

## **Webster Economic Development Alliance**

### **Meeting Minutes from April 5, 2016**

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#### **PRESENT:**

Carmen Gumina, Ron Nesbitt, John Cahill, Robyn Whittaker, Ginny Nancy, Barry Howard, Chris Passero, Bill Horeth, Mike O'Connor, Ann Kowal, Matt Chatfield

Carmen Gumina welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Special Guests: Mark Peterson of Greater Rochester Enterprise and Vinnie Esposito from Empire State Development

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

Minutes from the meetings held on March 3, 2016 were reviewed with no changes. Approval of the minutes – moved by Ron Nesbitt; seconded by John Cahill - all approved.

#### **Financial Report:**

Matt Chatfield reviewed the financial report for the February 2016. Approval of Financial report – moved by Ron Nesbitt; and seconded by John Cahill– all approved.

#### **Staff Activity Report:**

Matt Chatfield provided an activity update for the month of March. Matt said he has been having preliminary discussions with UofR regarding a sports performance partnership with Higher Education and a Health Care institution. Matt explained this was one of the original 8 projects highlighted in the investment strategy outline during the Americas Best Communities Prize Competition. He said perhaps we can bring this to a more formalized arrangement between the school district and the community and do something really unique. This model project could end up at the West Campus of Xerox or it could be associated with the school. The role of the Alliance is to be the bridge between the relationships in the community to bring these discussions to together.

Matt said he met with Ron Nesbitt regarding the West Campus and he suggested the need to have some sort of health care campus which would serve the areas of Webster, North Penfield, Ontario, and Williamson which would be able to utilize those services as well but this continues to be explored. Matt said his role is like predevelopment. To identify the opportunity and then identify the person who would also see that opportunity and hand it over to them.

Matt said there is a great opportunity for Webster to benefit and contribute to the region's increasing start-up business activity with the assets and resources we have available in our community. A key question is how can we dovetail our assets and resources with what is taking place regionally; this supports the Alliance's continued relationship with Mark Paterson and his group from GRE and also with Vinnie Esposito and his group from ESD. An important next step is to improve the region's awareness of the opportunities in Webster.

Matt said he attended the March 23 Photonics meeting update at the Strong Museum to learn more about how the future of the Photonics industry could be a value to Webster. Matt said he still wants to learn what types of companies are interested, and who the companies are that need this kind of space. Matt asked Mark Peterson of Greater Rochester Enterprise and Vinnie Esposito from Empire State Development how Webster can best prepare our sites to be identified as priorities within the region. He also asked what sort of partnerships and relationships through their organizations can help assist the Alliance in moving in the right direction. Mr. Peterson said this is a very exciting and positive opportunity for the community, but it will take time, maybe several years, to develop what is the opportunity in Photonics.

Matt said we have the West Campus Facility and we have another site that is 150 acres that is industrial and it is only 2000 feet from the Water Plant. One is pure development, brand new and the other is a redevelopment or revitalization. Matt asked which property the Alliance should focus on.

Mr. Peterson said the best way for the green build is to get everything ready that you can such as pre SEQR up to the point of project specifics and things that don't cost a lot of money. This would get the property ready to be competitive within a short timeframe.

The existing properties become a bit of a challenge. They are not easy to deal with because you have to make a lot of updates. It was stressed that this is a process in which regional partners such as GRE and ESD can assist. Let GRE help with resources and making sure Webster's assets are out there and the demographics are on our website. New York State has the talent, we have the smart people, we have a very competitive cost structure, and it is a great place to live. To have a strategic vision is key and assets such as chilled water, advanced manufacturing, and building a relationship with utilities like RG&E is also important. Another competitive advantage would be the ability to fast track something like planning and zoning related to a property.



**Meeting Adjourned:** Carmen Gumina adjourned the meeting at 8:40 a.m.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, May 5, 2016 – 7:30 A.M. / Webster Chamber of Commerce.

Respectfully submitted,

*John Cahill*

Secretary, WCCED  
JC/ja