
PUBLIC HEARING
FOR
PHASE II OF THE ONONDAGA CREEKWALK

Held on Tuesday, July 26, 2016, taken at the Southwest Community Center, 401 South Avenue, Syracuse, New York, 13204, commencing at 7:00 p.m., before Leah C. Didsbury, a Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of New York.



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PARTICIPANTS:

Russell Houck

Chuck Stanton

Eileen Moore

Rich Sawczak

Doug Stansbury

Mike Gridley

Dustin Trivisonno

Andy Maxwell



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JULY 26, 2016

1 MR. HOUCK: Good evening and welcome
2 to Southwest. We're here for the Creekwalk
3 Phase 2 Public Hearing. Thank you Southwest
4 for hosting us here. And I am Russell Houck
5 with the City of Syracuse Engineering
6 Department, project manager for this project.
7 Our design engineers are C&S Engineers. I
8 am going to briefly introduce you guys.
9 Chuck Stanton here, Doug Stansbury, Mike
10 Gridley, Dustin Trivisonno, he is also here.
11 They can answer your questions after the
12 formal hearing here. And also from the New
13 York State Department of Transportation we
14 have Rich Sawczak, project manager, and
15 Diane Miller and also Eileen Moore will be
16 talking about right-of-way property
17 acquisition.

18 So, briefly, we're nearing the end
19 of the preliminary design phase of this
20 project and we're looking for design approval
21 from New York State, which we would expect
22 in a few months. In general, this phase of



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1
2 the Creekwalk extends the first phase two
3 miles from downtown to the Kirk Park Holden
4 area. It's a federal aid project. We're
5 looking at eighty percent paid for by federal
6 dollars, twenty percent local. And tonight
7 we're going to be looking at the preferred
8 alternative. We will discuss a little bit
9 of the other alternatives that were done.
10 The preferred alternative routing and we have
11 some concepts for green space development.

12 To date, we've had a large amount of
13 public input of public meetings the last
14 couple of years. We have feasibility studies
15 with public input and we had a community
16 advisory group give us some guidance as well.
17 So tonight's format Chuck went into a little
18 bit. Chuck Stanton from C&S Design Engineers
19 will provide an overview, a good detailed
20 summary of the project at this point. Go
21 through the preferred alternative. Following
22 that there will be a presentation by New
23 York State DOT on the right-of-way
24 acquisition. And, finally, people can
25 formally make a comment. We have a



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1 stenographer who will record your comments.

2 It's not a question and answer at that
3 point, but we will be available after the
4 formal hearing to answer any questions that
5 the board hears. We are having a formal
6 hearing based on the potential for the number
7 of right-of-way property acquisitions that
8 could be part of this either partial parcels
9 or whole parcels, but on that I would like
10 to turn over to Chuck Stanton from C&S
11 Engineers.
12

13 MR. STANTON: Thanks Russ. And
14 thanks everybody for coming tonight and
15 sacrificing what's turning out to be a great
16 evening sitting here in this hot room. I
17 will try to cut down on the hot air. First
18 off, can everyone hear me okay? I tend to
19 trail off during these meetings. Just let
20 me know if at any time you can't hear me.
21 We've already talked about who was here. So
22 we will get by that. Again, just a few
23 record keeping things. Make sure we sign
24 in. Fire exits, one behind me and obviously
25 one where you came in. It's actually behind



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1
2 the screen here. We have a stenographer
3 present right now to record our meeting.
4 And with this public hearing format, unlike
5 the other eight meetings that we've had, we
6 can't really address questions during the
7 formal presentation. There will be a formal
8 comment period afterwards. Again, like I
9 said, please fill out the comment forms if
10 you want to get in the formal line.
11 Otherwise, just wait until everybody is done.
12 You can come up. There is no problem.

