

## HOST COMMUNITIES STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 26, 2009 – 12:00 p.m.

Niagara County Department of Economic Development

6311 Inducon Corporate Drive

Sanborn, New York 14132

### Representatives Present:

Fred M. Newlin, Supervisor, Vice Chairperson

Thomas O'Donnell, Esq.

Donald Rappold, Assistant Superintendent

Rob Daly, Special Advisor, Relicensing

William L. Ross, Chairman, NC Legislature

Scott Hapeman, Esq., Counsel

Cynthia A. Bianco, Interim Superintendent

Michael Risman, Esq.

Town of Lewiston

City of Niagara Falls

Lewiston-Porter School District

New York Power Authority

Niagara County

Niagara Wheatfield School District

Niagara Falls City School District

Town of Niagara

### Guests:

Aaron Besecker

Sherry Shepherd-Corulli

Thomas DeSantis

Barbara Montante, Asst. VP

Michael Keating, 1<sup>st</sup> VP

Chris Roser

Tom Burgasser, Esq.

Angelo Massaro, Esq.

Mark Scheer

Jackie Siegmann

Buffalo News

City of Niagara Falls

City of Niagara Falls

HSBC Bank

HSBC Bank

Lewiston Porter School District

Niagara County

Niagara Falls School District

Niagara Gazette

Town of Niagara

### Staff Present:

Charles Miller, President, NPC

John Baird, Treasurer, NPC

Mary Melloni, Recording Secretary

Stan Widger, Esq., NPC Counsel, Nixon Peabody

Samuel M. Ferraro, Executive Director/Commissioner - Niagara County Center for

Economic Development

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#### 1.0 Call to Order

Vice Chairman Newlin called the Host Communities Standing Committee meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

#### 2.0 Roll Call

Ms. Melloni called the roll; a quorum was established.

#### 3.0 Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Ross led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Message from the Vice Chairman

Vice Chairman Newlin stated that the projects presented by the Host Communities are the biggest substantial investment in Niagara County. The Committee decides over \$3 million per year and the Niagara Power Coalition has an additional \$5 million. He explained that these projects have three direct benefits: to enhance the quality of life for residents with non-taxpayer money, enhance the burgeoning tourist economy, and stimulate the economy.

Vice Chairman Newlin asked that the members submit the quarterly reports that are required of their developing projects.

#### **4.0 Report on Meeting with Greenway Commission Chairman**

Vice Chairman Newlin stated that Mr. Kresse requested a meeting with the heads of the local standing committees, which he attended along with Erie County, Rob Belue and members of the Riverkeepers. There was an idea presented on the branding of Greenway projects by putting the Greenway logo on projects that have received Greenway funding. People who travel from Erie County to Wilson will keep seeing the logo and it will give a unified theme to the projects and it will also keep in mind what the Greenway concept is responsible for and what NYPA's monies are being used for. He stated there were also more elaborate proposals about mandatory signage and uniform signage, park benches, pedestrian crossing signs, etc. Mr. Kresse suggested keeping it simple, which Mr. Newlin agreed with.

HCSC members discussed the idea of using the Greenway logo on projects. Mr. Daly stated that the Erie County Standing Committee has adopted/in process of adopting a sign standard for all projects and any project receiving money from that fund will have to agree to use that signage standard in their project/on the project property. He explained that Erie County had this idea in the past regarding bringing Niagara/Erie Counties together in uniform signage throughout the area for tourism and way-finding, etc. He stated the items (i.e. benches, trash containers) do not have to be exact—just operating within a standard. Mr. Newlin stated that Erie County is willing to make these standards available to the Standing Committee projects. He stated that it was decided at the meeting that it would be better to make the program optional. The logo, however, would connect everything and gives the public a good idea of what the Greenway is and where it is.

Mr. Burgasser stated that the County did recommend to the Gratwick project that they contact the agency that did the signage in Buffalo and use the same templates and he explained that the County does request this of all projects submitted. Mr. Burgasser noted that the logo says Niagara "River" Greenway and they are just Niagara Greenway. He suggested removing the term "River" and using the same logo.

Mr. Burgasser asked if Mr. Newlin could provide a list of what the suggestions are so the Committee can review it. Mr. Newlin will get an electronic version of the sign proposals to circulate among the membership to discuss at another meeting. Mr. Daly stated it was his understanding that Erie County was going to ask Wendell-Duscherer to approach the communities and committees and work with them in development of a uniform standard.

