

Regional Economic Development Council

Meeting Notes

June 14, 2012

Welcome and Introduction of Members, Agenda and Overview

Lt. Gov. Robert Duffy welcomed everyone and introduced SUNY Oneonta President Nancy Kleniewski. President Kleniewski welcomed the Lieutenant Governor, MVREDC members, and the public to SUNY Oneonta. The President spoke of the college's commitment to economic development both at the State and regional level. The college community is working to foster the following goals: adding more performing arts, promoting STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education and improving the local quality of life and the concept of sustainability.

Co-chair Yeigh thanked Lt. Gov. Duffy for his commitment to the Mohawk Valley Region and asked REDC members to introduce themselves.

Co-chair Gilroy previewed today's agenda, which includes an update on the Clean Green Communities Sustainability project, an overview of the 2012 MVREDC Action Plan, and updates on priority project identification, strategic planning, project tracking; the presentation and adoption of the outreach and communication plan, as well as breakout sessions for the council and the public.

Cleaner, Greener Communities Regional Sustainability Planning Program

Carolyn Lewis thanked the Council for their support of the Clean Green Communities Sustainability project and announced that NYSERDA had approved the Council's \$1 million application.

The first meeting of the Clean Green Communities Consortium was held on June 5 at HCCC. Otsego County will lead the planning process and provide the required reporting to the State. The planning effort will:

- Assess current greenhouse gas emissions and energy use, along with available natural resources and economic assets, liabilities, and opportunities.
- Set sustainability targets for energy supplies, transportation, waste and water management, land use, housing, agriculture, economic development, and open space.
- Develop a sustainability plan outlining the short- and long-term actions our region can take to achieve targets and goals.

A RFQ was released to identify one or more regionally based sub-contractors to support in facilitating and managing all aspects of program arrangements and coordination of the public and stakeholder events. Ms. Lewis asked the Council to contact her if they are aware of a consulting firm which should be solicited for this project.

Review of the 2012 MVREDC Action Plan and Timeline

Steve DiMeo presented a work summary which the Council will perform and report on in 2012, noting the importance that CFAs are aligned with the regional strategies to take advantage of funding opportunities. He provided a recap of the Regional Council priorities, which were developed by the Council last year.

As the 2012 regional goals were reviewed, Mr. DiMeo advised that the Regional Council is to take last year's plan and establish an action plan. The four key requirements to fulfill are: to establish a framework to advance strategies, to implement the strategies, to create a project pipeline, and to provide a progress report.

Mr. DiMeo also reviewed the leadership and mission of each Regional Council committee. The following committees have been established: Outreach and Communications, Strategic Planning and Oversight, Project Monitoring, County Liaison, and an Executive Committee.

As part of the creation of a project pipeline, Mr. DiMeo advised that the six county steering committees are completing "Priority Project Worksheets" to help identify priority projects. Currently 142 questionnaires have been received and it is expected that the remainder will be submitted by July 20. He noted the MVREDC is competing with six other regions for three \$25 million awards.

The MVREDC Action Plan timeline was reviewed; key dates are: the draft action plan due on August 8, comments on draft plan due August 20, and action plan review and approval by the Council on August 27.

Mr. DiMeo referenced the 2012 CFA resources, noting there is \$530 million available from 11 state agencies, including 27 programs and Recharge NY. The CFA window is currently open and the application deadline is July 16 at 4pm. CFA scores are due in late summer with awards being made in early fall.

Priority Project Identification

Steve DiMeo described the process through which the County Liaison Committee has been working with economic development professionals across the region to identify priority projects. Membership consists of 50 representatives from all six counties. Leadership includes Carolyn Lewis, Steve DiMeo, Mary Morse, Mike Reese, Alicia Terry, Ken Rose and Mark Feane. There is also representation from education, industry, workforce development, tourism, and Chambers of Commerce. A county-level meeting was held to identify new projects. The County Liaison committee will evaluate how projects align with the five regional strategies and each county will evaluate their key strategies.

Strategic Planning Update

Charles Green presented the Strategic Planning and Oversight Committee activity update. Committee members are Ann Thane, Randy VanWagoner, Mike Reese, Tom Quinn, and Charles Green. The committee is looking to add additional representation from Otsego and Herkimer counties.