13 So we talked a little bit about
14 housekeeping. Russ talked about the purpose
15 of the meeting. I am going to give you
16 some project background then to the technical
17 presentation. DOT is going to have a
18 right-of-way acquisition procedure. We will
19 talk about the next steps for this project
20 and where we go from here. We will have
21 public comment then we will close the meeting
22 with closing statements then after that we
23 will have our informal open house and the
24 ability for people to ask questions. Russ
25 also talked about this. So we will skip



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past that.

So what is the Onondaga Creekwalk?
A lot of you who have been here have heard this before, but please bear with me. The vision for this trail that runs from Onondaga Lake to Dorwin Ave where possible should follow Onondaga Creek. It's in three phases -- at least three planned phases. First phase Onondaga Lake to Armory Square. That's the one that's completed. Hopefully some of you have utilized that. Phase 2 is the phase that we're talking about now, Armory Square to Kirk Park. Then there is a future Phase 3 in planning from Kirk Park to Dorwin Avenue. That's the southern city limits. So if you imagine this, this would form the backbone of a future interconnected trail system. This would hook into Loop the Lake Trail. This would hook into an extension of the Erie Canal trail way. This would hook into local neighborhood networks as well as bike networks. And we definitely want to have an emphasis on connection with neighborhoods. This is one of the main



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1
2 purposes of having this trail.

3 Again, Russ talked a little bit
4 about this, but why do we have the public
5 input process? This is part of the
6 requirement for all projects that have
7 federal money. So we will review the
8 project plan. We will talk about the
9 impacts. This is designed to allow people
10 to voice their opinion. We want to make
11 sure we have it structure to allow comments
12 to be incorporated into design. So we don't
13 just have a final report ready to slap down
14 and move on from here. We're actually going
15 to take your comments, look at them and if
16 we can incorporate them in a reasonable way
17 into the project, we will. We will have a
18 complete record of this meeting and comments.
19 And we will incorporate those in the final
20 design report.

21 And, again, this public hearing is
22 required to use a number of potential
23 property acquisitions. Right now we have
24 approximately 34. How are we going to do
25 this? All comments are welcome. You can



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2 mail the provided form again, that I talked
3 about, on the back of the brochure. You can
4 also e-mail your comments to
5 Onondagacreekwalk.com. Both Russ and I get
6 those. Those will be incorporated into the
7 design report and we have a two-week comment
8 period from today.

9 So what do we do when we get those
10 comments? We evaluate them. It's based on
11 do they fit within the project goals? Do
12 they fit within the funding criteria? We
13 look at the feasibility of the suggestion.
14 And we do an engineering review. We look at
15 the practicality of it. And we also compare
16 that against the overall project budgets. So
17 it would be nice to have a trail on both
18 sides of the creek with interconnected
19 bridges going at each block. Unfortunately,
20 that doesn't fit within our funding resources
21 and it doesn't fit the project criteria,
22 which is to provide a trail from point A to
23 point B. So we divided this public input
24 process into three steps.

25 The first one that -- I am seeing



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2 some familiar faces around here. We had a
3 series of three meetings to present the 2008
4 study alternatives. After that we had a
5 second series of three meetings to present
6 the revised alternatives, which incorporated
7 those public comments. Then we took a
8 little bit of a step back in the process and
9 decided to form a community advisory group
10 that met here at the Southwest Community
11 Center. We had two meetings. They provided
12 input on specific sections that we still had
13 some questions about what alternatives we
14 wanted to choose. And then tonight is the
15 public hearing and presentation of the
16 preferred alternative. So we have eight
17 total meetings completed for steps one and
18 two. This one final meeting tonight for
19 nine and we can move on.

