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Planning Commission  
City of Jamestown, ss:

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Proceedings by Authority

State of New York,  
Mayor's Conference Room

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission for the City of Jamestown, New York was held on Tuesday, March 17, 2015 at 3:30 p.m.

Members Present: Chairman Paul Whitford, Joe Trusso, James N. Olson, Regina Brackman, Paul Andalora, Jeff Lehman, Jeff Nelson.

Members Absent:

Others Present: Bill Rice, Jeff Hollern, Vince DeJoy, Paul Hedin, Tom Benson, Joe Rollman

Chairman Whitford called the meeting to order.

**RIVERWALK TRAIL PHASE VI-STAIR ALTERNATIVE**

Mr. Lehman: This is part of the phase 6 of the Riverwalk Project. We had a staircase designed in the preliminary designs and meeting with the DOT they recommended that we put in a ramp to keep it all handicap accessible. I think you all got copies of the plans. It's a switchback ramp that comes off of the east end of the Sixth Street bridge, drops down into the parking lot behind the Park's building.

Mr. Nelson: How's that going to work up there? Have you thought about with the pedestrians and no lights close by and everything else, what's going to happen with that?

Mr. Lehman: A lighting plan is part of this project Jeff. It will be lit like Third Street on Christmas. It's pretty straightforward it's just a change in the original plan.

Mr. Nelson: I thought you were talking about bicyclists and riding a bicycle upstairs is difficult so it's really nice that you've changed to a ramp.

Mr. Lehman: We're backpedaling, but the original plan had stairs with an area to walk your bike down.

Mr. Nelson: It's more fun to ride.

Mr. Lehman: Actually that's our biggest concern is they don't want people riding on it. We're planning on starting that within the next couple weeks as far as the project goes.

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Mr. Whitford: And we did get communications from Ed Rotkowski from the DOT that they concur with Jamestown or the lead Agency and if we have any questions certainly they're available.

Mr. Rice: For any environmental impacts that concur with the SEQR form, the details for the designs are going to be worked out through the permitting process that they go through with the DOT.

Mr. Lehman: It's pretty straightforward.

Mr. Whitford: It's better that we work toward ADA compliant with the initial plans than deal with that later.

Mr. Nelson moved, seconded by Mr. Trusso to approve the Environmental Assessment Form.

Carried 7-0

### **NATIONAL COMEDY CENTER**

Mr. Benson: Thanks a lot for giving us the opportunity to come and talk to you about this. I think some very important things have happened recently that have made us shift from maybe someday we'll do this project to we are going to do this project so we need to really get down to the details like site plan approval and all that stuff. So Paul and Joe from Clark Patterson Lee are with me. I'll talk a little bit about the project and then when we get into the site itself, I'll turn it over to those guys and they can talk about that and specifically answer questions with respect to that. (Mr. Benson provided a power point presentation on the project.)

What you're looking at there is the rendering of how the Comedy Center will look from the top of the old Grant's building basically. The building on the left, not the one with Lucy on the front, but the one next to that is obviously the old BPU building. The building with Lucy on the front is a new addition that will be built on the front. That would be the entrance to the attraction. There will be a connector that takes folks from the BPU building into the east wing of the Train Station and then they'll circulate around back to go over to the west wing and then they'll exit out the front door of the train station. They'll also be using the track master which is the next level down in the back for adult comedy stuff. Obviously comedy has a lot of adult themed material that you just can't ignore if you're going to have a National Comedy Center, but the designers have artfully put that down in the next level so that you'd have to – it won't have access to everybody and it'll be on the level that you'd really have to search for to find. It's about 35,000 square feet of attraction space all in. It's now fully populated in terms of all the components have now been put together by the designer from the company down in Cincinnati called Jack Rouse. Back in December when New York State granted us \$1.5 million for the project, that's really when it took the turn from development stage to reality because what that meant by New York State's approval is that this project is now absolutely a part of New York State's long-term strategic tourism and economic development strategy. So instead of us saying hey this is a good project, now it's the governor of the state saying we agree with that and so we're going to support it and we're part of the I Love New York campaign now and the importance of that is since there are 8 million people a year that come to Niagara Falls, with all

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the stuff going on in downtown Buffalo now which is all good and we have all the wineries and things along the lake from Buffalo down to this neck of the woods, along with the other attractions that are in Jamestown and our vicinity, this project has now been kind of a link to the southern anchor of that strategy to try to keep a chunk of those 8 million people in western New York just one more day because that one more day translates into enormous economic benefits and kind of percolates through our whole world.