The committee has had three meetings to date, an initial kick-off meeting, a meeting with Council members and MVEDGE to discuss findings and committee tasking, and a meeting to review the 2012 Action Plan. The committee has begun to identify areas that need clarification within the Regional strategies.

Moving forward, the committee will continue to work with MVEDGE on the 2012 Action Plan and to present a performance measurement survey. After receiving the survey results, the committee will decide on which strategies need focus and which ones need modification.

Outreach and Communications Plan Presentation

Wally Hart presented an overview of the revised MVREDC Public Participation Plan, stressing the need to do more to engage the public and make the plan a vital tool in reaching out to the communities within the Mohawk Valley region.

The plan works in alignment with New York State's new economic development mission and consists of three integrated components: public involvement, education and information, and public outreach. The mission's guiding principles are meaningful and relevant dialogue, and recognition that each county has its own distinctive characteristics. A motion was made by Wally Hart and seconded by Mary Morse to adopt the updated MVREDC Public Participation Plan as presented. This motion was approved.

Project Tracking

Dan Robinson updated the attendees on projects being tracked by NYS and the MVREDC, explaining that the committee co-chairs have been meeting with Ken Tompkins and MVEDGE representatives to discuss status of the 2011 CFA project awards.

The committee is working to refine a tracking report. In the future, the committee would like to recruit assistance from the county executives and economic development officials to keep projects on task. As certain 2011 projects are terminated for a variety of reasons, the Council can reallocate funds within the counties, however, there are certain restrictions and it is important to work closely with ESD to make sure reallocations meet legal guidelines.

Scott White and Ann Thane met several times to discuss scoring, their task was to look at ways to improve both how scoring as a Council can be coordinated and how the process itself can be improved. In addition, the State has provided a new template this year, which assigns priority projects 20 points automatically and then has Council members consult the rubric. Last year the strategic plan had endorsement standards that had points and weights; this system is now replaced by this new rubric. Regional Council members need to think about what are the attributes of a very strong project, what are the attributes of a strong project. There also needs to be coordination with the strategic planning committee because the scoring technique used by the Council will need to be adopted by the committee.

Co-chair Yeigh, addressing the public participants, asked if there were any questions for the Council members and advised the audience that in the future, to feel free to reach out to the co-chairs or the ESD regional office.

Jeff Katz inquired about tourism related grants and their relation to specific job creation as this is very difficult to link directly. For instance, Cooperstown expects increased job numbers but how does an applicant quantify jobs and how can tourism job creation be measured, what are the metrics to identify success. Ken Tompkins stated the most important document to reference is the 2012 CFA Available Resources document, which identifies the programs that have funding available and is specific about how judging occurs. It also addresses job creation and how each agency will handle. From ESD's perspective, we are looking at job creation and retention. Anyone completing a CFA can request assistance from their local economic developers. There is a tool on the website for folks filing out the CFA survey, which includes the names of the economic developers who are familiar with the process within each county. Carolyn Lewis also suggested referencing the strategic plan to make sure projects and strategies are working together.

Ken Tompkins reminded Council members and the public of a CFA workshop being held at 3:00 p.m. today at SUNY Oneonta. This is a great opportunity to learn about the application process in detail.

Breakout/Public Outreach Sessions

Members of the public engaged in a facilitated discussion while Council members formed a single breakout group to review the Action Plan in depth.

Council Re-assembles lists ideas/tasks generated during breakout

Co-chair Yeigh welcomed everyone back and thanked them for their participation today. He reviewed a summary of the Council's breakout session, noting that the Council outlined steps to get the action plan developed by the August 27 due date. The committee will work to flesh out performance measures, to engage the public and will summarize and share the action plan with public before the next meeting. Also, the public's help in identifying issues with Council and the CFA process will be summarized and shared. All documents regarding the action plan will be available on the ESD website.

Adjournment

The meeting closed with a reminder from Co-chairs Gilroy and Yeigh of the next Regional Council meeting scheduled for July 10 at 9:00 a.m. with the location still to be determined. All stakeholders are invited to attend.

Lt. Gov. Duffy thanked everyone for their participation and complimented the group for their efforts.