

Dear Friends of the Albany Waterway,

This has again been a busy quarter as we enter the Fall gaining momentum with events, building our organization and understanding our challenges and opportunities.

This report will bring you current on our work, ask for your continued support, request you attend our November 18<sup>th</sup> event at the NYS Museum, and ask that you contact me with any questions.

#### Process

The NYS DOT study has entered a quiet phase although we continue to connect with the co leaders, provide them with updated material and be available to refine their thinking.

We do not expect any public preliminary results until the Spring, 2024.

In the meantime we remain closely engaged and meeting with the NYS Canals Corporation, the New York Power Authority, which has assumed overall responsibility for the New York State canals, The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation on issues we have identified as relevant to it with our proposal and are awaiting a meeting with representatives of the Governor. Since our proposal has significant economic benefits we are seeking a meeting with the Empire State Development Corporation and with its' regional leaders who will lead the distribution of local funding in 2024.of the distribution of regional funding in 2024

#### Partnerships

We have engaged academic institutions in our vision. RPI and SUNY POLY are committed to examine the engineering and related challenges while the Albany Law School is studying the legal issues presented by the proposal.

In addition the noted Albany firm of Clough Harbor Associates is preparing a report on the location of various underground utilities to assist in our plann

#### Recent Presentations

On September 19<sup>th</sup> Len Tantillo, the Chair and Steven Talbot participated in a panel hosted by the New York Archives Magazine Online Speakers Series hosted and led by Tom Ruller, retired NYS Archivist. Recently we sent you the link to this very compelling review of the Hudson River's impact on Albany, the original terminus of the Erie Canal, in the past and looking towards the future. WE provided the link to you last week. We have had many positive reviews and the NYSDOT has found much to like with it as they continue their work. A recording of the program is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QWJOCwykdJI> or Search You Tube for the New York State Archives site and it will be available there.

In preparing for this I was struck by the work in building the original Erie Canal. It was completed over 200 years ago, against great odds and with rudimentary tools. Particularly impressive were the challenges overcome in the miles long Montezuma Swamp. There disease bearing mosquitos killed over a hundred workers. Next up was the challenge of cutting through the hard rock Niagara Escarpment in Lockport. After the engineers settled on a revolutionary system of 5 locks to ascend the 70 foot wall the builders were able to hew out the canal path. Upon completion they realized that to accommodate the Niagara River, a source of canal water, they would need to lower the canal down by 10 feet. This required blasting and other methods to create the multi mile Deep Cut. Again, many more were killed in this effort. The return on investment was realized in 9 years!!

And I thought.... And we are only seeking to build a waterway for less than 2 miles on flat public land!!!!!! In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century!!!!

Seems like this is so much easier than building the original canal, particularly with the tremendous return on the investment! In Buffalo, for example, \$50m in public funds has resulted in \$300m in private investment, on top of nearly 2,000 housing units, increased public revenue from taxes and good jobs.

And this is why we need your ongoing public support, continuing to bring our message to public officials.

#### Future Presentations

We will be speaking to the Ten Broeck Triangle Group, the American Council of Engineering Companies, the Empire State Heritage Corridor, whose director of communications will be a leader in the 2025 World Canals Conference to be held in Buffalo. We will also be meeting with the Parks New York team where there is considerable interest in our Lock One initiative. This could lead to funding opportunities.

#### November 18<sup>th</sup> Conference

You are all invited to an event to be held at the Huxley Theater in the NYS Museum on the afternoon of Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup>. While still in the planning stages, the tentative program will open with a presentation on Lock One, located at the northern terminus of our vision, partially under the Modern Press building and adjacent street, where water will flow back into the Hudson River. Andrew Wolfe and Denis Foley will present their study of this intact, though buried, granite landmark. It was here that New York State became the Empire State, Albany a leading port and New York City became the leading commercial center of America. This will be followed by an update presented by Len Tantillo. The day will conclude with a panel exploring the impact of water on other cities. This will be chaired by Paul Grondahl, the leader of the NYS Writers Institute. Panel members are still in formation but will include former Buffalo mayor and state senator Tony Masiello as well as representatives from other cities where the return on investment has transformed cities.

We will be providing more details in the future and urge you to RSVP for our planning purposes only.

#### Final Thoughts

Please take time to view the NYS Archives presentation either using the link provided earlier or going to YouTube and searching for the Archives site where the presentation will be featured.

We continue to seek a grant writer to further our work so please respond with any prospects.

We continue to urge you to recruit Friends, now over 600, by either directing them to the website or to the Chair.

If you can attend our November 18<sup>th</sup> afternoon event, please send me an e-mail at the address below. As always, you continue to inspire us and we remain grateful for your support!!!

Stay Well!!!

BJ Costello

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