

**OPEN FOR BUSINESS:
A NEW STATE GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
Second Meeting Discussion Group:
New York City Regional Issues
Tuesday, August 23, 2011
The Graduate School and University Center, The City University of New York**

Meeting Summary

Co-facilitators:

Dr. Howard Apsan, The City University of New York
Marion Phillips, Empire State Development Corporation

Attendees:

Hon. James Molinaro, Staten Island Borough President, w/ Jason Razefsky
David Sattenstall, representing Scott Stringer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Robert Steel, New York City Deputy Mayor, w/Ashley Cotton and Tokumbo Shobowale
Carol Conslato, Queens Chamber of Commerce
Gary LaBarbera, Building and Constructions Trade Council of Greater New York
Kenneth Knuckles, Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation
Marlene Cintron, Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation
Amy Sugimori, representing Mike Fishman, 32BJ SEIU
Stuart Appelbaum, Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, w/ Ademola Oyefeso and
Zayne Abdessalam

Co-facilitator Marion Phillips of the Empire State Development Corporation started the meeting at 9:30 a.m., reminding the members that its purpose was to spur discussion on the criteria for scoring prospective projects. He reviewed the work that had been done at the August 18 meeting, highlighting financing and policy issues.

He turned the meeting over to co-facilitator Howard Apsan of The City University of New York, who presented a list of broad categories for committee members to consider for criteria. He listed four general categories:

1. Financial
2. Economic impact: What are the specific objectives?
3. Community impact: There should be a broad-based effort to focus on the boroughs and their neighborhoods, too.
4. Leverage: How can we leverage our efforts so the sum is greater than the parts? How can we work with other councils and even the federal government?

Apsan then listed 10 narrower criteria for the committee to consider:

1. Project readiness: When is the project expected to be delivered? Is the financing in place?
2. Timing: What are the short-term and long-term expectations, and when can they be met?
3. Leverage: Does the project include private and public collaboration?

4. Consistency: The project should be consistent with the objectives of the existing regional plans, but it also should be creative.
5. Projects must support strategies in the council's plan.
6. Do established metrics exist to measure the impact of the project?
7. Is there organizational capacity to implement the project?
8. Ability to create long-term jobs.
9. Are there inter-regional connections?
10. Demonstrate sustainable practices. He defined sustainability as having economic and environmental impacts.

When Apsan opened the points up for discussion, Kenneth J. Knuckles, of the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation, said that project readiness shouldn't necessarily be a make-or-break point because most projects have a gap so there should be a time line. He suggested that "shovel readiness" might be a better term.

There was talk of perhaps making a two-year or five-year time frame, and it was suggested that this might be too restricted and that all projects should be put on the table sans time frame.

Gary LaBarbera, of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York, pointed out that if New York City wants to promote development, it has to have a more effective transportation system to move goods and services. He said that infrastructure improvements lead to other job creation and should not be factored out of the equation. He said that projects like the development of Moynihan Station are critical to the city and region.

Staten Island Borough President James Molinaro agreed that lack of an adequate transportation system was the biggest problem to his attracting business and development in his borough and that regulatory requirements often delay important projects, sometimes for years.

It was noted that the word "regulation" was removed from the vision statement, and Phillips said the subject of policy has been discussed, and he thought it would be placed in future drafts.

Borough President Molinaro suggested that the word "innovation" be part of the criteria for picking projects. "We should encourage it, we should give extra points for it, and we should be determining how much gets reinvested in New York," he said. "If you reinvest in New York, you should get more."

Stuart Appelbaum reiterated that he wanted job creation to focus on long-term jobs.

The committee discussed the high cost of doing business in New York City, saying it had to be considered. Keeping money in the city and state was another consideration, with committee members saying that private-public collaborations are critical.

The committee tried to define some of the key concepts, such as "transformative," "innovative," and "sustainable." This prompted discussion of green projects and creating jobs around the business of sustainability. Brownfield development was discussed, and participants agreed that such

projects offer good opportunities for private/public collaborations, but the regulatory issues have kept some of them stalled for years. Borough President Molinaro said that Staten Island has numerous brownfield projects that are still in various stages of completion.

Marlene Cintron, Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, noted that the Bronx has 31 percent of the city's solar panels. She said that there are still many developable properties in the boroughs, even if they are not brownfields.

While the committee is charged with coming up with projects for New York City, the members also wanted to examine how projects would affect partners in other regions, particularly upstate and Long Island.

Apsan said that he had been reading the minutes of other New York State regional economic development meetings and that members would be kept apprised of activities in the other regions.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.