## 5.0 Organizational Items

### 5.1 Nominate Chairperson

*Ms. Bianco nominated Mr. Newlin as Chairperson of the Standing Committee. Mr. Ross moved to close the nominations. Mr. O'Donnell seconded the motion. Motion carries.*

*Mr. Ross nominated Mayor Paul Dyster as Vice Chairperson. Mr. O'Donnell seconded the motion. Mr. Ross moved to close nominations. Mr. O'Donnell seconded the motion. Motion carries.*

*Mr. Ross nominated Mr. Rappold as Secretary. Ms. Bianco seconded the motion. Mr. Ross motioned to close nominations. Mr. O'Donnell seconded the motion. Motion carries.*

*Chairman Newlin entertained a motion to adopt those nominated for their offices of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary. Mr. Ross made a motion, seconded by Mr. O'Donnell. Motion carries.*

### 5.2 Set Fiscal Year – Quarterly Report Due Dates

Mr. Newlin stated that Mr. Daly suggested that a July 1 start for the fiscal year would be appropriate since that is the date that funds are transferred to the Host Communities each year. *Mr. Ross made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hapeman, to adopt July 1 to June 30 as the fiscal year for the Host Community Standing Committee. Motion passed.*

### 5.3 Bank Signatory – HCSC Checking Account

Ms. Montante of HSBC stated that she will need signatures from the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary, along with a copy of each driver's license. She stated that her business cards and Mr. Michael Keating's business cards are available so that the members can contact either of them to set up project-specific accounts to better report the project's progress. *Mr. O'Donnell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ross, to authorize the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary as signatories on the HSBC bank account for the Host Community Standing Committee. Motion passed.*

## 6.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes

### 6.1 December 9, 2008

*Mr. O'Donnell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roser, to approve the meeting minutes of December 9, 2009. Motion passed.*

## **7.0 Project Presentations**

### **7.1 City of Niagara Falls**

#### **7.1.1 Gill Creek Park Lighting (\$101,790)**

Ms. Shepherd-Corulli made the presentation: This project involves putting in electric service and lighting in for Gill Creek Park. Gill Creek runs from the Town of Niagara through Niagara Falls and empties into Niagara River. The park is located in close proximity to the historic Echota district and is patronized very heavily by surrounding districts, the Niagara Street district being very supportive of the park. The park is approximately 7 acres and includes picnic shelters, gazebos, and nature trails. The Niagara Street Business Association has been proactive in supporting the park and contributing to maintenance and has been successful in securing funding. One of the problems in the area is vandalism and comes as a result of the cover of darkness and very poor lighting in the area. This project will promote some of the goals/objectives of the Niagara River Greenway – preserving the aesthetic and recreational benefits of the park. It will make the park safer and more secure for the residents in the evening. It will promote Olmstead’s legacy to preserve an area of natural beauty in an urban setting.

Ms. Shepherd Corulli stated that they are requesting \$101,790, which will provide an entire new electrical service throughout the park and trenching and landscaping that will need to be done afterward.

Mr. DeSantis added that this is clearly a community park and the City is trying to make improvements to the park for the residents and to improve the quality of that park on the creek and waterways so that in the future it will be a feature that can be highlighted as part of the larger Niagara River Greenway. There will be additional improvements made to the park and in the Gill Creek corridor.

#### **Q & A:**

**Q.** Mr. Massaro asked what the connection is from the Creek to the Niagara River.

**A.** Mr. DeSantis stated that it will never connect to the River by way of the creek; they hope to have a connection in the future from Buffalo Avenue and the River, particularly at the south end of Hyde Park so that in the future there will be pedestrian crossings there. That would be where the access point to the upper river would be. It is all part of a much larger plan.

**Q.** Ms. Bianco asked if there was ever or will there be any consideration for monitors or cameras.

**A.** Ms. Shepherd-Corulli stated that at some point it may be considered. However, at this point they are taking the first step, which is the simplest step of eliminating the darkness that is there that promotes the opportunity for vandalism.

## 7.0 Project Presentations

### 7.1 City of Niagara Falls

#### 7.1.1 Gill Creek Park Lighting (\$101,790) CONTINUED...

**Mr. Ross** stated that he feels this is a great project; it is an extension of the great Hyde Park recreation area and will enhance the Hyde Park area. It also anchors the eastern end of Niagara Street for the Niagara Street Business Association that has work so hard for improvements. It is an improvement that is contagious and will work its way down Niagara Street; it is in the Niagara River Greenway corridor.

