

# FINGER LAKES REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

## June 11, 2012

**Council Members Present:** Lt. Governor Robert Duffy, Joel Seligman, Danny Wegman, A. D. Berwanger, David Callard, Charlie Cook, Ted Fafinski, Steve Griffin, Mary Pat Hancock, James Hoffman, Tom Macinski, Augustin Melendez, John Noble, Cynthia Oswald, Sandra Parker, Tyrone Reaves, Thomas Richards, Hilda Rosario Escher, David Young. **Representatives for Council Members Present:** Vinnie Esposito for Assemblyman Joseph Morelle, Todd Oldham for Dr. Anne Kress, Kate Munzinger for Senator Joseph Robach, Mitch Rowe for Robert Hayssen, Patrick Rountree for James Merrick, Julie Pacatte for Timothy Buckley, Ryne Raffaele for Bill Destler, Jason Aymerich for Kirsten Werner.

**Members Absent:** Maggie Brooks, Richard Colacino, Taylor Fitch, Pam Heald, Bradley MacDonald, Theresa Mazzullo, Mark Peterson, Robert Sands and Christine Whitman.

**Team Members Present:** Robert McNary, Joe Hamm, Dave Seeley, Irene Baker, Megan Daly, Jason Conwall, Kent Gardner, Dick Petite, Kiska Stevens, John Striebich.

**State Agency Members:** Paul D'Amato, Janet DeOrdio, Phil Giltner, Linda Hardie, Lee Loomis, Richard Parker, Haley Rotter, Leonard Skrill, J. C. Smith, Julie Sweet and Ralph Van Houten.

**Other Attendees:** Greg Albert, Josh Farrelman, Bret Garwood, Sean Hart, Mark Michaud, Peter Robinson, Bill Strassburg, Joe Chan, Kathleen Kingsley, Sean Hart, David Zorn, Joe Wesley, Meredith Smith, Judy Seil, Rachel Beckerman, Allen Rosen, Chris Wiest, Chris Mueller, and Tom Tobin.

Lt. Governor Duffy opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and acknowledged the new members Senator Joseph Robach being represented by Kate Munzinger, Assemblyman Joseph Morelle being represented by Vinnie Esposito and Dave Young from the Rochester Building and Construction Trades Council. He then turned the meeting over to Mr. Wegman.

Mr. Wegman thanked the Lt. Governor and stated we are trying to establish performance measures so we can understand the progress we are making on various strategies, initiatives and if there are problems, how the Regional Council can help. There was also a new meeting scheduled for July 23<sup>rd</sup> from 3pm to 5pm and he asked that everyone put that on their calendars.

Mr. Seligman stated it was good to see everyone back and that we have a great shot this year as we are building off a strong strategic plan and expressed his gratitude for those working on the workgroups, which have been meeting as much as once a week. Comments were received by the judging panel and they were impressed with our strategic plan. As Mr. Wegman stated, we are scheduling two additional meetings so we can focus on the deliverables, one on July 23<sup>rd</sup> from 3pm to 5pm and one on August 13<sup>th</sup> and the meeting on August 6<sup>th</sup> will be cancelled so that we can better coordinate with the workgroups. The meeting that was scheduled for August 6<sup>th</sup> was to take place at Eastman Business Park and the possibility of tours but we are encouraging voluntary visits there or we can possibly conduct a meeting there in September. We will need to pull together over the next few months so that we can present our progress in the most effective way for the second round as our timeline is really compressed. The submission date is September 14<sup>th</sup> so the next three meetings are key to this year's progress. We will have a report on the CFA applications, which are due July 16<sup>th</sup>, to you at our next meeting on July 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Ms. Baker explained that a lot of what is in the guidebook was covered at the last meeting and what we are doing is a follow up to what was done last year and what is expected for 2012 and the guidebook is providing the framework for this. She explained that there has been \$780MM worth of projects that were funded through the first CFA round and Ms. Daly, who is the Deputy Director of the Regional Councils, has taken on