The estimated economic benefit for this; the attendance is estimated to be about 114,000 people a year once it's operational and normalized. That translates into about \$23 million a year of economic impact not counting things like the hotel development or new restaurants that can open up and the entrepreneurial stuff that is really why we're doing all of this. This isn't the be all end all this is just the impetus that hopefully will stimulate the rest of the fit out if you will of the town and all of western New York. With New York State's approval, our biggest foundation partners basically said okay this project is now a go, go spend the money as if we had all the funds that we need to do this which we're still on the fund raising scheme, but they said go and don't stop, get the rest of the design work done as fast as you can so the attraction people are working on schematic designs so that's a June 30<sup>th</sup> target date, they're working hand in hand with the Clark Patterson guys to do the schematic design for the shell basically if you will and the new construction parts so around the end of June we'll have that next level of detailed work done. We did the phase 2 environmental review of the BPU property and thankfully those borings came back negative and as you guys probably all saw, we've entered into contract with the City to actually buy that piece of property. That is subject to having all the money raised and also the site plan approval, which we hope to get accomplished in July, is what we talked about right Bill? That's why we wanted to have this conversation today to talk about the concept, answer any preliminary questions because that process of honest to goodness moving down that road and trying to get to that point in July it's happening because it's our intent to have a groundbreaking ceremony August 1<sup>st</sup> which is the Saturday night of this year's festival when Seinfeld is in town and really trying to make that groundbreaking thing into a national scope event where we can get all kinds of promotional attention from hopefully around the country and around the world.

So that's kind of the timeline that we're on. Again, the important part of that is that we don't have all the money raised yet, but we have identified specific sources. Schumer's office is now very interested in helping us find federal grant money for the project and we're actively working with them. We're actively trying to syndicate new market tax credit equity and we're moving quickly down that path and we have other foundation asks that haven't come to fruition yet and so what we're trying to see in everybody's mind around here is that this is not someday this might happen, this is happening. And if we can get the groundbreaking done this August 1<sup>st</sup> then it is our intention to spend the next year actually constructing the facilities that need to be done and actually building the attraction parts and the goal is to open this the following August 1<sup>st</sup> 2016. So it's a fast track, but with a project like this one thing to remember right from the start is momentum is key and we really need to keep pushing and moving as fast as we possibly can to make this work. It's a team effort, the City has been great, they're on board. The County, the State, Schumer's office now and Reed's office are involved because it's finally, I think, sunk in that this really can be something that makes a difference here and it's not just because of this, I mean this is happening on top of all kinds of other things that have taken place over the past bunch of years, but this might be the thing that gets us over the hump from a mental state perspective so that like what's happening in Buffalo now, they've kind of turned the corner mentally. It's not a we never do anything right, nothing good ever happens around here, now

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their kids are staying in Buffalo after college, college kids moving to Buffalo which hasn't happened in a million years. In order for Jamestown to really get back to where it needs to be that's what we need. We need to have kids not check out in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and say I've got to go to college and then want to get away after that. We need to create an environment where they can actually have the ability to make a good living here and plan to be here and raise their family here and contribute to the rebirth.

So that's what it looks like from the outside. This is an overall site plan. Before I turn it over to these guys, last year we started the construction of Comedy Center Park and before snow came for real I think we got about 60% of the way there. This is the plaza area that's down at track level on the south side of the train station. If anybody's peeked over the railing you'll see that this railroad crossing system has been installed. A lot of the foundation work has been done for the benches and for the drainage. The stairs that come down from this parking lot were fabricated over the winter and then we'll start installing those over the next few weeks. Some of the landscaping has been done over here. This will all be new topsoil, seeded, landscaped. This pathway will come down and connect to the existing Riverwalk and will be lighted and that should all, depending on the weather obviously, be done by Memorial Day-ish. If you go down there and take a look at that space it's really never been used, at least in my lifetime. It's amazing how fantastic that space really is. That will change lots of things in and of itself. So that will be ready to go around springtime, Memorial Day. We'll use that to program stuff during the festival in August and then here's the rest of the footprint of how the National Comedy Center looks with this being the BPU existing building, this is the new addition on the front, a connector that goes between the two and obviously the existing footprint of the train station itself.

Last week, Joe and I went up to see SHPO in Albany to present these preliminary designs and Bill and Paul were on the phone here and thankfully the folks at SHPO were really excited about this. They embraced the design, didn't see any issues with it and so we've got, obviously they play an important part here because the train station is a certified historic structure that just went through a tax credit program itself and so it's important to make sure they are endorsing what we're doing before we got too far down the design road and they did so now we've got the green light to get the rest of the design nailed down.

Mr. Rollman: This is kind of an enlarged plan of the site development around the new facility and the BPU building. As you can see, we're proposing developing what is now Rose Alley into more of a pedestrian-oriented mall space. It will be a plaza area of seating, again it will provide space for programming different events through the National Comedy Center. Looking at the front, the corner of Second and Washington, again you've got more of a pedestrian-oriented gathering space of a pedestrian plaza out front there framing the building. In terms of what we're doing on-site, we're utilizing a lot of green infrastructure technologies for storm water mitigation. So any runoff generated on site we're embracing the new and upcoming technologies as far as rain gardens, that sort of thing.

