

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY CHECKLIST
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"Historic New Bridge Landing Park"

NJSA: 13:15B-1

LAWS OF: 1995 **CHAPTER:** 260

BILL NO: A2440

SPONSOR(S): Rooney and others

DATE INTRODUCED: January 10, 1995

COMMITTEE: **ASSEMBLY** Environment
SENATE: ---

AMENDED DURING PASSAGE: Yes

DATE OF PASSAGE: **ASSEMBLY:** June 29, 1995
SENATE: October 19, 1995

DATE OF APPROVAL: November 13, 1995

FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ARE ATTACHED IF AVAILABLE:

SPONSOR STATEMENT: Yes

COMMITTEE STATEMENT: **ASSEMBLY:** Yes
SENATE: No

FISCAL NOTE: No

VETO MESSAGE: No

MESSAGE ON SIGNING: No

FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:

REPORTS: No

HEARINGS: No

See newspaper clippings--attached:
 "Whitman signs bill creatinb board for park," 11-14-95, Bergen Record.
 KBG:pp

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[FIRST REPRINT]
ASSEMBLY, No. 2440
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED JANUARY 10, 1995

By Assemblywoman VANDERVALK, Assemblyman Zisa,
Assemblywoman Weinberg, Assemblymen DiGaetano,
Russo, Felice, Assemblywoman Heck and Assemblyman Roma

1 AN ACT creating the Historic New Bridge Landing Park
2 Commission and supplementing Title 13 of the Revised Statutes.

3
4 BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
5 *State of New Jersey:*

6 1. a. The Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission, a
7 body corporate and politic with corporate succession, is created
8 in the Division of Parks and Forestry of the Department of
9 Environmental Protection. The commission is an instrumentality
10 exercising public and essential governmental functions. Exercise
11 by the commission of the powers conferred by this act is deemed
12 to be an essential governmental function of the State.

13 b. The commission shall consist of the following nine
14 members: the Director of the ¹[Divisions] Division¹ of Parks and
15 Forestry or the director's designee; one representative each from
16 the County of Bergen, the Blauvelt-Demarest Foundation, River
17 Edge Borough, and New Milford Borough; and two representatives
18 each from the Bergen County Historical Society and Teaneck
19 Township. Members of the commission shall serve without
20 compensation but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses
21 incurred in the performance of their duties. The members of the
22 commission shall elect annually a chairman and vice-chairman
23 from their number, and a secretary and treasurer who need not be
24 members of the commission. The same person may be elected to
25 serve both as secretary and treasurer. The chairman of the
26 commission shall be its presiding officer and the vice-chairman
27 shall serve as chairman in the absence of the chairman. The
28 commission shall organize and adopt procedures for the conduct
29 of its business. Five members of the commission shall constitute
30 a quorum and the concurrence of five members of the commission
31 shall be necessary to validate all acts of the commission.

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

37 b. The commission has jurisdiction over the area in Bergen
38 County known as New Bridge Landing, in the Borough of River
39 Edge, between Main Street and Hackensack Avenue and extending
40 into Teaneck Township and the Borough of New Milford, the area
41 being situated along the banks of the Hackensack River.

42 3. The Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission ¹[has
43 the power] shall have the following powers¹:

EXPLANATION--Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the
above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹ Assembly AEN committee amendments adopted April 27, 1995.

- 1 a. To sue and be sued in its own name, but the members of the
2 commission shall be held harmless for acts performed in good
3 faith;
- 4 b. To adopt a seal and alter the same at ¹its¹ pleasure;
- 5 c. To adopt bylaws for the regulation of its affairs and the
6 conduct of its business;
- 7 d. To maintain an office or offices at such place or places
8 within the State as it may designate;
- 9 e. To appoint officers, who need not be members of the
10 commission, in addition to a secretary and a treasurer, as the
11 commission deems advisable, and to employ other employees and
12 agents as may be necessary or desirable in its judgment, to fix
13 their compensation, and to promote and discharge officers,
14 employees and agents all without regard to the provisions of Title
15 11A, Civil Service, of the New Jersey Statutes;
- 16 f. To acquire in the name of the commission, hold and dispose
17 of ¹real and¹ personal property ¹[and lands]¹ in the exercise of
18 its powers and the performance of its duties under this act;
- 19 g. To make, enter into, and perform all contracts and
20 agreements necessary or incidental to the performance of its
21 duties and the execution of its powers under this act;
- 22 h. To request the State ¹[Historical] Historic¹ Preservation
23 Officer to place the lands and buildings under the commission's
24 jurisdiction on the National Register of Historic Places pursuant
25 to the "National Historic Preservation Act ¹[of 1966]¹,"
26 Pub.L.89-665 ¹(16 U.S.C.§470 et al.)¹, as amended ¹and
27 supplemented¹ by the "National Historic Preservation Act
28 Amendments of 1980," Pub.L.96-515 ¹[(16 U.S.C.§470 et seq.)],
29 and the "National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of
30 1992," Pub.L.102-575, or any future amendments or supplements
31 thereto¹ ;
- 32 i. To acquire and hold real and personal property by gift,
33 purchase, devise, bequest, or by other means and to preserve and
34 administer these properties;
- 35 j. To conduct public information and education programs
36 relating to the historic nature of the property under the
37 commission's jurisdiction;
- 38 k. To apply to the Department of Environmental Protection
39 for ¹[a grant] grants¹ from the ¹["Green Trust Fund," created
40 pursuant to section 16 of the "New Jersey Green Acres Bond Act
41 of 1983," P.L.1983, c.354] Green Acres or historic preservation
42 bond programs or other appropriate funding sources¹, for the
43 purpose of acquisitions pursuant to subsection f. of this section
44 ¹or for the purposes of development, preservation, or
45 maintenance of those acquired properties¹; and
- 46 l. To do all acts and things necessary or convenient to carry
47 out the powers expressly granted in this act ¹[;]¹
- 48 4. The Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission has the
49 specific power to contract for the construction, reconstruction,
50 restoration, or maintenance of all lands, buildings, landscaping,
51 bridges, docks, and facilities under its jurisdiction including the
52 maintenance, restoration, and reconstruction of the Steuben
53 House, the Demarest House, the Campbell-Christie House, the
54 Westervelt-Thomas Barn and the construction and operation of a