the task of tracking the 720 projects and is conducting calls with each Regional Director every two weeks to discuss all of these projects. We are also identifying projects that are not ready to go forward or have declined funding and we have been pulling back that funding and working with the Regional Councils to identify other projects they would like to see funded. We are working on a portal that the public can utilize to track projects in their areas, but we have limited ability given that the projects are actually being executed by outside project sponsors. The second round of funding announced on May 3<sup>rd</sup> will comprise of \$220MM which consists of \$150MM in Capital Funds and \$70MM in Excelsior Tax Credits and will be distributed on a competitive basis and will be based on the implementation agenda and progress reports. An implementation agenda will need to be developed around the priorities identified in the strategic plan and a progress report will need to be submitted to the State on September 14<sup>th</sup>. The Guidebook provides templates for use as a reference. The four best plan awardees will compete for two awards of \$25MM and the other six regions will compete for three awards of \$25MM and that will leave \$25MM to be spread among the rest of the five regions. The review committee will consist of outside experts and they will be talking with the Co-Chairs. There is an addition \$530MM in CFA Funds from existing program funds that we have identified from existing agency funds. We did remove \$169MM from the funding stream that was from HCR and was for affordable housing and low income housing tax credits as they didn't fit well with what the councils identified through the planning process as priorities, even though it is agreed that affordable housing is a priority and necessary for community and economic development. We will be putting together webinars over the next couple of weeks for the scorers and council members to prepare for the scoring of the applications and we have also been holding CFA Application Workshops across the state on top of the public forums. The scoring for the applications has been simplified so that it only has a 0 to 20 score and priority projects are the projects that get a 20. The CFA Application timeline is as follows:

- CFA Applications opened May 3, 2012
- CFA Applications will close July 16, 2012 at 4:00 PM
- CFA Application Documents are due by July 23, 2012
- CFA Application Scores are due by August 27, 2012
- Progress Reports and Priority Projects are due by September 14, 2012

The Executive Committee has been working very hard and engaging in the time sensitive and confidential projects that have been identified by ESD and other agencies, identifying and realigning workgroups that are needed for the planning process versus those needed for the actual implementation, identifying and developing which strategies the Regional Council wants to focus on and identifying and developing an implementation agenda and providing a progress report. The next step is identifying the project pipeline which can not only be picked from the CFA's submitted but other priority projects can also be identified.

The State Agency Resource Team (SART) being led by Julie Sweet of the Department of State and will assist in clarifying any elements of the progress report that are not clear from the guidebook. The SART developed a draft work plan for the State agencies and what resources, programs and elements they will be able to contribute to the implementation and planning process which has been provided to the Executive Committee. Once it has been approved, it will be provided to the Regional Council to review and refine it. The state needs to be a real partner in this process as we regulate and drive this process, and the SART has been working diligently to that end.

Ms. Baker also touched on the Statewide Chairman's Committee finally meeting with the SAGE Committee. The Statewide Chairman's Committee will be identifying workgroups to focus on identifying regulatory reform and other thematic issues that have been identified, such as agriculture, food and beverage, workforce development, business and employer issues, and technology commercialization entrepreneurialism.

Mr. Seligman inquired how the scoring will be done for the next round and Ms. Parker stated that maybe we should start scoring now instead of waiting until July 16<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Baker stated that the issue with that is an applicant can go back and change information and that there are some restrictions on the ability to interact with applicants on a one on one basis. ESD does have more flexibility for dialog and if an applicant is identified that needs more due diligence or more in depth benefit analysis, we will have the ability to have those conversations. We can take a list of finalized applications and get them to the scorers so they can start identifying priority projects. Ms. Parker stated that the process utilized last year worked well as they scored applications individually and then came together as a group and talked through each one. Mr. Seligman asked, in terms of the Council's role, we had a meeting last year to approve the scores do we have to come together in a meeting this year? Ms. Baker stated that whatever makes it easier once the scores are done is fine. Mr. Seligman proposed that the Council proceed on a contingent agenda and any council member can pull something off and if any council member feels there needs to be a discussion on any project then we can come together for a meeting. If everyone is comfortable with the scores, we won't need a live meeting but could respond via e-mail. Mr. Seligman asked that the questions for the oral arguments that will be required for the competition be sent to the Co-Chairs in advance as it is easier to respond to questions by e-mail instead of traveling to Albany. Ms. Baker stated she understood.