20 So, again, as I said our Phase 2 is
21 the continuation of Phase 1 from Armory
22 Square to Onondaga Lake. Current concept
23 plans are a result of the study completed in
24 2008 comments from previous meetings. What
25 we're talking about tonight encompasses the



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2 area from Colvin Street to most of West
3 Jefferson Street. Just a little about our
4 timeline. In early 2015 we had our first
5 series of meetings. Mid-2015 our second
6 series. Late last year we started our
7 survey and mapping. So we could start some
8 of the preliminary design process going.
9 Obviously, tonight in July, we have the
10 public hearing. By September 2016 we
11 anticipate having the final design report.
12 And then moving along in fall 2016 the start
13 of final design. Between now and 2018 would
14 be the property acquisition phase. And the
15 2018 to 2020 will be construction. So
16 overall goals -- we want a continuous
17 pedestrian bicycle trail. This section of
18 the project is approximately 2.2 miles long.
19 We want to generally follow Onondaga Creek,
20 what we call the Onondaga Creek corridor.
21 We can't always be right on or right at the
22 creek, but we try to stay there as much as
23 practical.

24 We also want to provide access to
25 city neighborhoods, which would be near the



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2 west side, which you will see that. And
3 provide possible opportunities for trailheads
4 or nodes or parks and access points along
5 the trails, green space, picnic areas, things
6 like that. So our design considerations,
7 when we looked at it, while we were
8 developing this weren't practical. We wanted
9 a dedicated trail with a desirable
10 thirteen-foot wide path for bicycles and
11 pedestrians. Basically, six and a half feet
12 in one direction, six and a half feet in the
13 other with a stripe down the middle. Two
14 lanes very similar to a roadway. If we
15 can't meet that thirteen foot width we're
16 allowed to go down to eight to ten feet
17 wide. Where a dedicated trail is not
18 practical, we would utilize streets for
19 bicycles and sidewalks for pedestrians. We
20 do ADA upgrades all along this. Which means
21 sidewalk ramps, detectable warnings. Public
22 safety, we want to make sure we have
23 dedicated street crossings and lighting.
24 Increasing the visibility of this so that
25 everyone can see who is on the trail. And



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1 when you're on the trail you can see who is
2 off the trail.

3
4 We're also investigating the use of
5 cop cameras. This is going to require some
6 additional funding outside of the project and
7 some coordination with the Syracuse Police
8 Department. And we are also investigating
9 the use of emergency lights or call boxes at
10 strategic locations along the path. So on
11 our draft design report we've reviewed
12 available space and multiple routes. We
13 identified our two feasibility alternatives.
14 And through the source of six public meetings
15 and two community advisory meetings we
16 selected segments of two feasibility
17 alternatives to make a preferred alternative.
18 And we have just for reference afterwards we
19 have a comparison -- the big board on my
20 right here on your guys' left is the two
21 conceptional alternatives that we used. And
22 on my left and your right is the preferred
23 alternative, which is really a melding of
24 what we thought was the best pieces of those
25 two.



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2 So our preliminary cost estimate of
3 today we're looking at about \$7.6 million
4 construction for this 2.2 miles. About \$1.9
5 million for right-of-way acquisition cost.
6 This is all estimated. We anticipate a
7 federal contribution of eighty percent of the
8 total project cost. So right now what that
9 means is the City would be responsible for
10 twenty percent of the project cost or .40
11 cents on the dollar. This works out to
12 about \$1.9 million for the City's
13 contribution to this project. And just for
14 comparison on Phase 1 it was \$6.2 million
15 for construction. So you can see we upped
16 the game a little bit here as far as the
17 funding for the project and potentially what
18 we can include in it.

19 Just a little bit about contracting
20 goals because I know that's been a recurring
21 question here. During our design phase we
22 have a 20 percent disadvantage business
23 enterprise goal. DBE, that's an actual firm
24 that does professional services to help us
25 out with the design. Right now we have



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1 exceeded that at about 32.7 percent. That's
2 surveying, mapping and environmental
3 professional services. During the
4 construction phase we have two different
5 goals we have been working on. First is a
6 work-force goal. So of the work force that
7 works on the project 6.9 of that work force
8 has to be female, 3.8 percent of that has to
9 be minority. And then on top of that there
10 is a six percent disadvantage business goal.
11 So on top of the actual work force
12 requirement, the contractor will be required
13 to hire at least six percent disadvantaged
14 businesses to work on this project.
15 Unfortunately, at this point the current
16 process doesn't allow for the requirements
17 for local work force. But I can tell you
18 that the City's made that request. DOT is
19 being researched to see if we can get into
20 the USDOT pilot program. We obviously can't
21 make any promises about that, but I wanted
22 to let you folks know that that is being
23 researched. And on top of that, when you
24 look at from when the project is built and
25



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2 in the future we're also looking at
3 opportunities to get local work force
4 involved in the actual maintenance of the
5 trail as well as maintaining the plants and
6 providing additional plants.

