Economic Zone Meeting
Glens Falls Region
September 4, 2003

Meeting Summary

Attendees:

Wayne LaMothe  Warren County Planning  518-761-6410
Ted Thompson  NYSDOT Region 1  518-388-0443
Willy Grimmke  Washington County DPW  518-746-2440
Larry Shajuyigbe  NYSDOT Region 1  518-388-0438
Chris Round  Queensbury EDC  518-761-8221
Aaron Frankenfeld  A/GFTC  518-746-2199
Mark Galough  Washington County Planning  518-746-2292
Marshall Stevens  Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport  518-742-5995
Bill Remington  Warren County DPW  518-761-6556
Len Fosbrook  Warren County EDC  518-761-6007
Todd Shimkus  Adirondack Regional Chamber  518-798-1761
Jim Martin  City of Glens Falls  518-761-3864
Maurice Rasheed  NYSDOT  518-457-3429
William Crowell  Parsons, Project Manager of Parsons/CHA JV  212-266-8507
Sophia Rakowsky  Parsons  212-266-8520
Tom Karis  CHA  518-453-3981
Shelley Lang  CHA  518-453-8242

Local Economy/Economic Issues

- Key industry sectors:
  - Tourism is the No. 1 industry for the Glens Falls region. Goal is to make the area a year-round tourist attraction (80% of land w/in Warren County is located in Adirondack Park)
  - Agriculture (approximately 30% of industry in Washington County)
  - Paper
  - Slate
  - Medical Device Plants (e.g. CR Bard and Boston Scientific)
  - Want to be involved in the development of Sematech
  - Insurance/Finance
  - Retail
  - Retirement Communities (primarily in Queensbury)
  - This area still has successful manufacturing industry if you look at it in terms of sales and exports.

- Key constraint to industry growth is inadequate “shovel ready” development sites, the cost of doing business, and lack of skilled labor base.

- This region has no desire to become a “bedroom community” for the Albany metropolitan area. Spin-off development from Sematech is sought, but big box-type development, such as Target, ACE Hardware, etc., is not.
• **Infrastructure Issues**
  - Lack of adequate water, sewer and arterial roadway infrastructure in rural areas and outside of villages/towns prohibits economic and residential growth.
  - Lack of natural gas, especially in Washington County.
  - Lack of access to fiberoptics/cable lines.

• **Tourism Issues**
  - Gore Mountain can ski 8,000 people, but can only accommodate parking for 4,500 vehicles. Improved public transit (park-and-ride type facilities) for skiers would be beneficial.
  - Signage along I-87 for tourist destination points is poor to nonexistent.

• **Highway Issues**
  - Improve existing and future regional vehicular mobility.
  - Congestion on Northway between Interchanges 8 and 1.
  - Interchange 18 is currently undergoing limited bridge widening over I-87.
  - Need improved access to Glens Falls Hospital (via Interchange 18). This hospital is the largest employer in the area and the largest hospital in the corridor.
  - Need to widen Corinth Road to 3 lanes west of I-87.
  - Congestion at Interchanges 18, 19 and 20 in Glens Falls area, primarily due to their connection to Route 9 retail services and access to Route 149/4.
  - Most of the major employers are located on Route 4; therefore, truck access to Route 4 is key.
  - Need improved transportation links to affordable housing areas (e.g. create “gateway communities”).
  - Route 9/Route 254 is most congested intersection in the area.
  - Need to improve access/linkage to Northway in the northern and southern portions of Washington County to help small manufacturing industries that support big industries.
  - Need improved access to I-87, rail facilities, airports and the canal.

• **Rail/Transit Issues**
  - Scenic Rail Project – connection to Saratoga is necessary and very important.
  - Changes in regulatory issues are needed to improve rail service.
  - Need to publicize that passenger rail service is provided at Fort Edward and need to increase frequency of this service.
  - Trolley service was implemented in Lake George to manage the traffic congestion. The usage of this service has been successful.
  - Considering new bus service between Glens Falls and Gore Mountain. There are many unused large parking lots in the area that could be used for park and ride lots (e.g. Great Escape).
• Service Area Issues
  o The Warren County visitor service area is antiquated. Need a better facility and staffing to accommodate its services.

• Aviation Issues
  o Warren County Airport
    ▪ An aviation park (maintenance) is being considered for a 90-acre parcel within Warren County Airport.
    ▪ Need to extend the existing 5,000 foot runway another 1,000 feet to get bigger planes in and out of the airport under all weather conditions. It will also help to accommodate the emerging corporate aviation market.
    ▪ The airport has capacity issues whenever there is a conference in the area.
  o New corporate airplanes are being developed that carry about 5 passengers and can travel cross-country with fewer re-fueling stops. Many corporations are considering investing in this new airplane for business travel.

• Other Issues/Discussion
  o Currently promoting 2 industrial parks that have rail access.
  o Noise remediation is needed along I-87, especially if tandem trucks are added.

• Priorities
  o Improve Interchange 18 and create community gateway into Glens Falls.
  o Improve access to airports and 2 new industrial parks.
  o Completion of the Scenic Rail Project with a connection to Saratoga.
  o Improvements to the following east/west roadways are needed. There are no concerns that upgrading these facilities will disproportionately benefit Vermont; the improvements are needed to maintain the regional economy.
    ▪ Expand Route 4 to a 4-lane highway to match existing 4-lane highway in Vermont.
    ▪ Route 254 is a heavily traveled roadway that needs to be expanded to a 5-lane cross-section.
    ▪ Congestion issues on Route 149 need to be addressed. During the summer, trucks will use Interchange 17 and travel through Fort Edward to get to Vermont, which is a detour around traffic congestion at Interchange 20 (Route 149)
    ▪ Widen Corinth Road west of I-87.
  o Designate truck routes and provide any infrastructure improvements needed to these routes.
  o Expand commuter corporate flight service at local airports.
  o Improve rail service.
  o Infrastructure (sewer/water).