

NCPR – The In Box
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BLOG ENTRY

NY Senate delays confirmation of Hornbeck to Adirondack Park Agency board

New York's state Senate is delaying confirmation of an Adirondack businessman and environmental activist to the Adirondack Park Agency board.

Peter Hornbeck, a boat builder who lives in Omstedtville, in Essex County, was appointed by Governor David Paterson to serve on the commission last year.

He's the former chair of a green group called the Residents Committee to Protect the Adirondacks.

Hornbeck sits now on the board of directors of a newly formed environmental group called Protect the Adirondacks.

That organization is currently suing the APA over its decision not to classify the waters of Lows Lake as wilderness.

Yesterday, the Senate's Environment committee held a confirmation hearing for Hornbeck, but put off any action.

Hornbeck faces opposition from pro-development and local government groups.

In a statement issued yesterday, Fred Monroe, head of the Local Government Review Board, criticized the governor for not gathering input from elected officials before picking a nominee.

"What ultimately concerns the Review Board is the lack of public announcement about the APA appointment – no public news release, no email. The APA commissioners have direct influence over the lives and livelihoods of everyone who lives inside the Adirondack Park and the private land owned by those people. We believe that Adirondack local governments should have input on the selection of their representatives on the APA."

Hornbeck has been named to replace businessman and resort owner Arthur Lussi from Lake Placid.

Local government leaders have also complained that the APA commission is too heavily weighted with environmentalists.

Three of eight appointed commissioners -- including chairman Curt Stiles -- used to sit on the Adirondack Council's board.

In an interview yesterday with WNBZ radio, the Council's John Sheehan dismissed the idea that the commission is lopsided.

"Well what is the balance? I mean people are complaining about folks having been affiliated with environmental groups who are their neighbors. It's up to the governor to decide who of the Park residents he thinks are best qualified to serve on the Park Agency."