



**STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING # 14 - June 7, 2013,
9:00 – 11:00 AM
Belmont Housing Resources of WNY,
1195 Main Street, Buffalo, NY**

In attendance: Amy Fisk (Niagara County Economic Development), Bill Parke (City of Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning), Hal Morse (Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council), Kelly Dixon (Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council), Brenda Stynes (University at Buffalo Regional Institute), Michael Ball (Empire State Development), Bart Roberts (University at Buffalo Regional Institute), Darren Kempner (Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority), Laura Smith (Buffalo Niagara Partnership), Anthony Armstrong (Make Communities), Tom Dearing (Erie County Department of Environment and Planning), Bob Shibley (University at Buffalo Regional Institute), Bradshaw Hovey (University at Buffalo Regional Institute), Mike Riegel (Belmont Housing Resources), Supervisor Ross Annable (Town of Hartland), Matt Hartrich (Buffalo Niagara Partnership), Darren Cotton (University at Buffalo Regional Institute), Teresa Bosch de Celis (University at Buffalo Regional Institute), Steve Ricca (Jaekle Fleischmann & Mugel LLP),

1. Welcome & Introductions

H. Morse: welcome and thank you to Mike Riegel and Belmont Housing Resources of WNY for hosting this morning.

2. One Region Forward Working Teams – Meeting #2 & #3

B. Shibley: Brief overview on the Working Team meetings to date. Talked about meetings #2 and #3 and their focus on strategy development. Mentioned the Working Teams would not meet in July, allowing for the preliminary work developed through the first 3 meetings to be strengthened by precedence research, regulatory and legal analysis and quantitative data analysis.

Content production for each of the groups is uneven to date, which is to be expected. We are starting to do the cross cut of the content produced to have the work produced by these teams seep out of their individual silos. Asked for an update from the Chairs present in the room.

Housing and Neighborhoods:

M. Riegel: In the third meeting, much of the time was spent discussing strategies. Work prior produced about 15 strategies, but in this meeting, we discussed them in the context of four themes. Participation has been good and the group has been engaged. Biggest take-away thus far is the group feels the strategies and discourse has been more urban-centric and not as applicable to suburban communities.

A. Armstrong, Facilitator: Discussed the 4 themes by which the strategies have been organized: target neighborhoods based on their strategic assets (one size does not fit all); anticipate, accommodate and embrace demographic shifts (focus on retaining and attracting residents);



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improve the housing support and delivery system (enhance capacity and program effectiveness);
and provide resources for informed decision making & action (tools and resources).

T. Dearing: Attended the second meeting and echoed the comment about a divide between suburban and urban viewpoints.

Land Use and Development:

Laura Smith: We went through the preliminary list of strategies and dissected each for meaning and intent. The need for education and engaging the general population was a common theme throughout discussions.

- We spent time about “what a regional planning body was.” The politics involved about such a concept worried the group. A concept for that still needs to be further refined to fit our region.
- We talked about the idea of taking example projects to hold up to examine how land use decisions can impact it.

Implementation and finance were also generally talked about.

B. Roberts: At recent grant peer-to-peer session with grantees from similar background, they provided talking points about Smart Growth America’s new report on the fiscal and economic benefits of Smart Growth development.

S. Ricca: Glad we are going to be looking at regulatory environment. The discussion about strategy differentiation between urban and suburban communities plays out in our Working Team as well. One item that we talked about had to do with population change in the future – will we grow, stay the same, or shrink.

R. Shibley: Perhaps it’s worth taking some time talking about this issue of population growth and the different scenarios we may see based on how our population changes across the groups.

A. Armstrong: We are evading the issue by taking the conversation to the micro level. In bringing it down to the neighborhood level, we don’t have the same issue Talking about immigrants and different style of neighborhoods, and fit different demographics. How to make neighborhoods within the region attractive for all demographics. Housing focus on the small picture while Land use focus on the bigger picture.

Ricca: It is really about quality of life. If we can create measurements, metrics, that speak to these things, we can use them to market how we are changing and becoming a region of more livable communities.