Mr. McNary asked that in terms of priority project criteria, can this be revisited and changed if we feel the need to. Ms. Baker stated that is up to the Regional Council and Mr. Seligman stated that there will need to be some adjustment.

Mr. Wegman stated that we are operating differently like a region instead of small areas where we live and thinking of a region is a different task and as we get into the workgroups, we are trying to measure some of that. We should be reaching out to other regions such as the Western NY Region as the STAMP Project in Genesee County could benefit their region as well as ours so it would benefit both regions to endorse it. Mr. Wegman noted the workgroups and Mr. Melendez was asked if we should have a separate group on minority aspects on all 14 groups. Mr. Melendez agreed there should be a minority involvement in all aspects of the workgroups and Mr. Seligman stated that one way we could accomplish this was to appoint someone to each workgroup. Mr. Wegman will work with Mr. Melendez to do this.

Mr. Wegman went on to show the advantages of healthcare in the Finger Lakes Region versus the national average and it's amazing the advantage we have with healthcare in our region and anyone looking to hire people. We want to use this healthcare sector or workgroup to demonstrate some of the reporting and accountability we are looking for and Mr. Strassburg will explain this. Mr. Strassburg went on to state that Mr. Wegman would like this to be the dashboard for the workgroups and its' something that can be sent to the Regional Council monthly or quarterly and can be used for a reporting tool for all workgroups showing the council where they are, where they are heading and what factors that we should be looking at.

Mr. Strassburg then went over an action plan for the blood pressure advocate program, which is a different way of looking at this project and is a little more in depth and explains what actions are being planned, which ones have taken place, where we stand and how we are going to get there. They are both examples of what other workgroups can use to look at their priority projects and evaluate them to help fulfill the strategic plan for 2012. Mr. Seligman asked the workgroups to look at the documents that were provided and if they are comfortable, they can use them as templates going forward as this will be operational and measurable. Mr. Seligman turned the meeting over to Mr. Griffin for an update on the workgroups.

Mr. Griffin stated the workgroups have always been important and we didn't want a strategic plan that once written and submitted would sit on a shelf somewhere. We wanted a plan that would help drive economic growth in the region and we are looking at the focus of the workgroups to do that. The workgroups were put together in sectors we thought were important to drive the growth of the economy and we are going to those workgroups to help drive the plans they came up with. A meeting was held on May 16<sup>th</sup> for all the workgroups and approximately 70 people attended which Mr. Peterson led and we discussed focusing on the implementation of the strategic plan and if any modifications were needed. We talked to the workgroups on how we can push forward the projects and the implementation plans and to make sure the groups are meeting. The groups are meeting, and some have come back to reaffirm that the strategies that were in place are still the right ones and they will meet as needed. The templates will be sent to each workgroup chair and we will follow up to see how we can assist them going forward and continue to foster relationships and partnerships that are going on within these groups. They will let us know when challenges or questions come up and we will get back to them and help where needed. There was some confusion from the meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> about whether or not the workgroups were to put forth new projects and that was cleared up here as some people thought we weren't expecting new projects and didn't want any new projects, which is not the case. We are hoping the workgroups will report back to us on July 23<sup>rd</sup> on how they are doing and where they are at. Ms. Rosario Escher asked where the minority and small business development workgroups were and Mr. Griffin stated that it was discussed and it was felt that it is a crosscutting issue and should be part of each workgroup and having a performance measure on how those groups are presented and will be benefitted in the criteria. Mr. Macinski asked that if there was a workgroup working on a multi-region project that will involve two or three regional councils, how that should be documented so it reflects in the CFA process. Lt. Governor Duffy stated that it should be included in the application process and encouraged this council not to wait for the statewide meetings to happen and that the collaborations you are working on with other regions are critically important and would benefit larger areas. Mr. Macinski asked if other regions should submit similar CFA's to show their support and Ms. Daly stated that we already have cross council applications and they do notify both councils and have them review the one application and each council can provide a letter of support. Mr. Macinski will get the process going on this and Ms. Parker asked if there is a way to build the collaboration element into the criteria for priority project identification. Ms. Daly stated some of the other councils are identifying a priority to work cross regionally. Mr. Seligman asked how many cross regional priorities we are going to have and if it is necessary to make this a criteria, or just when we see one, we can identify it. Lt. Governor Duffy stated that the process should adapt to multi-regional projects, not the other way around and the more we get the more it will show what a difference it is making across the state.

