



**STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING # 6 ~ September 7, 2012, 9:00 – 11:00 AM
Buffalo Niagara Partnership 655 Main St., Suite 200, Buffalo, NY**

In attendance: Ben Bidell (Niagara County Economic Development), Darren Kempner (NFTA), Bill Parke (OSP), Bob Shibley (UB), Hal Morse (GBNRTC), Bradshaw Hovey (UDP), Kelly Dixon (GBNRTC), Laura Smith (BNP), Brenda Stynes (UBRI), Michael Ball (BNMC), Bart Roberts (UBRI), Matt Hartrich (BNP), Bradshaw Hovey (UDP), William Dunn (NFHA), Frank Billittier (NYS DOT), Anthony Armstrong (LISC) Lawrence Cook (Oishei), James Bragg (NF), Tony Restaino (NCDSS), Tom Dearing (Erie County)

I. Welcome & Introductions

- Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) welcomes new members of the steering committee

II. One Region Forward Overview

- GBNRTC gives a short background on the Partnership for Sustainable Communities formed between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), initiated in 2009.
- The initiative builds off the vision created by the Framework for Regional Growth, and will leverage other planning initiatives such as the Regional Economic Development Council (REDC), New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), and Buffalo Niagara 2050. It will apply cross cutting metrics for each.
- Buffalo Niagara 2050 reflects the GBNRTC's long range planning initiative. The HUD plan is 20 year plan – link housing and transportation
- Project binders for One Region Forward were provided. UB Regional Institute (UBRI) mentioned that the work plan, developed in April, has materials in the binders that were organized by thematic elements.
- An intranet website, in the works, could be used for internal communication and that Steering Committee members would be sent an email containing a link and invitation

III. Administrative Update

- UBRI recommended members finalize a list of people they would recommend who could add more functionality to the GIS portion of the project and pick a meeting date in October.
- The UB National Center on GIS was recommended, they could use that technology to visualize quality, as a component of a place as well as use it as a user-friendly tool to apply to problems within the community.
- Buffalo Niagara Partnership (BNP) mentioned that from an economic standpoint, it would be helpful to have visuals highlighting both the social benefits to economic benefits to sustainable development



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- The potential of seeking out additional funding for GIS, to supplement what is budgeted in the work plan was discussed, as was the formal amendment process required to change the budget.

IV. Activities and Major Milestones Leading to January 2013 One Region Forward Sustainability Congress

- UBRI explained the selection of the public rollout date in January, and recommended that everyone forward further suggestions by looking at the calendar for the different events to be identified for local engagement.
- The need to reach out to disadvantaged communities was expressed, and work towards a strategy to meet that end is ongoing.
- It was brought up that while it is important to host one's own events; the most efficient/effective ways to get the word out is to go to other people's events.
- BNP wondered who would be giving the presentation and whether it would be tailored to each audience.
- It was stated that the Community Congress and Local Government Council were great ways to reach people who are represented in other bodies
- The City of Buffalo's Office of Strategic Planning (OSP) mentioned the Mid-November planning day rollout for the Green Code as a potential to link the two initiatives
- It was mentioned that the online calendar can now have dates added to it
- It was discussed that it is crucial for the initiatives to capture public participation through strong outreach

V. Project FAQ and Talking Points Discussion

- UBRI asked if there were any pertinent questions missing from FAQ
- Direct talking points and simple FAQs are imperative for effective communication
- It was discussed that the plan should state what it will do and what it will not do.
- It was discussed that talking points should give solid reasons why this initiative makes the region stronger
- UBRI stated that the plan needs to be clear and honest about things like sprawl, and needs to address why these three particular agencies are funding the initiative
- It is mentioned that balancing the abstract and concrete concept of sustainability was very important in communicating with a broad audience



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- It is suggested that FAQ should just be an introduction, rather than an opportunity to take a stance on issues
- GBNRTC recommended that feedback and/or additional input be forwarded to the Communications Subcommittee, and motioned to refer it to the Communications Subcommittee. Motion carries unanimously.

VI. Project Communications Update

- UBRI stated that the website would go live next week once HUD gives approval, and will follow up with an email providing instructions on how to access the initiative's social media.
- The presentation, which will be placed on the website, will be a slideshow instead of a movie, that way it can be paused to engage the audience. It will include a "slide deck," that will allow presentations to be tailored to their audience.
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) motioned to have the presentation placed on the interim website. Motion carries unanimously.
- On the concept of a video, UBRI suggested that the presentation slide show tool can talk about process related items, while video can be used for personal stories. Some of the ideas raised in the video brainstorming can be visualized in another way. In particular, an interactive map showing sustainability examples from around the region can be discussed and created. Also mentioned is the idea of user created content. A form could be provided, allowing individuals to fill it out, upload a picture, and have their effort featured on an interactive map.

VII. Implementation Council and "Demonstration Project" Discussion

- UBRI mentioned the example of planning for the Queen City Hub, for example, using projects to inform the planning process and identifying projects that support the plan.
- The idea of considering investment corridors and supporting projects such as the Buffalo/Amherst alternatives analysis, Buffalo-Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC), and Downtown Niagara Falls was discussed, as this type of inclusion was proposed in the initial grant application conception.
- It is suggested that by centering on the theme of commercial corridors and how they can function to support sustainability, one approach is to have the implementation council serve as a two-county conversation which continues after the plan is complete. This conversation can continue talking about sustainability in the future and building capacity.
- NFTA discussed the Niagara St. corridor and the collaboration it required, between the GBNRTC, City of Buffalo, and NFTA.



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- Committee members envision the implementation councils as a way to test capacity building, growing greater capacity for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to do greater regional land use planning.
- It is noted that the Framework discusses cores AND corridors, and thus not to lose sight of the importance of strong cores in the region
- It is suggested that one way accomplish this is to form two small working groups focused on cores and corridors, as well as the relationship between the two. UBRI wanted members to come back with proposals for a conversation about cores and corridors.
- It is recommended that an accountability structure is developed early on to identify champions for change.
- UBRI discussed the idea of structuring public participation, metrics, and implementation as one entity, and wanted to sharpen conversation on accomplishing this at the next meeting.

VIII. Good of the Order

- GBNRTC mentioned Oct 10th as a potential date for the next meeting. Members are free to offer a time and location.