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H. Morse: At one point in our long range transportation planning process, we projected growth **IF we achieved certain things** as a region. That was one way we approached this issue.

B. Roberts: In speaking with the consortium in Cleveland, who are one year ahead of us in this regional planning process, they are projecting constant population, not growth, in their Scenario Planning process. Not to say we should follow their approach, but It is interesting that they are approaching it like that.

B. Hovey: We should also remember, we have limited control over this. The Working Teams have to think about strategies understanding that over the long term there is probably going to be lots of changes. Some think that to survive climate change they would choose Buffalo.

Transportation and Mobility:

K. Dixon: We had a really productive third meeting. We talked a lot about finance as well as how to promote best practices. Transit oriented development (TOD) was discussed a lot. Education is a big piece. We talked a lot about the need for transportation planning to be closely linked with land use planning. People really appreciated the importance of that, especially with limited resources. We also talked about transportation and opportunities with strengthening our economic ties with Canada.

D. Kempner: The transportation working group distinguished between financing and funding, debated whether we design land use with a transportation to fit or the other way around and the importance of transit-oriented development to achieve all 1RF goals.

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Food Access and Justice:

B. Hovey: They have actually only had two meetings since their third meeting is scheduled for Monday. The group is supported by Dr. Raja and her food lab with really strong data, analysis and comprehensive thinking on the subject. They have adopted a slightly different approach to creating their strategies and categorizing their goals. They are working on: food producers; food consumers; and the actors who link between consumers and producers.



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Climate Change Action:

B. Hovey: This group is really looking at the really big picture in terms on energy and carbon emissions and how we as a region shift from producing and consuming energy from fossil fuels. They are working on how we adapt and how to mitigate. They are taking a different approach and their meeting 3 was a group learning exercise. The group had presentations from three members (Lou Paonessa, Kelly Tyler and Terry Yonker).

K. Dixon: The long-term view they are taking can be beneficial to all of our groups. We have people stakeholders in our group who serve very immediate needs that it is sometimes difficult to look at long-term issues.

R. Shibley: Climate change group is not populated with anyone that doesn't believe in climate change, so there is less friction in the group. They have a more singular focus and are more united about what needs to be done than perhaps some other groups.

B. Hovey: Across the groups, we are looking at the goals they've been identifying and how they relate to each other. There is a good awareness in all 5 working teams. There are pretty visible connections between the 5 groups.

3. Communication & Engagement Update

Communications Presentation

B. Roberts and D. Cotton from UBRI gave a presentation on the progress of the communications and engagement strategy to create broad awareness of the project and also reach the intended target audiences.

B. Roberts: Brief introduction on our engagement strategies.

- *Key audiences:* citizens typically marginalized by planning process, public sector officials, private sector leaders (people that are really driving the decisions), and Community-nonprofit groups.
- Established a communications sub-committee last year. Early work was on getting launched – the website, initial public engagements, etc. Work recent has been focusing on how we expand the depth and reach of engagement to key audiences
- Our forums for engagement - Community Congresses (in January and February), Local Government Council and Private Sector Council (November 2012), got off to a good start in late 2012, early 2013. But we always can do better.



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- We want to broaden and deepen the involvement of the key audiences and increase participation in the forums for engagement.

D. Cotton:

- Discussed two major types of activities - events that educate and teach the public about what One Region Forward is and what sustainability can look like, and those that give presentations to groups on the project, with detailed information about the process and intent. Recent educational events include Relay for renewable in Appleton, NY; Earth Day Festival at University at Buffalo (North Campus); Designing to Live Sustainably (downtown Buffalo); and the Dairy Fest in Springville.
- We try to target the information depending on where we go. For example Springville talking about farmland. We need to target our communications depending on the events.
- Events coming up: Balle Conference on June 12th, Juneteenth Festival on June 15th, Party for the planet June 22nd, Taste of Diversity on June 29th.
- Tools we have been using. Large posters asking people to compare how they relate to averages throughout the region (i.e. commute time). We also have set up quiz games that take the data stories and compel visitors to guess the answer. Another tool is asking people how they “move one region forward...”, and take their picture with a white board holding their answer.
- We are also giving Community presentations that are open to the public. We present information and data points focusing on the location of the event. We try to think it individually for each municipality, even on the follow up emails.
- Also, to keep the local gov council and private sector council engage we are creating monthly communications from chairs that will be personalized to keep groups engaged.
- Other tools online:
 - o What the data tell us
 - o Sustainability in action
 - o Test your sustainability IQWe are looking on how to spread the word on this.
We got our first article on the Buffalo Rising. It is not just getting messages out but getting feedback back in. There was a good discussion on the article.