At this time, Mr. Seligman read the comments from the Strategic Plan Review Committee that were relevant to the Finger Lakes Region and identified the weaknesses noted in our plan.

- No weaknesses were identified with regards to the Vision Statement or the Process.
- There were two weaknesses identified in the Strategies

- Although focused, strategies relied heavily on the energy sector and funding requests focused most heavily on projects already under way at the Region’s anchor tenants.
- Not all barriers or issues are equally addressed in the strategies, projects (e.g. community development, poverty) but future projects may help to fill the gap.
- The Implementation Plan strength is that it offers detailed project sheets that present the regions institutional anchors that will lend strong focus to the implementation. However the weaknesses are:
  - The overall timeline is annual and does not provide sufficient granularity for implementation, adjustments or refinements.
  - The funding commitments are not always clear.
  - The plan is vague as to the level of engagement by the Council over the next five years.
- The Leveraging Resources weaknesses noted were:
  - The calculation of public/private resources over five years may be overstating the investment.
- The Evaluation/Performance Measures strengths identify a valid matrix of the goal and project level. The weaknesses noted were:
  - The annual review of the priority projects may not be sufficient.

The biggest substantive issue was that not all barriers and issues were equally addressed by the strategies: Projects, community development, housing and poverty. Mr. Seligman stated he is not sure if equally addressing everything is necessary but adequately addressing them is and we may want to focus on this as we get to the evaluations and what our priorities are for this year. It was clear, when looking at the four areas we were most successful, that “Jobs, Jobs, Jobs” was part of this, but there were other factors of consequence and we want to learn from this experience. From the report you will see we are getting two messages: Economic development and jobs was the message we heard most clearly from the Governor; but it is clear the traditional economic development that focuses on things like core savings is very important.

Mr. Seligman asked if the full draft of the report could be forwarded to the Council and Mr. McNary and Ms. Daly both stated it wouldn’t be a problem and Mr. Seligman stated that it would be sent out soon via a letter or e-mail.

Mr. Seligman stated that the workgroup structure is appropriate and the question is how do we select next year’s priority projects and we will want to take the reports comments into consideration when we articulate the new document. Mr. Wegmans stated that maybe Mr. Richards could help us with some projects.

Mr. Richards stated he could fill up our bucket but he doesn’t agree with the reports assessment and things that one of the good things about this approach was the focus on jobs and that is how we were going to have a serious impact. There are a lot of other important things in society and important things that government has to deal with, but he hopes we aren’t going to try to take them all on and solve them with this process as we will diffuse ourselves as our primary mission here is “Jobs, Jobs, Jobs” and we should stick to in order to accomplish what we set out to do. Mr. Richards also stated that workforce development has a direct impact on our role because if people aren’t trained they can’t fulfill the job requirements. He also stated that affordable housing is an important piece as it is

not only a city issue but a rural one and that has already been implemented with a separate program and a review process that is already in place. Mr. Rowe agreed with Mr. Richards in that challenges that poverty and economic opportunity are not unique to urban areas.