By in large, this site development around the building is really geared toward creating pedestrian space that would be usable in all shapes and sizes and forums for any performances or gatherings around this corner. We'll really dress out that very prominent corner of Washington and Second Streets. We're currently working through the site development in terms of creating it out and really getting into the nuts and bolts of the work, paying particular attention to make sure that it's all ADA accessible and easy to navigate.

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Mr. Rice: Can you talk a little bit about the connection underneath the bridge as well as the patio area behind the BPU building?

Mr. Rollman: Sure. To the south of the BPU building, it kind of shows up as a green mass projected. It's being planned as a pedestrian terrace off the south side of the building so again there will be seating, gathering space out there. There's a stair system that connects from there down to the lower plaza that's behind the train station that's under construction right now so those two spaces will essentially be connected. As Bill indicated where Rose Alley is we have that pedestrian mall that comes down towards the connecting link and then there is a passageway that allows you to pass underneath that connecting link and access back to the south side terrace or down to the train station. That lower elevation there where Tom has the arrow is the passage.

Mr. Benson: The connector actually plugs into one of the garage door openings as opposed to creating a new opening on the east side of the train station. SHPO really kind of loved that idea.

Mr. Rollman: Yes we're not creating any new perforations on that side we're just kind of using the existing opening.

Mr. Benson: And this is where the pedestrian walkway will eventually go through so on the other side of that if you're walking through that towards the park, the stair system there, additional ramp there and the elevator there and then you'll have the other set of stairs that's being built as we speak on the east side so you'll be able to get down to track level from both sides of the train station without having to go through the building itself.

Mr. Rice: The center concourse of the existing former railroad station is still public access points all the way to that main concourse and all the way down to track level as required. So there's another access point to be utilized.

Mr. Whitford: I'm just wondering; it's like you're a separate entity from the train station, but how much collaboration is there at this point between what your focus is and the train station and the possible excursions and how you market each other? As part of the entire plan in that area.

Mr. Benson: Let me address a couple things there. The first thing is that when this is done and the park is done, the concourse area is public space and will continue to be public space so anybody that wants to rent that space will be able to rent that space, but they'll also be able to rent other parts of the Comedy Center. You can rent the Albright Knox, you can rent the Rock N' Roll Hall of Fame, we'll certainly continue to make that available in conjunction with the park so now you can actually rent the concourse and have your wedding and have your reception in the park so instead of taking away what's there now, we're making what's available to the public much better because there's much more to pick from.

Mr. Trusso: Rent it from whom?

Mr. Benson: From the National Comedy Center.

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Mr. Trusso: Oh then they will take over the running of the train station?

Mr. Benson: Yes.

Mr. Rice: When it comes to the excursion trains one of the things we're working on presently is to update the Urban Design Plan.

Mr. Trusso: I've been told that the train station would stay as the train station, it would be run by the people that worked to have it done and that the Comedy Center would be on the east side of the train station, the garages that the trucks used to pull in and they would go to the west side where the baggage is being taken off and stored for the train. Now what you're saying is you're going to take over the entire train station and if they want to rent that train station, they have to rent it from the comedy center?

Mr. Benson: I think what you just said is true. We're using both of the wings, but the center piece even though there's a lease that will basically be the same thing as renting it from the people who have it now, except you're renting it from the National Comedy Center because that center piece is public space. It's public space whether it's operated by us or operated by whomever.

Mr. Trusso: That's true, but why do they have to come to the comedy center and ingratiate the comedy center when the people that worked hard to get the train station in the shape that it is today where it can be taken over by someone, why aren't they benefitting from that?

Mr. Benson: Well they are because the whole point in the development of the train station and I know those involved with that project for a lot of years was to get to the point where there was somebody else that would take advantage of what was done for the benefit of the community, but it always was designed for commercial development to take place in the wings after the basic renovation was done.

Mr. Trusso: As I read it, it's not the benefit of the community, it's the benefit of the comedy center that's going to make the money on that after all the hard work that was put in and the money that was put in from different entities. What's this whole project going to cost?

Mr. Benson: What's it going to cost who?

Mr. Trusso: What's it going to cost the comedy center? How much money is going to be involved in developing all of these different things? Ten million, twenty million? What's it going to cost?

Mr. Benson: The National Comedy Center is a not for profit entity first of all. Just like the train station entity is a not for profit entity. So nobody's making any money at this.