To push those tools out and keep people involved.

- Moving forward. We need help staffing these events; we need greater Steering Committee representation on our “Sustainability in Action” map; in-kind donations to use as incentives for contributing and participatin; use your organizations’ newsletters and social media to spread the word.
- Other possibilities we would like to explore:
 - o Ad campaign in NFTA spaces.
 - o Public participation using public art as public engagement. How to contribute something that is good for the environment and also for our planning process.
 - o SWAG – increasing brand recognition and having more “take-a-ways” at community events.
 - To keep it in the sustainable aspect. Water bottles or reusable bags.

K. Dixon: we have listed events in Erie Co. and we could help add events to Niagara Co. as well.



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- Economics of Sustainability Series – June 27th Event

L. Smith: Gave a brief update on June 27th event about preservation and development.

M. Hartrich: Preservation has a lot of tools out there. The intent of this event is to talk about land use control, resources for development, tax credits, etc. all related to historic preservation. Event will work to explain the process of using these tools. We have a couple national speakers, right now we are trying to get any regional speaker that can help on this. If you have any thoughts please give me a call and we'll work on that. Event will be at the Hotel Lafayette, registration 8-8:30am.

4. Potential visit by HUD Secretary Donovan – Nov. 2013

H. Morse: Approached by fellow grantees in Erie, PA about coordinating an ask for a coordinated visit to Erie, Buffalo and Cleveland as well.

Introductory idea just to keep you thinking if we should go ahead with this visits. The fall we will be reconvening groups. What things should we highlighting the work that has been doing.

B. Roberts: Request voting on sending a letter to invite the Secretary.

H. Morse: Put it to a vote. No opposition, signaled an approval to proceed with sending a letter to the

5. Implementation Opportunities & Efforts

H. Morse:

- **Fiscal Revenue Analysis** Provided an update on an opportunity to do an analysis on the fiscal benefits of smart growth, through revenue growth. Talks have been had with U3 who previously was in Buffalo to present as part of our Economics of Sustainability series. Exploring funding opportunities currently.

- **USDOT Grant for Technical Assistance in Climate Change Scenario Planning.** Application submitted. USDOT will pick one inland site to work on this. Could be a great synergistic opportunity for the work we are doing with One Region Forward. We partnered with the US Army Corps of Engineers since an FMLA was required for the application. They are interested in the work and are very supportive. They see the need in this every day as they said to us the 100 year flood is now happening "every six years."

- Alternatives Analysis Update

- Brief update on the Buffalo – Amherst Alternatives Analysis that is looking at opportunities to expand transit options in the Amherst-Buffalo corridor. Process is being led by NFTA in partnership with GBNRTC.



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- Very consistent with what we are talking about in 1RF. Other plans are really key in improving transportation (i.e. UB 2020 to connect campuses and adding transit stations).

6. Good of the Order

M. Ball:

- Would like to give a plug to the New York State CFA process, which is always looking for good Smart Growth projects. Encouraged Steering Committee members to work to spread the word; will continue to coordinate with the Steering Committees as there will be 4 workshops through the summer.

D. Kempner: In response to Bob Shibley's question on how the group is doing, Mr. Kempner thanked everyone for their hard work to this point and encouraged group members to deepen the involvement of their respective agencies in the effort in order to get maximum exposure and impact for One Region Forward.

H. Morse closed the meeting by thanking everyone for coming.

7. Adjournment