**Q.** Mr. Burgasser asked if they have tried to leverage some of the monies from Federal or State funding for parks.

**A.** Ms. Shepherd-Corulli stated that they just secured NYS Parks funding to look at possibilities to design a trail system connecting all of the City parks and to make recommendations for improvements in all of the City parks. That will be a component for the parks; but there is no additional funding for this particular project.

**Q.** Mr. Burgasser asked if the City has money available in the future for sustainability/maintenance in the future.

**A.** Ms. Shepherd-Corulli stated that the City does maintain it yearly and nothing will change with that. The new lighting should make maintenance easier.

**Mr. Burgasser** suggested they look into the signage, park benches, etc. that were discussed today.

**Q.** Mr. Daly asked what the schedule is moving forward with further improvements to the park and planning.

**A.** Mr. DeSantis stated that the planning will take place in the next year and that will generate recommendations for a series of capital projects in the following year.

**Q.** Mr. Baird asked if the project has been bid and will City electricians do the work or outside contractors.

**A.** Ms. Shepherd-Corulli stated it has not been decided yet. The estimate they received was from an outside firm.

**Q.** Mr. Massaro asked if Greenway funds are subject to prevailing wage.

**A.** Mr. O'Donnell stated it will be determined by how the municipality the project is located in is governed. Based on the dollar amount, if it is subject to prevailing wage in that jurisdiction, it would have to meet that requirement no matter where the funds come from.

## 7.0 Project Presentations

### 7.1 City of Niagara Falls

#### 7.1.1 Gill Creek Park Lighting (\$101,790) CONTINUED...

***Mr. Rappold made a motion to approve the project as presented for the City of Niagara Falls -- Gill Creek Lighting Project, Number HCSC-09-001. Resolution as follows:***

*WHEREAS, the City of Niagara Falls has applied to the Host Communities Standing Committee for funding in the amount of \$101,790.00 for its Gill Creek Lighting Project; and*

*WHEREAS, this project was submitted to the Niagara River Greenway Commission for consultation.*

*WHEREAS, the Host Communities Standing Committee finds the project to be consistent with the Greenway Plan.*

*NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Host Communities Standing Committee that the funding in the amount of **\$101,790.00** for the **City of Niagara Falls Gill Creek Lighting Project** is approved; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution is forwarded to HSBC Bank.*

***A roll call vote was taken.***

<i>Town of Lewiston</i>	<u><i>Yes</i></u>
<i>Town of Niagara</i>	<u><i>Yes</i></u>
<i>Lewiston Porter</i>	<u><i>Yes</i></u>
<i>City of Niagara Falls</i>	<u><i>Yes</i></u>
<i>Niagara-Wheatfield</i>	<u><i>Yes</i></u>
<i>Niagara County</i>	<u><i>Yes</i></u>
<i>New York Power Authority</i>	<u><i>Yes</i></u>
<i>Niagara Falls Schools</i>	<u><i>Yes</i></u>

***The resolution was thereupon duly adopted.***

#### 7.1.2 Centennial Circle (\$335,000)

Mr. DeSantis explained that he is one of the ad hoc members of the committee to organize the 2009 Centennial for the Boundary Waters Treaty between the United States and Canada. This project is a bi-national project, but a project that is intended to be an asset and attraction for the entire region and particularly as a focal point in downtown Niagara Falls for the Niagara River Greenway.

## **7.0 Project Presentations**

### **7.1 City of Niagara Falls**

#### **7.1.2 Centennial Circle (\$335,000) CONTINUED...**

He reviewed the location of the circle which was part of a 2006 Niagara Transportation reconstruction of Rainbow Boulevard and First Street. It was the City's undertaking to reconfigure the streets in downtown Niagara Falls and remove the massive 7-lane Rainbow Boulevard and remove the two one-way couplets of Rainbow North and South and put two-way streets back in again. That created a traffic roundabout. The project includes procurement of public artwork and it will go in the center of the circle, replacing the tree. The public artwork that they will be commissioning will commemorate the Boundary Waters Treaty and the 100 years of that treaty and hopefully the next 100 years. They will also be replacing and making more permanent and sustainable different landscaping to fit with whatever the public artwork is that is ultimately chosen. They will also be incorporating interpretive plaques that will explain the artwork and what the International Boundary Waters Treaty is. It follows and meets the principles of the Niagara River Greenway.