Mr. Rowe went on to ask if there were opportunities for new individuals to get involved in the workgroups as there has been some drop off in participation. He also expressed concern that there could be greater participation from rural communities on the issue of community development. Mr. Seligman will take that under advisement with the Executive Committee as we want to replenish the workgroups and the request that community development not be limited to the City of Rochester is fair. Mr. Rountree, the Co-Chair of the Community Development Workgroup, commented that the message we received was very clearly “Jobs, Jobs, Jobs” and feels we don’t have as far to go as it seems and understands why community development was heavily edited. Ms. Hancock stated she is delighted that we have some feedback and that it energizes this group and she is delighted to know there are some specific areas that those that scored the plans feels we could do some follow up on and improve on.

Mr. Seligman made the recommendation that we start with the Public Session so we won’t have to end precisely and we can then go into the Executive Session afterwards making it easier for the press and public to join us.

Mr. Wegman asked for a five minute review from the workgroups at the next meeting and to coordinate the workgroups feedback with Mr. Farrelman. Mr. Wegman also recommended that the workgroups put the minority impact right on the performance measures and Mr. Melendez stated he has some ideas for this and will discuss them with Mr. Wegman. Mr. Seligman asked Mr. Wegman to get this out early next week so people have time to work on them.

Mr. McNary gave an update on Eastman Business Park. They are in Chapter 11 which is the preliminary stage of restructuring and stabilizing their assets. They are looking to come forward with a restructuring plan in the final quarter of 2012 or the first quarter of 2013. This is a unique park not only locally but nationally in terms of services, utilities, security and a variety of other things. The Governor’s Office and the Lt. Governor have made it very clear that this is the State’s and ESD’s top priority. There is a team and committee working on this non-stop. ESD has three people working on it and looking at a number of strategies to keep them well positioned for future economic growth. The tenants concerns we have heard so far are the continuity of utility services, the pricing of the utilities, and their continued ability to lease buildings from Kodak on a long term basis. ESD is coordinating with other agencies, in particular DEC and they have been extremely helpful, as well as the Lt. Governor’s Office. There has also been work with the Public Service Commission in terms of facilitating RG&E working with Kodak on contingency plans in case of the electricity being shut off and RG&E stepping in and providing services on an emergency basis. There have also been discussions with NYPA and others. A Rochester based firm, Bergman Associates, have been hired in representing us in a variety of things such as looking at the capacity of the utilities, what alternative plans will be needed if the utility piece mail goes down, how do you bring the parts back up and the cost feasibility for those utilities also. Kodak has been working with us in terms of access to their virtual database, which is confidential, and we are proceeding to utilize that data to make decisions. We have reached

out to owners, operators and other developers of industrial facilities around the state and nation with Kodak in terms of moving forward. We are meeting weekly with Kodak and are having communications with stakeholders (mainly tenants) and have met with them over the last couple of months. Lt. Governor Duffy reiterated that there is a lot of work to be done in the park and that it is a priority for the Governor. We are exploring every option as this will have a huge impact on our region and there is a sense we could double the jobs currently there but the power and utilities on that site are key for an expansion or any outcome that takes place.

Lt. Governor Duffy agreed with Mr. Seligman's point that there was some disconnect in terms of things that were said and some of the rationale. Some had to do with the people doing the actual judging who were not part of the process early on which may explain some of it. He recommended that the Council make the CFA Process work the way the Governor wants it to and in the end the priorities from each community have to be the ones that really reign in terms of how to grow jobs and improve education. He asked the Council to suggest changes in terms of funding streams, how we do business and the process. He stated you can add to the workgroups as needed as there is an incredible amount of talent here to get involved.

Mr. Seligman reaffirmed that Eastman Business Park is still a top priority in our Strategic Plan and we will do everything we can to continue to communicate that to those in Albany and asked if anyone had any objections that he and Mr. Wegman signed a letter to that effect.

Mr. Seligman stated there was some disconnect between the criteria we are following and how it was scored and asked if the State wanted us to follow what we thought were the rules for scoring or maybe evolve to a different direction. Lt. Governor Duffy stated the first thing to do would be for Mr. Seligman and Mr. Wegman to do a written response to the draft and didn't think anyone would disagree as we are aware there were communication issues that were resolved. Ms. Baker stated the score card done by the initial panel was on the Strategic Plan and the next score card will be based on the implementation process and if there are any major disconnects we want to make sure we clarify what those are. Mr. Wegman stated that we should work our tail off to execute the plan as there will be a reward for doing that even if we are not rewarded by the panel for doing it we will be rewarded by the community.