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Mr. Trusso: Just the people that are running it. They'll make the money and they won't have the directors and all that, that's where the money goes when there's a non-profit. That's the claim, non-profit. But what's it going to cost? How much is it going to cost? How much are you going to put up? You said you got a million-something from the state and you've gone to Schumer and you're going to develop something through Schumer. I mean, how much is he going to give? Have any of the foundations in Jamestown given any money to support that? Where are they going to park? You've never shown us a parking ramp where there would be people in there parking. I mean, I don't understand that.

Mr. Rice: If I could, I'll address that situation. Presently we are working with Goody, Clancy and Bergman Associates out in Rochester about updating the Urban Design Plan. That is one of the issues we'll be looking at is the parking situation. Personally I don't think we have an issue with it, it's how we get people from existing facilities to this back and forth. The same thing with the potential of excursion trains. One of the things that we're going to be looking at as part of the scope of work is how we get all that to work together in this facility, it can easily be done.

Mr. Trusso: I still don't know what this project is going to cost.

Mr. Rice: Tom do you have the total of what the dollar value is?

Mr. Benson: Joe if you'd give me the chance to answer one question at a time, I'd be happy to.

Mr. Trusso: There are a lot of questions on my mind.

Mr. Benson: I've got that. Let me take them one at a time. It's an \$18 million project.

Mr. Trusso: \$18 million.

Mr. Benson: Yes now let me answer your next question; are the Jamestown foundations, do they have skin in the game, yes \$9.5 million so far.

Mr. Trusso: That gives you \$10 million.

Mr. Benson: \$9.5 plus \$1.5 is what.

Mr. Trusso: \$11 million, okay.

Mr. Benson: There is a tremendous amount of local buy-in for what we're doing. As far as parking goes, we had a national scope firm come and look at things like the support that would be required for those 114,000 people; hotel spaces, restaurant spaces, parking. Their answer on parking was that Jamestown has plenty of parking. Look at the occupancy rates and the parking that we have. We all expect to park right out in front of something, but if you go to a national scope attraction, do you really expect to park out front? I don't think you do. You expect to park within a reasonable distance and they basically said look you've got that parking

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available, you just don't have it out in front. Maybe during the summertime, you have to create some sort of a shuttle system, where people can park in a satellite place downtown which is fine, but by in large you've got that space, you don't need to build other parking. Hotel space, I can tell you for a fact because if you ask them, they will tell you for a fact, the Hammister guys who bought the old Holiday Inn are putting \$10 million into it primarily because of this project. So you're saying what good is this? That's a tangible honest to goodness economic development impact that's happened and the project isn't even real yet.

Mr. Trusso: Don't misunderstand me. I think this is a good project. I think it's going to do a lot for the City of Jamestown, but I think that questions should be asked so that it's out in the open and we all know exactly what's going on.

Mr. Benson: I'm answering, I'm not arguing.

Mr. Trusso: Another thing is I understand that maybe in the rear of the park there, an amphitheater that will be built. Is that possible?

Mr. Benson: It is.

Mr. Trusso: It will be.

Mr. Benson: Well there's a second phase to the park program which is, the first thing is to do what they did in Buffalo which is create it, let people use it so that they can figure out how to program it. The second phase is also to do what they're doing and that is to create infrastructure to make it easier. So our vision is to make that a comedy themed park with the amphitheater, with bathrooms, with a comedy-themed playground with the stuff that really makes it a lot more user-friendly than not. Let me go back to another question that you asked a minute ago and that is where is the railroad in all this? We're big fans of the whole excursion train thing. Because that's a one plus one equals three thing. If we can stimulate that effort to redo the tracks or whatever needs to happen so that people come in from Buffalo, Cleveland, New York, Pittsburgh, stop right there in front of the thing and go through the center and go up to the town. That's a wonderful thing and that doesn't detract from what we're doing and what we're doing does not detract from what's happening with that excursion train thing. There's a lot of conventional wisdom, frankly, that pisses me off – pardon my French, that flies around town. It's that negative mentality that we have here. It's just not true. We're not undercutting anything; we're trying to be as community-oriented as we possibly can to get to that point where this really can make the biggest impact possible. Is it perfect? No, but it's a good project.

Mr. Trusso: My purpose to sitting on this committee is that I'd like to see Jamestown come back to – it'll never come back to – I hope it does, but I don't think it'll every come back to where it was with 47,000 people living here. I think we could start bringing more people in here like Mr. Rice has plans on doing just that. I happen to agree with what he's trying to do, but the whole purpose of here is bringing Jamestown back. That's what you have to do. Projects like this, the skating rink and things like that are things that will bring Jamestown back. But I think the people of Jamestown have to understand what we're doing. They can't be asking all kind of – well we don't want that, why should we do this – we put it right out in the newspaper and they'll

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know exactly what's happening in Jamestown and Jamestown will come back, but you've got to let the people know.

