engraved, reading:

“These are the times that try men’s souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now deserves the love, and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet, we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated.”

The opposite face of the pedestal will also bear the following extract from the *American Crisis*:

“Our first object was to secure the bridge over the Hackensack, which laid up the river between the enemy and us, about six miles from us, and three from them. General Washington arrived in about three quarters of an hour, and marched at the head of the troops towards the bridge, which place I expected we should have a brush for; however, they did not choose to dispute it with us, and the greatest part of our troops went over the bridge, the rest over the ferry, except some which passed at a mill on a small creek, between the bridge and the ferry, and made their way through some marshy grounds up to the town of Hackensack, and there passed the river.”

The face of the pedestal facing north will read:

HISTORIC NEW BRIDGE LANDING
THE BRIDGE THAT SAVED A NATION
NOVEMBER 20, 1776

The ***Second Alternative*** would open the design of the monument to a public contest, wherein artists would submit their designs of the monument and its location to the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission or to a special monument committee selected and designated by the Commission.

The ***Third Alternative*** offered the course of “no action.”

