

Meeting Summary
Niagara River Greenway Commission/City of Buffalo
City Hall, Buffalo, New York
April 26, 2006
3:30 pm

The purpose of this meeting was to brief the Mayor of the City of Buffalo and his staff on the purpose and function of the Niagara River Greenway Commission and to invite the participation in the development of the Niagara River Greenway Plan. Meeting participants included the following:

- Bryon Brown, Mayor, City of Buffalo
- Steve Casey, First Deputy Mayor, City of Buffalo
- Bernadette Castro, Commissioner, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
- Dominic Jacangelo, Deputy Commissioner, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
- Edward Rutkowski, Regional Deputy Commissioner, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
- Robert Belue, Administrative Coordinator, Niagara River Greenway Commission
- John Giardino, Niagara River Greenway Commission
- Paul Leuchner, Niagara River Greenway Commission
- Richard Soluri, Niagara River Greenway Commission
- Chris Jacobs, Secretary of State, New York State Department of State
- Mark Mistretta, Wendel DuChescher
- Joseph Giambra, Commissioner, Public Works and Streets, City of Buffalo
- Tim Wannamaker, Executive Director, Strategic Planning, City of Buffalo
- Richard Tobe, Commissioner, Permit and Inspection Services, City of Buffalo

Commissioner Castro briefed the Mayor and his staff on the purpose and function of the Niagara River Greenway Commission and the current status of the evolving Niagara River Greenway Plan including work schedules and anticipated milestone dates. Mayor Brown and members of his senior staff were invited to participate in the ongoing planning process.

Commissioner Castro defined the role of the Local Government Advisory Committee that is chaired by Town of Tonawanda Supervisor Ron Moline. She noted that this committee provides the forum for input and interaction between the Niagara River Greenway Commission and elected officials and government agency representatives. Mayor Brown was asked to consider attending future meetings of this committee as well as those of the Citizens Advisory Committee that receives commentary from stakeholder groups and the general public.

The Commissioner noted that issues currently facing the Niagara River Greenway Commission include the delineation of the greenway boundary and public misconceptions concerning the powers of eminent domain. She also explained that the Niagara River Greenway Plan will be developed using a grass roots process where affected local governments, stakeholder groups and the general public shape the outcome. The plan will integrate environmental conservation and restoration, cultural heritage,

recreation attributes and related economic opportunities to create a green continuum along the Niagara River between Lake Erie with Lake Ontario. Commissioner Castro noted that this plan will drive the future actions of the Commission and will serve as a guide for the various local governments and agencies involved in the implementation of that plan. She noted that events are currently being planned that will focus public attention on the values of the Niagara River corridor and the work of the Commission citing the ongoing logo competition as an example.

Commissioner Castro advised that the next meeting of the Niagara River Greenway Commission will take place on a date to be announced in June. (This meeting was subsequently scheduled for the evening of June 26 in the City of Buffalo.) Anyone with questions or concerns related to the work of the Commission should direct them to Robert Belue who serves as the Administrative Coordinator for the Niagara River Greenway Commission.

Following this briefing the floor was opened for comments and questions:

Tim Wannamaker: Expressed interest in getting involved in the process. He noted that the key focus for the City of Buffalo is the waterfront and its development and that the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan currently on hold will be moving forward in the near future. Mr. Wannamaker was advised that the due date for the Niagara River Greenway Plan is March 22, 2007. Mark Mistretta agreed to provide a copy of the scope of work for plan development and noted that there will be public input and scoping meetings in the near future. Mr. Wannamaker also asked to have the greenway plan goals defined before participating in future planning meetings. He noted that the key to success is to integrate ongoing major development projects with the Niagara River Greenway plan.

Joseph Giambra: Asked if the City of Buffalo will have to come up with a funding match for Greenway projects. He was advised that no funding contribution from the City of Buffalo is required.

Richard Tobe: Asked about the flow of funding in advance of the development of the Niagara River Greenway Plan. Dominic Jacangelo advised that funding will be received before the completion of the plan but projects will still have to meet the spirit and intent of the Niagara River Greenway legislation. Mr. Tobe noted that the tributaries are a boundary issue and that the extent of their involvement should be based on the magnitude of impact these watercourses will have on the Niagara River. Wendel-Duchscherer will be responsible for working out the initial boundary proposal that will be considered by the Niagara River Greenway Commission. Any plan that is adopted will require the concurrence and approval of the Niagara River communities.

The meeting closed at 4:15 pm with Mayor Byron Brown reaffirming his commitment to fully participate in the Niagara River Greenway planning process.

Paul G. Leuchner,
Niagara River Greenway Commission