At this time the meeting was opened to the public by Lt. Governor Duffy and he welcomed the public and turned the meeting over to Mr. McNary to give an update on the priority projects.

Mr. McNary proceeded to give an update on the priority projects that were funded in the 2011 CFA round as we had 14 out of 16 projects we submitted that were funded. We also had seven capacity driven projects that were transformational from the Council's point of view, and the Council also endorsed seven Excelsior Jobs Program applications. The seven Excelsior projects were: Sutherland Global Services, Qualitrol, Mabrouka Properties, Newstead Ranch or Krehers Sunrise Farms, AJL Manufacturing, E2E Materials, and Document Reprocessors. These are scattered throughout the region but the job creations by these companies is over 900 jobs and that will occur over the next couple of years. All seven of those projects have signed incentive proposals with ESD and they are now spending money and carrying out their expansions.

The other seven projects are:

- NY BEST is moving full steam ahead at Eastman Business Park and they are getting \$1MM from ESD and some other monies from NYSERDA for about \$2.5MM. We have our Incentive proposal done for this project and it has been submitted to the company for their signature.
- The High Blood Pressure Collaborative project with Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency that Mr. Wegman and Mr. Strassburg mentioned earlier, the Incentive proposal is pending. The background work is done and we are getting ready to sign that with the agency.
- The Business Accelerator Cooperative with High Tech Rochester is the Business Incubation Model. We still have a few outstanding issues that they are trying to define exactly what will be included in that incentive proposal.
- The University of Rochester's Health Science Center for Computational Innovation, we are closing in on the final incentive proposal wording and we are getting close and that is for \$5MM.
- The Economic Gardening and Internal Harvesting, that's the business retention program that GRE is carrying out in helping stage two companies grow at a faster rate, is for \$200,000 and an incentive proposal has been done.
- The Finger Lakes Museum has an incentive proposal signed and we are moving forward with that and some EOC funding and other funding on that project.
- Seneca AgBio Energy Green Park, No Interest Refinancing from Revenue Bonds, they still need to sell those bonds so that is the stage they are in.

Mr. Seligman stated that was a good report and that this is our second year and we will be focusing on the implementation of the plan and our priorities as we move forward and that there may be some changes or some continuations of these projects that were funded.

Mr. Hamm gave a presentation on the public forums and CFA workshops that were held over the last month. We have had six out of seven public meetings already. We had three CFA Workshops in May and they were held in Geneva, Batavia and Rochester with more than 350 people that attended who were interested in hearing about state agency funding, applying for the funding and I think this will pay dividend that we have better applications this year. We have one more workshop on June 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm here at MCC. The state agency commissioner will start off with a presentation of the application process for the people and then we will break out into rooms where people can ask questions, get answers on specific state agency funding programs and this has been very helpful as last year we only held one session and we have had four this year.

Mr. Hamm stated that we've also had three public forums which were fairly well attended by 50-100 people at each session, again spreading them out in Batavia, Rochester and Geneva and thanked Mr. Peterson for doing the main presentation for all three forums. He also thanked Mr. Young, Mr. Griffin, and Ms. Oswald who gave remarks at the forums and gave a special thanks to Mr. Striebich who facilitated all of the Public Forums and the discussions were intense and well focused. During the public forums we asked two questions and we handed out our regional strategies. The first question was: Which strategies are most important and which should the Council implement first?

