



PRESS RELEASE

August 29, 2008

Twelve years ago, the 565-acre Kings Park Psychiatric Center (KPPC) on the north shore of Long Island closed its doors after over 100 years of operation as a mental health institution run by the State of New York. This unique property in the hamlet of Kings Park in the Town of Smithtown includes waterfront on the Long Island Sound, riverfront on the Nissequogue River, wetlands, woodlands, and other natural resources. In many other areas throughout Long Island, such natural resources have disappeared completely due to overdevelopment over the past 50 years.

New York State made several attempts to sell the KPPC property. Repeatedly, the residents of Kings Park and the surrounding area demonstrated their opposition to any sale of this property to developers for housing. Time and time again, local residents have overwhelmingly maintained that they want the KPPC property to be preserved as parkland.

The Nissequogue River State Park Foundation was established by members of the Kings Park community to provide for the future of this land as parkland. In 1999, Governor Pataki dedicated 159 acres of the KPPC property along the waterfront as the Nissequogue River State Park. Since that time, this portion of the property has operated as an active state park. In December 2006, Governor Pataki placed the remaining portion of the KPPC property under the administration of the Office of State Parks and Preservation, thus declaring that the entire property be state parkland.

It is past time for New York State to move forward in its commitment to maintaining Nissequogue River State Park as a resource for the people of the State of New York. Now is the time for New York State to start spending the \$29 million obtained by State Senator Flanagan for restoration of Nissequogue River State Park. The State should begin by spending a portion of these funds to remove former KPPC buildings on the park property which are in ruins and are beyond repair. The presence of these remnants of structures poses both a hazard to park visitors and serves as a magnet for vandalism in the park.

The Nissequogue River State Park Foundation strongly urges the State of New York to remedy this situation now by using the funds obtained for the park by Senator Flanagan to remove the remains of the building structures numbers 40, 122, 123, and 124, also known as the "Group 2" buildings.

Removal of these structures should be just a first step in an ongoing effort by the State of New York toward preservation of Nissequogue River State Park as state parkland for the people of New York.

Sincerely,

Board members of NRSP Foundation: Michael Rosato - Chairman/President: Kings Park Civic Association, Lorna Paine - Co-Chairwoman/President: San Remo Civic Association, Charles Gardner - Co-Chairman /President: Kings Park Chamber of Commerce, Dorothy Chanin - Treasurer: Kings Park Civic Association; Victoria Brown - Secretary: Kings Park Civic Association; Sean Lehmann - Director: Kings Park Civic Association; Frank Mercuri - Director: Kings Park Civic Association; Rob Trotta - Director; Jack Hessel - Grantwriter: Kings Park Chamber of Commerce; Steve Weber - Director: Kings Park Heritage Museum, Jay Ropke - Director: San Remo Civic Association; Miles Borden - Kings Park Fire Department, Tony Tanzi -Kings Park Educational Foundation; Joe Vallone - Sons of Italy; Gail Hessel - Sons of Italy; Larry Flynn - Kings Park Chamber of Commerce; Tom McCabe - Knights of Columbus; Joel Blitzter - Kings Park Soccer; Rob Freudenberg - Nissequogue River Steering Committee; Leo Ostebo - Kings Park Educational Foundation; Kingsley Pedlar - Kings Park Historian..