

Eagle Lake residents Take Action: Defend Your Right to Public Comment

From: rolf tiedemann (camptouchstone@yahoo.com)

To: camptouchstone@yahoo.com

Date: Thursday, April 13, 2023 at 01:32 PM EDT

ELPOI residents

This just came through in our email. An article in the Adirondack Explorer from March 28, 2023 provides some additional details.

<https://www.adirondackexplorer.org/stories/apas-proposed-comment-policy-changes-draw-criticism>

If this the public comment period is changed it could affect the out come of the decision for the EL boat launch.

While I usually don't agree with the comments and actions of the Adirondack Council, this one is spot on - especially if you read the last 2 bullet points of the proposed changes:

I urge you to read the email below and indicate to the APA that these proposed changes will not serve the residents of, and visitors to, the Park in a positive or beneficial way.

Ask yourself, if it were not for this notification how would you, or did you, receive any other notification about this proposed change, so that you could provide public comment on these now proposed changes? How deliberate a move is this by the APA to reduce or close off public comment so the public has limited or no opportunity to have a say in the governance of the Park?

"Reduce the time in which written comments on agenda items are accepted in advance of Agency meetings..."

If we look back on the notification process associated with the draft 2019 HPWF UMP, the notices for comment were poorly publicized, and scarcely met the 30 day published open time then. If we look forward to 2023, Megan's comment about the proposed change to the EL boat launch as presented to the APA on Feb 7th had nothing in the meeting agenda, published a week prior, indicating this topic was even being considered- How can one be expected to comment if there is poor or no notification of the topics being considered? Shortening the comment period only makes it harder, or worse yet impossible for the public lay person or community that is not WATCHING the APA's every move, to have input.

"Remove text relating to written comments for Forest Preserve Unit Management Plans (UMPs)"

We may have seen this already as part of the 2019 HPWF UMP where in the red line document they either unintentionally or intentionally left out many of the resident comments submitted in opposition to the boat launch changes in the extended comment period, or took a 5 page comment letter and edited it to 5 paragraphs that were out of context to the letter as a whole. Or, does this proposed change mean something bigger in that the APA will be generating "separate" guidelines specifically for UMP's? And where will the public be able to learn about them?

Who provides the eyes and/or ears to oversee and watch over this appointed Agency on behalf of the public or community at large?

Just some observations,


Rolf

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Adirondack Council <foreverwild@adirondackcouncil.org>

To: "officer@eaglelake1.org" <officer@eaglelake1.org>

Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 at 11:31:03 AM EDT

Subject: Take Action: Defend Your Right to Public Comment 



TAKE ACTION

URGE THE ADIRONDACK PARK AGENCY TO PROVIDE EQUITABLE PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Please email the APA by April 21st.

Each month, the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) meets to deliberate on public and private land matters affecting New York's Adirondack Park. The eleven-member board, comprised of Commissioners that live both inside and outside of the park, reviews and votes on Agency actions.



The public currently has multiple opportunities to offer oral or written comments on decisions before the agency or on any subject they choose. Public comment opportunities are necessary to provide the APA board with key facts and perspectives that help them in their deliberations, ensuring that the Adirondack Park Agency is serving the interests of all New Yorkers.

The APA recently proposed draft amendments to their Public Comment Policy to the APA board. The policy is intended to guide public feedback on Agency actions and operations in advance of and/or during monthly meetings.

If approved as drafted, these changes will constrain public engagement and a critical legal function within our state government and the Adirondack Park. The proposed changes to the policy seek to:

- Reduce public comment opportunities,
- Restrict comments to the end of the meeting, which is harder for the public to participate in,
- Impose deadlines on the public and not on the Agency,
- Reduce the time in which written comments on agenda items are accepted in advance of Agency meetings, and
- Remove text relating to written comments for Forest Preserve Unit Management Plans (UMPs).

This is where we need your help! Please email the Adirondack Park Agency by April 21 and urge the Agency to provide equitable and accessible public comment opportunities.

TAKE ACTION



518.873.2240 | foreverwild@AdirondackCouncil.org | AdirondackCouncil.org



Adirondack Council | 103 Hand Ave., Suite 3, PO Box D-2, Elizabethtown, NY 12932

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