Mr. Whitford: Joe we had the same skepticism when the ice rink came in. If there was \$25 million given to you, would you build a chunk of ice in the center of the city? The benefits from that ice rink are pretty obvious and this is probably at least 10 or 20 times that scale and it's going to take time. What you've been talking about for months and years at the county and here is bringing Jamestown back to what it was. And we can't do that what it was. We have to reinvent and remarket Jamestown because those industries are not coming back to Jamestown. You're not going to have Proto Tool, Crescent Tool, Amsco Exel, Chautauqua Hardware, Ethan Allen, all our furniture factories. They're not coming back. They aren't so we have to do something to bring Jamestown back in another form and this is the way to do it.

Mr. Rice: You hit it right on the head. Buffalo is doing the same thing. What I'm saying is, Joe is the difference between what the City of Buffalo's waterfront was and what it is right now is night and day, totally different opposites. They're reinventing what they had and making use of it. We're proposing to do the same thing here.

Mr. Trusso: The only thing I'm trying to do is bring this out now so that people don't - and you know how it is - with the ice rink and the rest, they keep backbiting and backbiting, this is what we don't need are projects like this. We need people to be with us on projects like this.

Mr. Benson: Joe that's why we're here, to show you exactly what we're doing.

Mr. Whitford: And all of us here are advocates for that and we need to take that message.

Mr. Rice: When it comes to the parking situation I don't think personally we have an issue with parking. I totally agree with that study. I think the only time we might is when we start getting spinoffs from this thing in the western end. You may need to have more parking demand at that end at that point. God help us if we get that.

Mr. Lehman: I was going to say, what a terrible problem to have.

Mr. Rice: Exactly.

Mr. Whitford: It'd be a great problem to have.

Mr. Rice: Something really wonderful....

Mr. Trusso: Now we have garages that are below in the west end going down Second Street, right? Going to Steele Street, is that going to be used at all, that property below the train station? There's a garage there.

Mr. Lehman: That's a railroad garage.

Mr. Rice: At track level?

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- Mr. Trusso: I don't know about the track level, but it's going down...
- Mr. Nelson: Un-loading corporation...
- Mr. Trusso: This is on the left hand side as you're going down.
- Mr. Benson: That's an old locomotive repair shop.
- Mr. Trusso: Okay. Are we going to use that at all? Are there plans to use that? Because that just expands the footprint there.
- Mr. Rice: There has been some talk about the possibility of using that.
- Mr. Trusso: Vince?
- Mr. DeJoy: For excursion trains, eventually.
- Mr. Rice: There are environmental issues, just the form of use, we're going to have environmental issues.
- Mr. Trusso: We and the people understand exactly what's going on down there and there's not going to be any of this foot dragging and that the project will go along nice and smooth and we don't have those people complaining like they usually do because they don't understand.
- Mr. Rice: It'd be nice if they were at this meeting.
- Mr. Trusso: Well if the Post Journal does its job people will know.
- Mr. Benson: The Post Journal has been absolutely fantastic in covering this whole thing. I must say. Dennis has been great and right on top of it. The people that have actually been reading those articles stay pretty on top of what's happening.
- Mr. Trusso: I hope so. That's important.
- Mr. Lehman: I want to say your design; I think you guys did a fantastic job. It looks better than even the preliminary plans. I think it's come a long way, hats off. I think it really fits the motif of that area.
- Mr. Rice: It was a good discussion with SHPO last week and they're on board with where it's going so now they can proceed ahead without any kind of issues that they could see, so that's been good news too.
- Mr. Lehman: It seems to flow really well.

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Mr. Trusso: Is the County participating in this at all?

Mr. Whitford: There's nothing at the county level. I mean as far as legislative issues...

Mr. Trusso: I think they can do a resolution asking for help. Or is the budget so low that ...

Mr. Whitford: Not at this point. You know what the issues are right now at the County and that is not part of the priority.

Mr. DeJoy: I think that Tom would agree that the County has been with us every step of the way and has been very supportive of everything we're doing and there probably will be a role that the County will be playing here.

Mr. Benson: We are talking to them about some unique ideas on how to sequester some of the incremental bed tax revenue from this to get some funding out of it so it's not really coming out of a current budget, but coming out of found money. We're actually making a presentation in April to the Planning and Economic Development Committee of the Legislature.

Mr. Whitford: Probably the Administrative Services also I would think you'd go in front of. I'm on the committee. I wouldn't worry about it.

Mr. Trusso: All I know is the County has given money to Jamestown. They gave Jamestown Community College \$1 million for their shop down there and the City school district they gave \$500,000.00 to open up their shop where the administration building was. So they do give money to the City and I'm just wondering if they're going to give it this time.

Mr. Rice: Tom you've got this pretty much set up without looking to them for financial backing. They'll do tax credits and that stuff.

Mr. Benson: Well if you look at what's on the list, all of them don't have to happen in order to fill the gap, but some of them do so it's not – if that came through and other ones didn't then we'd still be okay. We're not relying solely on any mix. We've got lots of irons in the fire. But the incremental hotel revenue from those 114,000 people is significant. The bed tax part of that that's usable is 60% of that 5% and that's not a small number. I can make the argument with a straight face and say look this project isn't taking money out of the County budget, it's using money that's being generated by projects so why shouldn't you consider that?

Mr. Whitford: And that's the argument you need. That's the point you need.

Mr. Benson: Right, that's the argument that we're making or the proposal that we're making.

Mr. Trusso: This isn't going to cost the County anything because of the bed tax that goes into the general fund and you can draw out of the general fund.

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Mr. Whitford: But what you're discussing now is future funding, not the initial funding for the project because there has to be something that maintains it.

Mr. Trusso: Because of the benefits the County is going to derive from this they should have some sort of participation, financially.

Mr. Whitford: I don't disagree with you.

Mr. Benson: I think that the County and the City are in the same boat from their current budget restraints. Nobody has money to spend and that's why we're trying to do this is to get more people to come to town and I disagree with you 47,000 by the way, I would think it's not that farfetched that ten years from now we're bumping up against that kind of number again. They're not going to be working at Crescent Tool and Proto Tool, it's a whole different mix of the world, but when people can start to come back here and make a decent living and couple that with the quality of life that they have here and raising a family here. Compared to all the other crap you're dealing with in the bigger cities, I don't see it as something that's farfetched.

Mr. Whitford: Not with the school system, education, everything that we have to offer even today.

Mr. Benson: But we've got to change our mentality. It can't be this negative place where nothing ever happens.

Mr. Nelson: But there is always a balance that has to be achieved as far as income that comes into the city. The County always has a lot of things to be met, costs to be met, things to be maintained and the question of how high you can raise taxes in the area and accomplish all of those things and accomplish what its contributions might be to different kinds of projects. The main thing I'm thinking is it's not all that simple either to try to involve the government entities that are here. They're strapped, where the money really comes from are the government entities that can tap into additional money and that is usually now at the federal and state level to as many projects as you can get them involved in. If we said here that we're going to develop all of this over here and given our population and everything else and jobs available and tell Sam as an example that you're going to have to come up with money to maintain all of that, that may not work out too well. I'm not arguing against any of this. I'm just saying...

Mr. Benson: No, but I think that the missing link there in that discussion, at least in my mind is, you're talking about a stagnant size pie. We're talking about making the pie twice as big.

Mr. Nelson: I don't argue that, but I think there's another realism that's involved in this too. We've been talking about - and the things when I've been involved - we've been talking about this whole thing of trying to make it bigger and better for the last 45 years when I first came to work at City Hall. That subject has not changed. That has been talked over and over and over again and usually it is, especially on the local level, you can't raise the money. You've always got to go to the State, the feds and everything else. That's all I'm saying is that looking at

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all these different things, most often, money has had to come from our Chautauqua County with the governments that are up at higher levels. It's hard to get that going.

Mr. Whitford: You're talking about development, correct?

Mr. Nelson: Yes and that's just development and it's all part of the same, in essence, the same thing. It's going to be a factor that's involved because you're going to have a building like this being completed that starts attracting things, but it's going to be sometime down the road before possibly, more people will want to return. That's going to depend a lot on what's happening in other areas and how that keeps people as to how they're moving. Or a factor like Bill said one time, a lot of people will probably come back to here when water is getting more and more scarce in the south. It's all of these kinds of things that come together....

Mr. Trusso: The County will benefit a lot from this.

Mr. Whitford: The County and the City, everybody will benefit from the revenue side.

Mr. Trusso: How will the City, other than having people come in? They're not going to get any part of that 2% for the bed tax whereas if the County's going to benefit from the bed tax. What will they do for that bed tax?

Mr. Nelson: Hopefully do more work on the lake.

Mr. Whitford: That's just the bed tax. There's a lot of revenue that's going to generate.

Mr. Trusso: 2% that's what it is.

Mr. Rice: No because you're going to get spinoff businesses in this area that's going to generate revenues through purchasing things.

Mr. Trusso: Where will the County spend that money? How much is the County spending in Jamestown right now for our roads, for our buildings? How much?

Mr. Whitford: They've taken over quite a few of the roads in the last ten years.

Mr. Trusso: In the last ten years. How many have they done now? I remember when we put them up. We have roads still in Jamestown that go from state road to state road, we put it in and they want to take it out because it was going to cost them money. Jamestown is like a stepsister.

Mr. Whitford: Let's get back...

Mr. Trusso: This is going to generate money. This is going to generate for Chautauqua County and I hope that Chautauqua County realizes that and they help out. That's all I'm saying. And you as a legislator should know that.

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Mr. Whitford: Absolutely.

Mr. Trusso: Especially on the committee that you're on.

Mr. Nelson: The thing that can be difficult sometimes with development is that you're always ahead of the people that you need to have come in and start spending money. You do the project, it still takes time for all the rest of this kind of thing to happen. Those kinds of delays, other things that go on in the community, as much difficulties as what Jamestown has had and still does, make it hard for Jamestown itself to come up with appreciable amounts of money to get involved in some other kinds of projects other than regular maintenance and it's the same thing that can happen with the County. The money lies with the guys that are on the top and that's the federal, especially the federal, but also the state.

Mr. Trusso: They want to build a waterpark in Silver Creek right? Isn't that what they're talking about?

Mr. Whitford: We're discussing this right now.

Mr. Trusso: Yes I know I'm just making a point. Why isn't that kind of money coming into Jamestown?

Mr. Nelson: We didn't ask for it.

Mr. Trusso: Tons of money coming into Jamestown.

Mr. Nelson: You can only get so much. Money's got to circulate faster and faster to be able to get more money to come in.

Mr. Trusso: I'd just like to see us get our fair share.

Mr. Nelson: I really think over all this is an exciting project.

Mr. Trusso: It is a tremendous project and it will create wealth without a doubt. I hope it does it for Jamestown.

Mr. Rice: I can give you an indication. From the last year or so, we are starting to get more and more inquiries from potential developers interested in buildings in that area. So we know that it's having a positive effect when it comes to that. When it starts to become a reality, the nuts and bolts and everything is there, I think we're going to get a lot more.

Mr. Trusso: I hope the 112,000 people have a place to eat and a place to sleep.

Mr. Nelson: We better do some more work on zoning then to get ready. There are a lot of things that are not zoned...

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Mr. Whitford: There's a lot more to offer. This will bring them in, we have Chautauqua, we have – this is an incredible county and we're in the infant stages of marketing the way it should be marketed now. And this is a tremendous project that's going on and a lot of work, a lot of dedication and I give all of you a tremendous applause for what you've done in bringing this to fruition and at least to this point here. And I think to your point, we're here to answer those questions, the ones in the program, we have an infinite amount of resources to direct them to get those questions answered and a lot of them are founded, but a lot of them are unfounded.

Mr. Trusso: A lot of what are unfounded?

Mr. Whitford: The questions, the nervous anticipation, because they haven't had the opportunity to look at everything that we've been exposed to. It's the same as in the City. We had a meeting on housing and everybody was in an uproar because someone told them something was going to happen that really wasn't. So they came there with a preconceived idea. That's what happens. If you're not educated that they don't have the opportunity to hear this, there will be that resistance.

Mr. Trusso: Well if they can read, they're going to hear about it and that's great.

Mr. Whitford: I think the Post Journal has done a good job so far on it.

Mr. Trusso: Once it's done, just like the skating rink, my daughter lives in Rochester and she knows people in Rochester that come from Rochester to Jamestown for the skating classes and all that, the figure skating. That's quite a way to come for a project like that.

Mr. Whitford: We're on national TV with that which will, I'm sure, happen with this also.

Mr. Trusso: Without a doubt.

Mr. Whitford: Unless there are any other questions, I'd like to thank this young man for all of the work that you've done.

Mr. Benson: Do you want to hear about the other thing, the façade?

Mr. Rice: Walk it through. But we've got to give these guys a little credit too because I know the position that they're in with the short staffing and getting things ready for the meetings with SHPO, discussions and everything else. They've done a lot of work too.

Mr. Whitford: They continue to point to you so you are the driving force. But you don't do it by yourself.

Mr. Rollman: Believe me we're just happy to be part of the team.

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Mr. Rice: There's one other thing that they want to have a fast discussion about that we're going to be looking for. We're going to have to look at it when it comes to zoning issues. So Tom if you want to kind of prepare them as to what we talked about.

Mr. Benson: On the façade of the new building, the entrance way will be full screen hi-def video screens which will be tasteful, it won't be advertising, it will be strictly devoted to the center itself as well as community type stuff. You can see some examples there, the temperature, time, weather and whatnot. Obviously our sign code doesn't really address these kinds of things so we've come up with some ideas and plans as to how we're going to address that.

Mr. Rice: The present code right now really does not cover this type of signage, it's kind of unique and one of the easiest ways as part of the bigger picture, but also as an easy way to do this is to actually define the use of this with this type of facility. We will be looking at our present zoning codes on signage and bigger picture as we go through that urban design plan too, to make sure we have enough controls and to allow us in certain parts to be less restrictive in different areas. The cost of this is really kind of cost prohibitive for anyone else really to be thinking about this because this screen alone is just under a million dollars.