7 So now we can talk about the
8 alternative. So we have common elements to
9 every alternative. First, is that we want
10 to do selective thinning of the vegetation
11 along the bank of the creek. So we have
12 this great resource, which is Onondaga Creek,
13 but you can't see it because of all the tree
14 growth along it. The idea is to go in
15 there and selectively pull out trees and thin
16 out bushes and whatnot so that everybody can
17 see there is actually water in front of you.
18 Obviously, ADA accessible ramps and walks.
19 We want to minimize the number of changes in
20 pedestrian bicycle patterns. What that means
21 is that 13-foot wide path concept that I was
22 talking to everybody about six and a half
23 foot in one direction and six and a half
24 foot in the other, we don't want to have
25 unnecessary splits from that to people



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1 walking on sidewalks and bikes going in the
2 road. Because you wind up having to cross
3 each other. So we want to try to minimize
4 that as much as possible. Lighting -- and
5 if I could put it in here -- I probably
6 should have put it in here three times.
7 Lighting, lighting and lighting. We want to
8 make sure we have lighting along here.
9 We've set people out to do a photometric
10 survey of the area. We will be adding new
11 lighting. We will be supplanting --
12 supplementing existing lighting. We will
13 provide striping to delineate the path and
14 channelize vehicles away from pedestrians
15 where practical.
16
17 We also want to focus moving
18 pedestrians from point A to point B.
19 Basically, from the beginning of the trail to
20 the end of the trail. But we also want to
21 provide some kind of facility for stopping,
22 resting along the way. And, obviously,
23 way-finding signs. We have this great trail,
24 but if we don't have signs telling you where
25 it is, it's pretty easy to get off the



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1
2 trail. We've broken this up into three
3 sections.

4 First street is Colvin to Midland
5 Ave. And we got a -- thank you, Dustin.
6 We actually have a map up here now. If you
7 wouldn't mind zooming in down on the south
8 end if you can. Thank you, sir. So let's
9 talk about the Onondaga Creek Boulevard to
10 South Ave, which I can get my -- so Onondaga
11 Creek Boulevard where the trailhead is up to
12 South Avenue. Talk about this section first.
13 What we want to do is accomplish dedicated
14 parking, a trailhead at Hunt Avenue. This
15 gives us for people to park and walk for the
16 day. To do something that my family likes
17 to do which is we park one vehicle down at
18 the south end and one vehicle down at the
19 north end and we walk down, hop in the
20 vehicle, drive ourselves back. Also gives us
21 room to bring in and use the kayaks because
22 what we plan on doing is what we call a
23 boat launch, really a canoe and kayak launch.
24 So right down here at Hunt Ave have a port
25 edge from our parking lot all the way to the



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2 boat launch. A very short distance from the
3 boat launch. Dropping your canoe or kayak,
4 utilize the creek and then come pull out at
5 the end of the day. We're going to run the
6 path -- what we call the Park's Facility
7 Building some of you may know as travelers'
8 rest -- we're going to actually utilize the
9 area behind that to run the trail through.
10 Again, 13-foot wide. And then we decided to
11 keep ourselves close to the creek at this
12 point. We're actually going to run the
13 trail under the South Avenue bridge.
14 Obviously, we will provide lighting there.
15 This is going to require all new lighting.
16 So now we will talk to South Avenue
17 to Rich Street. So here to here
18 (indicating). Again, we will provide a
19 13-foot wide asphalt path. There will be a
20 section of lower Onondaga Park Drive that
21 gets closed as a result of this. The path
22 is going to be separate until it hits this
23 intersection, but it will combine with
24 Onondaga Park Drive. And by the time it
25 reaches this spot right here (indicating)



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2 we're actually going to have a one-way-in
3 condition. So the parks' vehicles and
4 visitors can come in, but bikes and
5 pedestrians can still get out. And,
6 obviously, we will have lighting again. All
7 new lighting through here.

