



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

Senator Flanagan Announces Step Forward In Cleanup Of Nissequogue River State Park

JOHN J. FLANAGAN October 19, 2011

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Senator John Flanagan (2nd Senate District) recently announced that the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) **Commissioner Rose Harvey has agreed to utilize a portion of the \$29 million in state funding** he secured to remediate the expanded Nissequogue River State Park to undertake a major demolition project at the site. This announcement by the OPRHP was in direct response to a **letter Senator Flanagan sent in August** inquiring about the status of the demolition plan.

The OPRHP announced that in November the agency will seek competitive bids from private construction companies to demolish up to 15 abandoned buildings and related structures at the former Kings Park Psychiatric Center property. Senator Flanagan had the former state institution placed in the parks system in 2006 to protect the quality of life for the residents of Kings Park after they worked together to stop the sale of the property to a private developer.

Since that transfer, he has worked with the community to move the project along and that led to the OPRHP utilizing some of the funds he secured to undertake an assessment of the project under the State Environmental Quality Review Act. The agency has determined that the structures included in this first round of demolition are deteriorated beyond repair and have no realistic potential for reuse.

Four of the buildings slated for demolition are located within the 153-acre Nissequogue River State Park, which was established in 2000. The other eleven buildings that will be removed are located on an additional 365 acres of the property that were transferred to the agency in 2006. In addition, a large smokestack and other structures adjacent to the abandoned power plant on the property will be removed.

After bids are received, OPRHP expects to complete selection of a construction firm and execute a formal demolition contract agreement by next March. Demolition work is expected to begin in May with completion of the project, including site restoration after the buildings have been removed, expected to take more than a year.

Funding for the project will come from \$29 million state in state funding that was secured by Senator Flanagan.

OPRHP will award the contract to the construction firm that submits the lowest price bid to demolish the greatest number of targeted buildings. The construction contractor must demonstrate that it is qualified to undertake a project of this scale, including compliance with all applicable public health, asbestos removal, and environmental standards.

"Removal of these deteriorated and unneeded buildings will represent real progress at the Kings Park site," said Commissioner Harvey. "Demolition of the buildings targeted in this first cleanup phase will address many safety and security risks, and provide us with a better understanding of the challenges ahead in the long-term remediation of the site."

Senator John Flanagan said, "After years of hard work and the most recent actions by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the vision for this parkland property can finally begin to take shape for the people of Kings Park. I want to express my sincere gratitude to Governor Cuomo and Commissioner Harvey for their steadfast attention to this issue and for responding to my request for proceeding with Phase 1 of the demolition plan. With final approvals in place to release a portion of the \$25 million I secured for this property, I look forward to continuing my work with state park administrators, local elected officials and community representatives to realize the full potential of this beautiful piece of open space located on the north shore of Long Island. In addition, I want to thank Congressman Tim Bishop for his keen interest in this issue and his constant willingness to help."