

Adirondack Daily Enterprise

## Ulrich to chair APA board

By CHRIS KNIGHT –

RAY BROOK - Right down to the wire.

With just over a week to go before the state Adirondack Park Agency begins its review of the largest development project its ever seen, Gov. Andrew Cuomo has named a new chair to lead the agency's board.

Leilani "Lani" Crafts Ulrich, an Old Forge resident and an APA commissioner since November 2004, has been appointed as the agency's new chairwoman. She replaces Curt Stiles, who resigned this summer.

Cuomo also announced the nomination of Sherman Craig, a retired teacher and school administrator who runs a furniture-making business in Wanakena, to a vacant APA commissioner's seat.

Cuomo, in a press release, said he was confident that the APA will "thrive under Lani and Sherman's leadership."

"Both Leilani and Sherman have dedicated their lives to the preservation and development of the Park," the governor said. "They recognize the need to balance economic development within the Adirondacks with constant environmental protections. I look forward to working with them to further the development and preservation of this extraordinary Park."

Ulrich's appointment isn't necessarily a surprise. Her name had been publicly suggested in recent weeks for the chair's position among local government leaders and environmentalists in the Park, in part because of her work with the Common Ground Alliance.

State Sen. Betty Little told the Enterprise that Ulrich is a "very good choice" to lead the agency.

"She has the support of the environmentalists as well as local government and other people concerned about the economy," Little said. "I've always felt its important that the chairman be an in-the-Park commissioner, and she is. She really listens people and tries to bring people to the table."

Little also noted that Ulrich is the first woman to chair the APA board.

Environmentalists praised both appointments.

"As a co-founder of the Adirondack Common Ground Alliance, Lani has demonstrated the leadership skills needed for the Park today, as we seek solutions that will benefit the Park's communities and the economy, while also protecting its environment," Adirondack Council

Executive Director Brian Houseal said in a prepared statement. "Sherman Craig also brings balance to the APA, with experience in both economic development and environmental stewardship."

In recent weeks, environmentalists and local government officials in the Park had called on Cuomo to name a new chairperson to lead the agency through its three-month review of the Adirondack Club and Resort project in Tupper Lake, scheduled to begin next week. Little said it was "critical" to have a chair in place to guide the review process.

Ulrich, in a prepared statement, said she will use her experience in finding common ground on land-use issues "to develop planning opportunities, as well as to fine-tune the regulatory process in ways that will empower communities and maximize the potential of the Park's land use while continuing to protect its world class natural resources. I thank Governor Cuomo for this exciting opportunity."

Since Ulrich is already on the agency board, she takes over as chair immediately. Craig would normally have had to wait until his nomination is confirmed by the state Senate to take his seat on the APA Board; however, Little said Craig will become a member immediately and the Senate will confirm him in January.

"There is a special process that the governor can enact, with the consent of the Senate, and we have the consent of the leader of the Senate, Dean Skelos," Little said.

The following biographies of Ulrich and Craig were provided in a press release issued by the governor's office:

"Leilani Crafts Ulrich was appointed to the APA in November 2004 and then reappointed in 2008. She moved to Old Forge permanently in 1994. In 1997, she began coordination of community discussions which grew into the Central Adirondack Partnership for the 21st Century (CAP-21), a regional nonprofit community development organization serving hamlets in Long Lake, inlet, Webb and Forestport on the western side of the Park. CAP-21 strives for balance between nature and commerce by increasing communication to build partnerships amongst diverse groups. The group supported comprehensive master planning, architectural preservation and regional planning efforts. CAP-21 assists small community groups in areas of economic development, social services expansion and recreational development. Ms. Ulrich sits on the Board of Directors of the Central Adirondack Business Association (CAA) and on the Architectural Preservation Committee of the Webb Historical Association. Regionally, she is on the Board of the Adirondack Community Housing Trust and serves as a member of the New York State delegation to the Northern Forest Center's Sustainable Economies Initiative. For her visioning work with Communities 2000, she received the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) Citizen of the Year Award. Past affiliations include the Fulton Chain of Lakes Performing Arts Council, Mountain Theatre, and the Community Chorus of Old Forge. Ms. Ulrich received her B.A. in Liberal Arts Mount Union College in 1978 and her Master Degree in Education Lesley University in 1985. She and her husband reside in Old Forge.

"Sherman Craig is a retired teacher and school administrator, currently operating his own business, Wanakena Woodworks, which makes rustic and fine furniture by using local resources within the Adirondack Park. He is an active outdoors traveler and volunteer, and is a current member of several organizations including the Clifton-Fine Economic Corp, Adirondack Mountain Club, and the Waterfront Revitalization Project. He is chairman of the 5 Ponds Partner subcommittee, managing relationships with groups associated with trail development and maintenance. His committee developed the Cranberry Lake 50 hike and assisted in the opening the Alice Brook snowmobile trail and bridge."