8 Let's talk about Rich Street to
9 Midland Avenue because of some space
10 constraints here we will be providing a
11 10-foot wide path running up to South Avenue.
12 In this area here we have an open lawn right
13 now. We're thinking about this as a
14 possible potential green space. And you will
15 see some renderings scattered across the room
16 and in a slide show at the end of this.
17 We're thinking possibly we have potential
18 uses as a dog walk, fishing access or picnic
19 day-use area or some combination of all of
20 them. Once we reach South Avenue we're
21 going to widen this existing sidewalk to
22 13-feet wide. And some of you are actually
23 familiar with this area. The county came
24 through and put in a very nice somewhat
25 narrow path running from here to here



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2 (indicating) as part of their RTF project.
3 What we plan on doing is actually widening
4 that to 13 feet and changing the alignment a
5 little bit to get us a little bit closer to
6 the creek. Doing selective thinning and
7 whatnot. And one important feature of this
8 was this is part of Save the Rain project.
9 So this has impermeable concrete. So we
10 will be replacing that with permeable
11 concrete actually increasing the water
12 quality, volume and treatment, if you will.
13 We will supplement the existing lighting.
14 And we will cross the Midland Avenue bridge
15 by widening this southern sidewalk and
16 shifting all the traffic to the north a
17 little bit. The important thing there is
18 that we're not going to narrow lanes below
19 12 feet. And we're not going to effect the
20 traffic patterns through there. You will
21 still be able to drive one lane in each
22 direction. There will just be a much wider
23 sidewalk on the one side than you're accustom
24 to.
25 Then the very last thing I want to



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2 talk about in this section is the question
3 you might be asking is what was the
4 alternative to that? So let's talk about
5 our alternative 2. That alternative 2 would
6 have used Onondaga Creek Boulevard and lower
7 Onondaga Park Drive. So we would have used
8 Onondaga Creek Boulevard all the way through.
9 This would have required either a partial
10 closure or a full closure to traffic. We
11 would have utilized most of the roadway. At
12 South Avenue that would have required a
13 crossing signal for us to get across South
14 Avenue. And then when we get up to Marginal
15 and Hovey, over here, we would have been on
16 this side of the creek. That presented some
17 unique challenges. We would have had to
18 share use of vehicles. That could have
19 included a one-way condition on Marginal and
20 Hovey in order to give us enough room to put
21 the path in. It also likely would have
22 required us to close down a portion of Hovey
23 to be able to get past. We also
24 contemplated along Hovey Street once we got
25 down past this point coming down to the



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2 actual creek level and running all the way
3 up to basically Midland where we come back
4 up to street level. We've looked at that.
5 That was part of what our focus group here
6 at the Southwest Community Center looked at.
7 We would have acquired some significant
8 retaining walls and a lot of cost to the
9 project. And because of that we ended up
10 not choosing it because of the cost, the
11 limit to access at Marginal and Hovey. And,
12 frankly, because we had another path already
13 made along Martin Luther King Street.

14 So Section 2, Midland Ave to Seymour
15 -- so, Section 2, we will talk about Midland
16 Ave to Temple Street. So we're talking
17 Midland Avenue to Temple. What we're
18 planning on doing is having a 13-foot wide
19 asphalt path. The standard width that we
20 wanted. We would cross Midland Avenue near
21 Hovey Street right here. And we have what
22 they call a hawk signal. It is not a full
23 traffic signal. But it is considered a stop
24 sign under New York State Law. So when you
25 add mast arms and drop down flashing red



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2 beacons that cover each way. Someone walks
3 up. They press the signal crossing button.
4 It times out, they start flashing and you're
5 allowed to walk across the crosswalk.
6 Anybody going through that gets a nice ticket
7 from a Syracuse Police Officer. We will run
8 the path at the top of the bank slightly
9 depressed nearby by two or three feet to
10 allow some separation between backyards and
11 the path. This is where the majority of our
12 property acquisition is focused at this
13 point. We will talk more about the property
14 acquisition process later in this
15 presentation. But I will cover some things
16 briefly here.