1 visitor center, library, mill site, curator's residence, parking
2 area, and other appropriate structures.

3 5. This act shall take effect immediately.

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8 Creates Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission.

1 Continental Army's retreat from Fort Lee, which inspired
2 Thomas Paine to observe: "These are the times that try men's
3 souls." The site includes numerous structures of historical
4 importance and interest to the general public, including the
5 Steuben House, the Westervelt-Thomas Barn, the Demarest
6 House and the Campbell-Christie House foundations. These
7 structures, foundations and other remains have been identified as
8 dating from the Revolutionary War period and earlier, spanning
9 over 400 years of American cultural and historical development.

10 New Bridge Landing is the historic community that surrounds
11 the narrows of the Hackensack River and serves as the hinge
12 between the northern and southern valleys of the Hackensack
13 River. The river and surrounding wetlands are of unique
14 environmental and scenic beauty. The site is significant from
15 pre-historic times, through the earliest European settlement, as a
16 Revolutionary War battlefield, as a commercial center during the
17 19th century, and as a recreation and arts center in the early
18 20th century. This broad perspective spanning over 400 years
19 provides an opportunity for valuable research and educational
20 programs. Coupled with living history activities, historic
21 reenactments, environmental interpretation, and recreation on
22 the river, Historic New Bridge Landing provides a unique
23 experience for tourists and residents.

24 Because the land and the various structures are owned and
25 operated by various bodies and organizations, an entity is needed
26 to coordinate the activities of these bodies in order to recreate
27 this whole area as a unified historic-cultural-educational park.

28 This bill creates the Historic New Bridge Landing Park
29 Commission to act as the coordinating entity. The commission
30 may contract for the preservation of the current buildings and
31 lands as well as construct and operate a visitor center, curator's
32 residence and library. It is believed that once the New Bridge
33 Landing site has been properly restored, it will be a premier
34 historic, cultural, educational and recreational facility, not only
35 for local and State residents, but for visitors from other states as
36 well.

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41 _____
Creates Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission.

ASSEMBLY ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 2440

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: APRIL 27, 1995

The Assembly Environment and Energy Committee favorably reports Assembly Bill No. 2440 with committee amendments.

This bill creates the nine-member Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission within the Division of Parks and Forestry in the Department of Environmental Protection to act as the coordinating entity for various bodies and organizations that own and operate properties and structures in the historic community of New Bridge Landing in Bergen County, for the purpose of re-creating the area as a unified historic-cultural-educational park. Under the bill, the commission may also contract for the preservation of the current buildings and lands as well as construct and operate a visitor center, library, mill site, curator's residence, parking area, and other appropriate structures.

The Historic New Bridge Landing Site is associated culturally and historically with the early settlement of the nation and the State. The site includes numerous structures of historical importance and interest to the general public, including the Steuben House, the Westervelt-Thomas Barn, the Demarest House and the Campbell-Christie House foundations. New Bridge Landing is the historic community that surrounds the narrows of the Hackensack River and serves as the hinge between the northern and southern valleys of the Hackensack River. The river and surrounding wetlands are of unique environmental and scenic beauty. The site is significant from pre-historic times, through the earliest European settlement, as a Revolutionary War battlefield, as a commercial center during the 19th century, and as a recreation and arts center in the early 20th century.

The committee amended the bill to clarify that the commission could apply for grants from the Green Acres or historic preservation bond programs or other appropriate funding sources to fund acquisitions and development, preservation, or maintenance activities. The committee also made technical and other clarifying amendments to the bill.