Mr. DeSantis reviewed the project budget. The City has committed \$50,000 toward this project, along with \$50,000 from USA Niagara Development Corporation. The City's funding will be used to establish a committee to procure an artist for the public artwork. They will go through a competition and call for artists to submit proposals for the artwork. USA Niagara's funds will be for design and construction oversight, and Greenway funds will be used for the hard construction costs of the public artwork, site work, installation & lighting and landscape improvements.

**Q.** Ms. Bianco: The timeline seems very tight and the cost of the artist compared to landscape and irrigation does not seem correct.

**A.** Mr. DeSantis: This is their budget, which may have to be adjusted and they recognize that they will not get public artwork by the date of the celebration on June 13<sup>th</sup>, so they are hoping to organize the committee to deal with the proposals and select the artwork so it can be announced by June 13.

**Mr. Ross** stated that the location of the NTCC near the Centennial Circle makes it an ideal location for tourists to congregate there.

Mr. DeSantis handed out information on the Boundary Waters Treaty Centennial Celebration and he noted the invitations that were sent out for the celebration.

**7.0 Project Presentations**

**7.1 City of Niagara Falls**

**7.1.2 Centennial Circle (\$335,000) CONTINUED...**

***Mr. Ross made a motion, seconded by Ms. Bianco, to approve the project as presented for the City of Niagara Falls -- Centennial Circle Project, Number HCSC-09-002. Resolution as follows:***

WHEREAS, the City of Niagara Falls has applied to the Host Communities Standing Committee for funding in the amount of \$335,000.00 for its Centennial Circle Project; and

WHEREAS, this project was submitted to the Niagara River Greenway Commission for consultation.

WHEREAS, the Host Communities Standing Committee finds the project to be consistent with the Greenway Plan.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Host Communities Standing Committee that the funding in the amount of **\$335,000.00** for the **City of Niagara Falls Centennial Creek Project** is approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution is forwarded to HSBC Bank.

***A roll call vote was taken.***

Town of Lewiston	<u>Yes</u>
Town of Niagara	<u>Yes</u>
Lewiston Porter	<u>Yes</u>
City of Niagara Falls	<u>Yes</u>
Niagara-Wheatfield	<u>Yes</u>
Niagara County	<u>Yes</u>
New York Power Authority	<u>Yes</u>
Niagara Falls Schools	<u>Yes</u>

***The resolution was thereupon duly adopted.***



## **8.0 Greenway Update**

### **8.1 Minutes of Greenway Commission Meeting:**

- **January 20, 2009**

Mr. Ferraro stated that staff continues to attend the meetings and will monitor the progress of the Commission and report to the Committee.

Mr. DeSantis stated the City will be happy to work with Economic Development and their staff on reviewing what Erie County is doing and recommend that here as guidelines and then apply them as they see fit. Mr. Ferraro stated that he agrees with that suggestion.

## **9.0 New Business – none.**

**Chairman Newlin** stated that he would like everyone to submit their quarterly project reports by March 31. He asked if there was a necessity for a meeting to accept the reports. Mr. Widger stated that there is a necessity to have a meeting by April 1 for Niagara Power Coalition so it can be combined with a Host Community Standing Committee meeting, although it is not necessary to formally accept the reports. Mr. Newlin stated that the quarterly report is a protocol report, but the annual report is what NYPA will be concerned with. It will be due by September 1, 2009 (within 60 days of the end of the fiscal year).

**Mr. Ross** stated that Mr. Baird has handed out a financial report for the Niagara Power Coalition. Also, an annual meeting has to be held on April 1, 2009 according to the by-laws of the NPC.

***It was decided that the Annual Meeting of the Niagara Power Coalition will be held on Wednesday, April 1, 2009, immediately following the 12:00 p.m. meeting of the Host Community Standing Committee.***

## **10.0 Next HCSC Meeting: April 1, 2009 – 12 Noon (followed by the Annual Meeting of the NPC)**

## **11.0 Adjournment**

Mr. Daly in made a motion, seconded by Mr. O'Donnell, to adjourn the meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mary P. Melloni  
Recording Secretary