



Preservation League of NYS

OFFICERS

Anne H. Van Ingen, chair
Jan C. K. Anderson, vice chair
Karen Arrison, vice chair
Dede B. Nash, vice chair
John Sare, vice chair
Frank Emile Sanchis III,
vice chair
Carol Bentel, secretary
Scott Duenow, treasurer

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Duncan Barrett
Ildiko Butler
David Christensen
Suzanne Clary
Dr. Georgette Grier-Key
Gerald A. Holbrook
Gregory R. Long
Lee Miller
Ruth Pierpont
Rev. Dr. Thomas F. Pike
David Schnakenberg
Miriam Tremontozzi
Arete Swartz Warren
Mark W. Warren
Charlotte Worthy
Lori Zabar
Caroline Rob Zaleski

Jay DiLorenzo
President

TRUSTEES COUNCIL

Kent Barwick
George H. Beane
William L. Bernhard
Constance L. Clapp
William Clarkson
Randall T. Crawford
Joan K. Davidson
Steven C. Engelhart
Stephen A. Facey
R. Brandon Fradd
Dorothy Twining Globus
Lionel Goldfrank III
Roberta Brandes Gratz
Chiu Yin Hempel
Christopher Holbrook
Anne A. Hubbard
Robert J. Kafin
Marilynn G. Karp
Robert J. Kresse
Alexia Lalli
Richard J. Lippes
Robert B. MacKay
Richard A. Maitino
Jean M. McCarroll
Henry A. McCartney
Norman M. Mintz
Gregory O'Connell
Anne G. Older
Ellen Phelan
Paul R. Provost
Robert C. Quinlan
Daniel G. Romualdez
Janet C. Ross
Thomas J. Schwarz
Robert D. Snedeker
Robert A.M. Stern
Cynthia C. Wainwright
Diana S. Waite
Steven J. Weiss

July 31, 2018

Gil C. Quiniones, President
New York Power Authority
123 Main Street
Corporate Communications
Mail Stop 10 B
White Plains, NY 10601-3170

Brian U. Stratton, Director
New York State Canal Corporation
30 South Pearl St.
Albany NY 12207

Re: Erie Canal Vessel Disposition

Dear Mr. Quiniones and Mr. Stratton,

I write on behalf of the Preservation League of New York State to express our organization's concern regarding the New York Power Authority and New York State Canal Corporation's disposal of historic vessels relating to the Erie Canal. The Preservation League of New York State is New York's nonprofit statewide historic preservation organization. The Preservation League has been working for years to help communities in the Erie Canal Corridor address their unique preservation challenges and revitalize canalside assets. We believe the historic canal fleet is an important piece of our Erie Canal history and wish to see this history preserved in context for future generations of New Yorkers.

The NYS Canal Corporation has successfully managed and maintained the New York State Canal System, designated a National Historic Landmark due to its span, scope, and historic integrity. The historic vessels related to the NYS Canal System are a significant component of the system's integrity. The National Historic Landmark designation notes the importance of the canal fleet and canal vessels to the New York State Canal System. Several canal vessels are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including the tugboat *Urger*, referred to as "the flagship

of the fleet of vessels operated by the New York State Canal Corporation on the 524-mile Canal System” by the NYS Canal Corporation.

The Preservation League is deeply troubled about the disposition of the National Register-listed tugboat *Urger*, currently planned for a landlocked display off the NYS Thruway at the Lock 13/Taste of NY Visitor Center. The *Urger* is one of only 27 vessels listed on the National Register in New York State and is listed as being of Statewide significance. It provides hands-on access to New York State’s history and development, not only to school groups, but to communities along the canal celebrating their heritage. We appeal to the NYS Canal Corporation and New York Power Authority to maintain the tugboat *Urger* as New York’s “Teaching Tug” and continue its use as an active canal vessel.

The Preservation League is concerned by the lack of an overall plan for the fleet of canal vessels that are part of the NYS Canal System. We do not know of such a plan nor of any public engagement regarding creation of a plan for the vessels. Recent actions by the New York Power Authority have jeopardized the future of the historic canal fleet. Based on documents we have received, we understand that the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation has reviewed disposition of 13 vessels as part of the initial phases of artificial reef creation near Long Island. Of those vessels, 3 are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. We understand there may be future phases of artificial reef construction, with up to a total of 30 vessels disposed of in the reefs. We ask the NYS Canal Corporation and New York Power Authority to embrace transparency and work with stakeholder organizations on a plan for its fleet of canal vessels. This includes providing a list of all vessels that could be removed from service or planned for disposition.

We urge the NYS Canal Corporation and New York Power Authority to follow the New York State Historic Preservation Act by eliminating any adverse impacts of their planned canal vessel disposition. In this, the centennial year of the Barge Canal opening and within the 200th anniversary period of the Erie Canal construction, we believe that New York State should be celebrating our canal history, not sinking or beaching it.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay DiLorenzo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jay" being the most prominent.

Jay DiLorenzo
President

cc: Jeffrey Cohen, NYPA, Director of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs
Kimberly A. Harriman, NYPA, Senior Vice President Public & Regulatory Affairs
John C. Callaghan, NYS Canal Corp, Acting Executive Deputy Director