

**City of Dunkirk Economic Development Meeting Minutes  
Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
4:00PM – Mayor’s Conference Room**

**Present:**

- Natalie Luczkowiak-1<sup>st</sup> Ward Councilwoman (Chair of Committee)
- Marty Bamonto – 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward Councilman
- Vince DeJoy- City of Dunkirk Planning & Dev. Director
- Edward Hayes-City of Dunkirk Planning & Dev. Deputy Director
- Nicole Clift -City of Dunkirk CDBG Community Development Planner

**Also Present:**

- Wilfred Rosas - City of Dunkirk Mayor
- Marsha Beach – Fiscal Affairs Officer
- Randy Woodbury – DPW Director
- Rich Morrisroe – City Attorney
- Chuck Bell, Consultant - Harrison Studio’s
- Steve Rees – Revitalize Dunkirk
- Mary Rees – Revitalize Dunkirk
- Paul Somerfeldt – Revitalize Dunkirk
- Jim Fisher – Revitalize Dunkirk
- Roy Davis
- John Dolce
- Frank Beach
- Dave McCoy, Chautauqua County
- Rebecca Wurster, Chautauqua County
- Randy Woodbury
- Paul Somerfeldt
- Mary Reese
- Erica Munson
- Kate Wdowiasz
- Steve Reese
- Kathy Jankowski
- Pete Pinkoski
- Richard Makuch
- Michele Stalworth
- MJ Stanford, Observer Today
- Kevin Kearns, FSU

**Agenda:**

Meeting was brought to order at 4:02pm by Councilwoman Natalie Luckowiak

**Dunkirk Harbor Update:**

Dunkirk Harbor was 1st on the agenda. Vince DeJoy talks of the harbor agitation and its negative results on the harbor and boats on the harbor. He mentions correction options and Congressional actions necessary. Vince introduces Dave McCoy, the Chautauqua County Watershed

Coordinator, and Rebecca Wurster, the Chautauqua County Planning Coordinator. There are slides with the presentation.

Vince states the County is in conversation with our City, along with Army Corps of Engineers and Senators Schumer and Gillibrand regarding this subject.

Dave McCoy speaks, he states “Dunkirk is a recreational harbor therefore, not a sense of urgency for state. There has been damage to boats and docks because of the ricocheting of waves into the inner harbor. Least costly alternative - Wave Attenuator(honeycomb) - to calm the inner harbor - 500 foot wide and 100-foot-long honeycomb structure. This is essential to a thriving pier and our city. Through the 2022 Water Act, we could access funding, must begin now to take the steps such as permits, etc.”

Rebecca Wurster speaks, she states “Dunkirk Harbor didn’t exceed 50% of commercial activity; therefore, the US Army Corps of Engineers could not help us. \$1 million dollars is the estimated cost. We could look to defederalizing a portion of this channel in order to access other funds for this project. With storms arriving every year, something needs to be done and Dunkirk deserves this.”

Vince also states that Senator Schumer begins legislative action every two years for the Water Act funds. Permitting process should begin states Dave McCoy. Rebecca states a preliminary engineering study would need to be completed before we send in an application for the Water Act funding.

### **Dunkirk Multi-Modal Transportation Hub Update:**

The meeting moves to the second agenda, the Dunkirk Multi-Modal Transportation Hub. An Amtrak station is at the center of this discussion. An initial Feasibility Study and Budget Scope is necessary from a qualified consultant. We are in collaboration with SUNY Fredonia.

A Multi-Modal Transportation Hub has been a concept around this area for quite some time. SUNY has had an interest to develop a stop here in Dunkirk for quite some time too. Gary Landrio and Kevin Kearns from SUNY Fredonia, along with Randy Gustafson, with Stone Consulting, a specialist in railroad projects, are our zoom visitors today. Vince states Amtrak does pass through and would make sense to have a stop here.

Randy states Amtrak is a different type of corporation from the past. After visiting Dunkirk, it is best to put the station away from the CSX freight trains. Gary Landrio states he has been involved with railroad projects his entire career, since 1975. Kevin states how it will connect us from East to West of the US, and the importance of that. He states the benefits for the University such as visits of potential students and also, their commutes during the year. He also states the University will do everything they can to support it.

Senator Schumer champions this effort, who has talked with Vince and the Mayor. We have his support. We need \$20,000 for a feasibility study and budget scope, so a resolution from the council is needed to begin this initial stage. The station will be on a north part of the city, and not alongside of any freight trains, such as CSX. This was talked about by Gary Landrio from SUNY Fredonia. He also states his entire career has been working on railroad operations and projects. The potential economic impact will be a game changer and everyone will benefit. It’s a once in a lifetime opportunity.

The Senate supports us - as it connects US, and we are on the radar of Amtrak. We can use Biden infrastructure money. Immunity Bio supports this wholeheartedly, and we will be seeking other support.

Roy Davis, one of the citizens present at the meeting, and passenger rail enthusiast, states the train would go to Depew near the Galleria and not downtown Buffalo, but would go to downtown Rochester, Syracuse, and Manhattan, among other places. Roy is knowledgeable with history of the railroad. He states last year Amtrak announced Connects US, NY to Cleveland services and within this list is a stop in Chautauqua County.

How much would this be a revenue game changer be for us? For example, the first two years, Amtrak covers all operational costs. Thereafter, any short falls, NYS will allocate moneys; however, that has not happened yet. Amtrak also builds stations.

#### **CDBG-CV Funding Application Update:**

CDBG-CV Funding Application, under the CARES Act, NYS HCR (Homes & Community Renewal) proposes to utilize \$78 million dollars of CDBG funds. This next subject on the agenda involves funding to be utilized to help communities throughout the state to safely reopen and restart local economies in the wake of COVID-19. We will utilize the Harrison Studio (Chuck Ball) to prepare the application submission.

A new funding source is now available post covid, it is the CARES ACT - Harrison Studios will prepare the application. We will use it for a program to assist small business such as direct grants for them. We can and also will use these funds to improve air and water filtration for the city. We need council to schedule a public hearing - before the first March council meeting.

Chuck of Harrison Studio speaks, he states he has familiarity with Dunkirk - and wanted to help us take advantage of this funding. Once we have the Public Hearing and move by council, then the study and application by the Harrison Studio can be completed.

#### **Adjournment:**

Natalie asks if there is a motion to adjourn. Mary Bomanto makes a motion to adjourn, Frank Beach seconds. Meeting adjourned at 5:06pm

**Next Meeting:** Monday, March 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm