

Meeting Summary
Mid-Hudson Inaugural Meeting
August 9, 2011

The meeting began with introductory remarks from Lieutenant Governor Duffy and brief welcome from Co-Chairs Len Schleifer (Regeneron) and Dennis Murray (Marist College). Council member and state agency staff team introductions followed. Lieutenant Governor Duffy provided an overview of the Regional Council initiative, which was followed by a presentation on the strategic planning elements and timeline.

Council members were then asked to break into four small discussion groups and were tasked with the following outcomes: Identify three issues and three opportunities/assets of the region; begin to articulate an economic vision for the region; and identify three workgroups needed to advance the work of the council and development of the strategic plan. Lively discussions were held in each of the small groups who then reported their key discussion points to the large group. Several themes emerged in relation to assets and opportunities, such as: beauty of the region and its natural resources that promotes tourism, access to waterways/Hudson River, certain industry clusters, proximity to New York City, and availability of a skilled and diverse workforce. Issues or challenges included those that affect the entire state such as taxes and government regulations and regional issues such as the number of unemployed and lack of affordable housing. The ideas for beginning to articulate an economic vision for the region included building on current successes and incentivizing new business start-ups, as well as working toward greater economic development coordination among the seven counties to benefit the entire region.

Small group reports were recorded for further consideration by the members. Following the reports, the Lieutenant Governor and Co-Chairs provided closing remarks and encouragement for the work of the Council. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m. and Council members were invited to participate in brief press availability with Lieutenant Governor Duffy and Co-Chairs Schleifer and Murray.

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for August 18, 2011 at Marist College.