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Legislator Testa Receives Unanimous Support from Colleagues in Appointment to Westchester County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Board

Legislator John G. Testa (R-Peekskill) was appointed to the Westchester County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Board at the Board of Legislators (BOL) regular meeting on Monday. Legislator Testa will replace Legislator Peter Harckham who had been the BOL's previous representative on the citizen-led Parks Board. Legislator Testa, who's appointment was affirmed by a unanimous, 17-0 vote of his colleagues, has long been an ardent supporter and advocate for parks, conservation and the preservation of historic sites.

"I am very gratified to have been appointed as the Board of Legislators representative to this very important and dedicated panel of citizens." Testa said following the vote. "I believe that Westchester County's open spaces, parks and historic sites are one of the true treasures that we have been blessed with and I am honored by the opportunity to help in the stewardship of those resources."

Legislator Peter Harckham (D-Katonah), the previous BOL representative on the Parks board said, "I thoroughly enjoyed my two years on the Parks board representing the BOL and I am thrilled that Legislator Testa is succeeding me. Legislator Testa is devoted to the county and to our park system. He will be a great addition to the Parks board."

Legislator Testa is a lifelong resident of Peekskill who first entered public service as a member of the Peekskill Common Council in 1999 and then served three terms as Mayor. Throughout his tenure as Mayor, Testa worked diligently to balance Peekskill's need for economic development while maintaining a steadfast commitment to improving, expanding and protecting Peekskill's parks, open spaces and historic sites. In addition to his public service, Legislator Testa is a teacher at Peekskill High School and an expert on local history.

One of the great accomplishments thus far, of Legislator Testa's public service was the purchase and rehabilitation of the "Lincoln Depot" in Peekskill. On February 19, 1861, President-Elect Lincoln made his only visit to Westchester when he stopped to address the residents of Peekskill during his train trip from Illinois to take the oath of office in Washington. Legislator Testa worked tirelessly, for years to raise the funds and coordinate the efforts to rehab the train depot, establish a museum on the original site and erect a statue of Lincoln to commemorate that historic day in 1861. Those goals were realized in 2007 and are now recognized as one of the great historic resources in the Hudson Valley. You can learn more about the Lincoln Depot at www.johntesta.com/lincoln.html and www.lincolndepotmuseum.org.

In addition to the Lincoln Depot, Mayor Testa also worked to create new public spaces and parks

like, the 40-acre historic Fort Hill Park and the Annsville Trail Preserve along the Hudson River. Testa also oversaw the renovations of Franklin Park, Depew Park, Lepore Park, Riverfront Green, Tompkins Ball field and the historic restoration of the Paramount Center for the Arts.

As a County Legislator, Testa has fought for funding to improve County Parks like Blue Mountain Preserve in Peekskill/Cortlandt and George's Island in Montrose.

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