

**City of Olean  
Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Project Meeting Minutes  
Second Public Information Meeting  
Council Chambers, Olean Municipal Building  
Thursday, January 10, 2008  
7:00 p.m.**

**BOA Steering Committee Attendance:**

Dave McCoy, TVGA

Daniel Riker, TVGA

John Sayegh, Catt. Empire Zone

Mary George, City of Olean, CD Program Coordinator

Philip Smith, City of Olean, Planning Board Member

Marty Doster, NYSDEC, Regional Hazardous Waste Remediation Engineer

Eric Wohlers, Catt. County Dept. of Health

Chris Crawford, Catt. County Planning, Tourism & Economic Development

Tom Barnes, Southern Tier West

Don Benson, Benson Construction, Owner

**Staff:** Keri Kerper, City of Olean, Sr. Acct. Clerk Stenographer

**Media:** John Eberth, Olean Times Herald

**Members of the Public:** See attached.

**I. Welcome/Introductions**

John Sayegh called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Mr. Sayegh introduced himself to the public and thanked everyone for taking time to attend the second Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Public Information Meeting. The Olean BOA Fact Sheet prepared by TVGA Consultants was distributed to those in attendance.

Mr. Sayegh explained that this is the end of the Pre-Nomination Study phase of the BOA program and there are approximately 500 acres in the target area that were inventoried and analyzed, with the goal of establishing a vision for redevelopment. He explained that in addition to this survey, focus was given to the 62-acre parcel of land known as the Felmont-Agway site, which ExxonMobil recently acquired. Mr. Sayegh noted that preliminary concept plans were initiated for this target area in light of ExxonMobil's acquisition and potential redevelopment efforts. He indicated that ExxonMobil is working on a remediation plan for these sites in coordination with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). Mr. Sayegh commented that this property is strategically located and everyone involved could benefit from the redevelopment of the property.

Mr. Sayegh advised that the draft Pre-Nomination Study is available for review in the City Clerk's Office and Community Development Office, Olean Public Library and at the Chamber of Commerce.

In response to a question, Mr. Sayegh explained that ExxonMobil is preparing a voluntary remediation plan, adding the company is taking charge and exercising good corporate citizenship to return these sites to productive use. Mr. Sayegh advised that part of the agreement that ExxonMobil has with DEC is that the company has agreed to reimburse the Urban Renewal Agency (URA) for approximately \$35,000-\$40,000 in expenses related to site investigation on one of the former Felmont sites and has also agreed to reimburse the State for approximately \$190,000-\$200,000 for its costs as well.

Mr. Sayegh then turned the meeting over to Daniel Riker and Dave McCoy of TVGA. Mr. Riker referred the members and public in attendance to the PowerPoint Presentation and gave a brief overview of the BOA Program. He explained that the Department of State (DOS) and the NYSDEC administer the BOA Program, which gives municipalities monies for planning and access to environmental consulting firms. Mr. Riker advised that Olean would be one of the first communities to submit this draft report for final review by DEC/DOS. He then outlined the three steps under the BOA Program: 1) Pre-Nomination Study; 2) Nomination Phase; and 3) Implementation Strategy and/or Site Assessments).

Mr. Riker referred to the PowerPoint Presentation slide outlining BOA Project Tasks and explained that sometime ago, Olean completed the project scoping, and formed a Steering Committee with the intent to get people involved who are a part of the local economy and government in order to receive input on this project. He advised that throughout the process Olean has met with these stakeholders on various aspects related to the planning process.

Mr. McCoy referred to the slide that states the Community Vision that was developed by the Steering Committee. He explained that this vision sets the stage for the future planning efforts and is a good foundation to recognize the project goals and objectives.

Mr. McCoy expressed thanks to Cattaraugus County Department of Planning, Economic Development and Tourism for sharing the GIS system information. He then directed attention to the Community Context Map, which illustrated the relationship of the study area to the City of Olean, Cattaraugus County and New York State. Mr. McCoy noted that the Proposed BOA also extended into the Town of Olean.

Mr. McCoy then discussed the data that was collected as a part the preliminary analysis of the Pre-Nomination Study, starting with the Existing Land Use Map, which depicted what land uses currently exist in the study area. Referencing the Existing Zoning Map, Mr. McCoy explained that the study area was predominantly zoned for industrial or commercial land uses and generally surrounded by residential and retail areas. Referring to the natural resources of the study area, Mr. McCoy noted the locations of the Two Mile and Olean Creeks and their floodplains. He indicated that with exception of the creeks, there were no state or federal mapped wetlands in the study area. He also noted that the study area was relatively flat and the soils were well drained gravelly soils, which makes the area very well suited for development.

In terms of the Underutilized Sites Location Map, Mr. McCoy explained that this map depicted vacant and potentially underutilized parcels that carry “environmental baggage” and thus may be a deterrent to redevelopment. The most significant underutilized property was the ExxonMobil Legacy Site, which had environmental concerns that could complicate or impede redevelopment. He explained that although ExxonMobil never actually owned or did business on the property, they had acquired the assets of the Standard Oil of New York (SOCONY) refinery. Because of that relationship, ExxonMobil also inherited the liabilities of the SOCONY refinery, and as a result, was a responsible party. Hence the property is called a “legacy site”.