The results are as follows:

- Focus on workforce development. We are doing that with our new Workforce Development Workgroup. This was talked about at all three sessions and emphasis on workforce development, addressing regional workforce strategies in key industries.
- Addressing local and statewide barriers to growth and competitiveness, including exploring ways to reduce the cost of doing business by striking regional planning efforts, developing cooperative agreements and streamlining services.
- Developing systems that monitor and identify firms and sectors with high growth potential and be proactively engaging those companies to connect them with resources they need to access new markets and business models. This is Mr. Peterson's effort at GRE with the Economic Gardening Project.
- Expand access to capital.
- Developing programs and shared resources that allow closer collaboration between academia and industry scientists and driving those ideas that are coming out of our universities and commercialization of them.
- Address regional workforce shortages in key industries

The second question was more open ended and it asked the question: If there were any changes or refinements to plan, what do you think they should be to our strategies or was something missed. The responses we received were varied and across the board. These six items were mentioned the most often:

- Maintain a focus on start-ups and small businesses.
- Addition of development of rural broadband infrastructure to the plan.
- Address brain drain of young talent.
- More collaboration on and coordination of workforce development programs.
- Community development not only in the city's but also the rural areas with specific actions/projects
- More focus on K-12 education in terms of workforce development and developing a career pipeline.

Mr. Seligman stated there was one additional agenda item that was added and Mr. Seeley will give an update on the path Through History Project. Mr. Seeley stated that this initiative was announced last March by the Governor to better promote the State's vast inventory of historic based sites and, in the spirit and philosophy of the Regional Council efforts, what better way to promote them than to have the regions tell the State which site should be promoted. The workgroups across the state are composed of historians, historic site operators and some regional tourism people. Our first meeting will be hosted by Ms. Oswald in Livingston County on June 15<sup>th</sup>. The idea is to develop a separate Path Through History signage that would identify historic sites along the Thruway Corridor and then to the Interstate Corridors throughout the state. The workgroup will submit a plan to the Regional Council for review and sign off and the State would implement this plan. The State will use a number

of tools and resources to better promote the historic sites but will still rely on the regions for regional marketing strategies to promote the sites. This initiative is based off a study done last year which found that people coming from out of state to visit relatives or go on holiday wanted to visit these types of attractions and while we have a great inventory of assets in the state, they are grossly underutilized and we can use them as an economic development resource. Mr. Parker, the Director at Letchworth State park, is staffing this workgroup and will be working with Mr. McNary and myself and members of the workgroup. Mr. Seligman agreed with this and stated that people do get excited about these sites and that it is a question of how it's advertised.

Mr. Wegman stated that he truly appreciates the time the members of the Council shares to make this a better region and just wanted to make sure that everyone knows that he totally appreciates that.

Mr. Seligman stated he shared Mr. Wegmans appreciation and that for those that came in from the public that we changed the scheduling for the meetings in that we will start our meetings with the public sessions in the future and that we have cancelled a meeting scheduled for August 6<sup>th</sup> at Eastman Business Park and scheduled two additional meetings on July 23<sup>rd</sup> from 3pm to 5pm and August 13<sup>th</sup> from 3m to 5:30pm both to be held at MCC. We will be focusing on the work from the workgroups in terms of judging how we've done with our plan, putting new projects into the priority project pipeline and deciding which are the wisest to go forward with. Mr. Seligman also reiterated that Eastman Business Park still remains our top priority and we are convinced that given the large employment there and tremendous potential for growth, the configuration of support and infrastructure that is unique to the state and the nation, that it is a vital community resource that it is essential the Eastman Business Park continue and thrive as a mechanism for job creation and economic development in our region. It is clear that those in Albany understand how seriously we take Eastman Business Park and share our views of how important they are to our economic future.

Lt. Governor Duffy agreed that Eastman Business Park is very important and thanked everyone for attended. He thanked Tom Tobin from the Democrat and Chronicle as time and time again he attends the Regional Council meetings and writes about the work we are doing. He also recognized Mr. Wegman's work through Hillside Work Scholarships Program that celebrated 500 kids graduating through their program and Ms. Rosario Escher who celebrated with a scholarship gala this past weekend through the Ibero American Action League. This shows there are investments that are being made by people at this table into young people that are graduating and hopefully getting off to careers that this Council may be responsible for creating.