Mr. Benson: There are two screens.

Mr. Rice: Two screens, so it's fairly expensive what they're doing so the chances of somebody else coming up with this is a concept that is somewhat cost-prohibitive, but it's there to create that wow factor for the center and it does very well when it comes to that. It is stepped back away from the corner and the screen itself is actually curved, the two sides, so looking, I would assume is kind of hidden very well from the traffic coming down Washington Street so it's kind of geared toward that.

Mr. Benson: It catches the traffic on Washington and Second both coming down from the rink.

Mr. Rice: The same issues we'll be dealing with any of the LED type of signage, speed of the change is going to be important for traffic issues. The brightness level, the technology is there to actually automatically dim and relate to the outside ambient light level so it doesn't become glaring at people. You can see some places that didn't control that and the signage is almost very annoying and it's not useful. So we'll be dealing with issues like that on this as well as the future signage coming.

Mr. Whitford: It's going, I was liaison to the Zoning Board of Appeals and we had a presentation here at the Planning Committee on these types of signs and it's all over the board as far as how they feel about this signage. I know the Ice Arena was turned down for this particular signage and it wasn't near this scope, but I'm just forewarning you, there has to be a lot of work and a lot of collaboration between the Zoning Board of Appeals and those standards that are set now and how to do that because the thing that you don't want to do is cause some disparate treatment from one organization to the others so there have to be exceptions.

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Mr. Nelson: You have to understand though that when they started, the technology has changed dramatically. We're not even talking the same subject anymore.

Mr. Whitford: I understand that, but the size of this city and things have come out that we don't want to be a mini Las Vegas and this and that and I think there have to be exceptions. I think we have to work closely with the Zoning Board of Appeals to develop something that's going to work for everybody in the city that has a standard. Just like any rules that you make, you have to be able to deviate from them in certain instances and I think that's what we have to work with.

Mr. Trusso: Why did they refuse the skating rink? What was their refusal? For what?

Mr. Whitford: It was the size. They asked for a variance and they turned it down.

Mr. Benson: I think we've got a really good plan to get this nailed down so that when our application comes to you guys that that hurdle will have been removed and the design and the content will be subject to your approval, but we'll already be passed the hump.

Mr. Whitford: That's what I'm saying. That needs to be taken care of before it comes here.

Mr. Benson: Yes and I think we've got a good plan to get that done.

Mr. Whitford: Not that I disagree with any of this, but you have miles to go.

Mr. Rice: We have a clear way of doing this in a very short term as well as addressing the longer terms. The problem is, the code as it is right now, does not cover this technology so the Zoning Board has nothing to really go on.

Mr. Whitford: No they don't and that was their confusion.

Mr. Rice: And that's the problem and we have to set that up for them.

Mr. Nelson: When the zoning was done, we didn't even have signs like that. It was 20 years ago.

Mr. Benson: Let me show you one more thing before we unplug this. It's important to understand that this is not a museum. This is not like going Cooperstown and seeing crap hanging on the walls with a little sign, nor is it a hall of fame. This is a totally different interactive and fun experience. So we put this 2 ½ minute video together to be able to tell the story to people like Leno and Seinfeld before they got here so we could have a dialogue with them. So if you'll bear with me for two minutes and watch this, you'll get a handle on this...

The members watched the video Mr. Benson spoke of.

Mr. Trusso: Will you still use the Palace Theater?

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Mr. Benson: This thing does not have any performing space in it, live performance space and that's specifically so that we can continue to use the Ice Arena, the Reg and the four or five other venues that populate those. During our festival, we probably use five or six of those things on a routine basis. The virtual theater that was mentioned there is going to be in the BPU building and it will be an area that's not separately ticketed, but there will be shows hourly or on the half hour that will have classic comedy routines that are holograms of people that are from a long time ago. The hologram technology, when you think of that, I'm not sure what you're thinking of because it's evolving and has evolved a lot recently, but this is technology that you'll see on the stage a projection that you think is absolutely real. You don't know that it's not real so it's like seeing that person in person from 1923 or 1954 or 1975 or whatever it is, you're experiencing that performance as if you were there during a night or day that that person is actually doing that routine. It's just fantastic. There will be no place else in the world that has that kind of programming.

Mr. Nelson: The first time I heard about that was on Star Trek when I was quite a bit younger.

Mr. Benson: Here's an interesting fact about Star Trek. Star Trek was launched by Desilou Studios by Lucille Ball.

Mr. Benson: Thank you very much.

Mr. Whitford: Well I thank you for spending all this time.

Mr. Trusso: Thank you, absolutely.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

James N. Olson, Director of Financial Services/City Clerk