Mr. McCoy then discussed the Land Ownership Patterns Map and explained that the area is a mix of public/private ownership. He indicated that there was approximately 10% public ownership until ExxonMobil acquired the former Felmont Oil property, which was a part of the SOCONY refinery. Mr. McCoy commented that increasing private ownership and bringing these parcels under the tax rolls was one of the City’s goals. Mr. McCoy also referred to the James V. Kirkpatrick Incubator Facility identified on the map as a potential site for future private investment and commented that this is now coming to fruition.

Mr. McCoy then discussed the Conceptual Site Plans. He noted that site planning would typically occur later in the BOA process; however, early in the Pre-Nomination Study it was agreed that preliminary conceptual plans should be drafted to assist potential developers. This was particularly important because of ExxonMobil’s commitment to clean up the former SOCONY refinery site. He commented that during the public information process many citizens expressed the need for different types of development, so three conceptual plans were developed to help visualize the public’s vision for the study area:

- Office Park Reuse Plan – This plan blended existing industrial and commercial uses with office parks and was intended to bring technology based employment and other value added jobs to the community;
- Commercial Reuse Plan - This plan focused largely on retail development with office developments; and
- Mixed Use Plan – The Mixed Use Plan provided for a wide variety of uses including alternative energy (windmills, solar farms, etc.), and the construction of hotels and restaurants.

Mr. McCoy then discussed the outcomes Pre-Nomination Study. He explained that the preliminary data collected during the Pre-Nomination Study were presented to the public as a part of the public participation process, and that outcomes of the Pre-Nomination Study were based upon an analysis of the assets of the study area and public comment. He noted that it was important to communicate the Community’s vision for redevelopment of the study area so that when City Officials and potential developers work together they can promote a mutually beneficial project. Mr. McCoy referred to City of Olean’s attributes, including the quality of life and a well educated work force. He also discussed the study area’s assets, which included existing physical infrastructure

such as utilities, highways and railways. He reiterated that it is important to strive to work together and promote Olean in a positive way.

Mr. McCoy then summarized the recommendations of the Pre-Nomination Study, which included:

- Complete environmental assessments at strategic properties within the study area;
- Complete market analysis and appraisals at strategic properties within the study area;
- Continue to build positive relationships with existing businesses and industries;
- Strive to promote City as a community with a business-friendly environment with ample natural resources;
- Seek out developers that have successful track records with producing sustainable developments and strive to build relationships with them;
- Ensure that zoning and other land use regulations promote and encourage the types of commercial and industrial development that the City would like to attract and retain;
- Foster relationships between local businesses, educational institutions and work force development organizations;
- Seek not-for-profit organizations that have successful track records with producing sustainable developments and strive to build relationships with them;
- Build upon existing relationships and strive to fully utilize the resources available from the existing planning and development entities;
- Continue to maintain City's physical infrastructure and work to eliminate any capacity constraints as they become known;
- Undertake a Feasibility Study for the extension of Constitution Avenue;
- Encourage private investment within the study area and increase the City's tax base;
- Encourage Cytec to develop its vacant property or release it for development;
- Encouraged the Town of Olean to participate in future BOA activities; and
- Continue to work closely with Indeck to identify opportunities for future development.

Mr. McCoy referred to New York State's State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) and the long Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) was being prepared by TVGA. The BOA program assists communities with the SEQR process and suggested that the City may want to take advantage of this assistance by preparing a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) to facilitate future development. This process could expedite redevelopment by defining development thresholds and creating "shovel ready" sites, which would not require a detailed, site specific environmental review.

Mr. McCoy then asked for input from members of the Steering Committee and the public.

Mr. Jeff Peterson questioned the timeframe for demolition of the buildings located on the former Agway parcels. Ms. George explained that the City of Olean has applied for \$1 million in state RestoreNY funding to go towards demolishing nine abandoned buildings

on the former Agway sites, which will have a total project cost of approximately \$2.5 million. She advised that the City should receive notice within the next week on the status of the application.

Marty Doster explained that DEC has been working in partnership with ExxonMobil on the 60+ acres referred to as the former Felmont-Agway sites. He explained that, in terms of a timeline, there are environmental studies that need to be done which will take the majority of 2008. Mr. Doster advised that the people who signed in for the meeting will receive facts sheets and updates throughout this separate process.

In response to a question, Ms. George explained that the RestoreNY is a relatively new state sponsored program and under the first round of funding the City received \$750,000 for redevelopment of the former Manufacturers Hanover building. She noted the environmental release on this project was just given, so she is unable to give a timeline for this second round application. She indicated that ExxonMobil has committed to the remaining costs of demolition of the buildings. Ms. George suggested that the Cattaraugus Empire Zone map should be incorporated into the plan. Mr. Sayegh agreed that most of the sites are located in the Empire Zone, which will entice developers.

In response to a question, Mr. McCoy advised that the BOA program is very flexible and there is nothing that restricts development as this process continues.

Mr. Doster explained that City leadership recognized the use of New York State dollars to do this planning study which, if it proceeds through steps 2 and 3 will take 3 years to accomplish after which the City will have a solid long term plan which could incorporate infrastructure needs, zoning recommendations, etc.

Mr. McCoy reiterated under this comprehensive planning effort, development will not be stalled by the BOA program and companies like ExxonMobil can advance its remediation and redevelopment efforts.

Mr. McCoy thanked everyone for coming and since there were no further comments or questions, the meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.