17 And we will also have lighting here.
18 I want to let everybody know that we intend
19 to shield on the backside, the lighting.
20 The lighting that faces people's backyards to
21 keep light spill over from going into
22 people's backyards and into their houses.
23 Here is some conceptions. This is a very
24 good conception of what it would look like.
25 We would have a thirteen-foot wide path.



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1
2 About a seven-foot wide planted slope that's
3 slightly depressed. Our lighting and actual
4 physical barrier between our path and
5 people's backyards. So with that, just the
6 rough idea on the property acquisitions the
7 Old Oxford Inn, we would plan on demolishing
8 that and turning that into green space.
9 What used to be a printing company that's
10 currently vacant that would go also. And be
11 wrapped into a much larger green space area,
12 which we have a section of that, that we
13 would be more than happy to point out to you
14 after the meeting. Also 427 Midland Avenue,
15 a warehouse kind of an eyesore at this
16 point. It's right up against the creek
17 where we need to be. So because of this,
18 that building would have to go to be able to
19 build this path. No green space though is
20 planned at this point here because we have a
21 pretty big opportunity for green space here.
22 But in talking with Russ and the City this
23 could be the potential area for future
24 development by the City of Syracuse.

25 When we get up around Tallman, it's



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1
2 obvious we're very close to the existing
3 residents here. We're planning right now on
4 having a retaining wall on either side of
5 this to kind of build out our area. So the
6 path can go by and not really affect these
7 people's side yards too much. And by the
8 time we get out to Temple Street, we really
9 don't have a choice here with the way
10 restrictions would go for building a
11 retaining wall and the hydraulics on the
12 creek. So at this point this alternative
13 would have the 401-403 Temple Street house
14 demolished and converted to green space.

15 And then in terms of minor
16 acquisitions basically every property around
17 along here will have a strip of roughly, I
18 believe we were talking about 18 to 20 feet
19 from the backyard in order to allow the
20 Creekwalk to be built. This will be
21 basically purchased and owned and maintained
22 by the City of Syracuse.

23 So let's talk about Temple Street to
24 West Onondaga Street, which is the end of
25 our Section 2. So, again, we plan our



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1
2 13-foot asphalt path. There are a couple of
3 different alternatives for this because we
4 have a rather wide green space here. You
5 will see the actual one -- the preferred
6 alternative over here. The idea here is to
7 convert at least a portion of this lot to
8 green space in a day-use area. Potential
9 Creekwalk overlook down at the southern end
10 of it. And along the northern end creating
11 a gateway to the Creekwalk and rendering of
12 that as we go along.

13 So, now, Section 2. A very short
14 section still Midland Ave -- West Onondaga to
15 Seymour Street. At this point we will wind
16 up using the existing pedestrian crossing to
17 get across to West Street. We will widen
18 the existing concrete sidewalk to 10 feet
19 between West Onondaga and Shonnard Street.
20 And also Seymour Street where we will
21 gradually blend over to match the existing
22 cycle track that is along West Street. At
23 Shonnard Street and Seymour Street
24 intersections, we're going to narrow the
25 crossing there. The idea is to take



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1 Shonnard down from three lanes to two lanes.
2
3 And Seymour from about four and a half lanes
4 to three lanes. Now, you may ask why we're
5 doing this? What we did was actually looked
6 at the other side of the West Street and saw
7 that Seymour and Shonnard leading into West
8 Street have almost a completely different
9 configuration from this side. So what we're
10 going to do is match these two together.
11 There is an added benefit to us in that it
12 decreases the crossing distances that
13 pedestrians and bikes need to get from one
14 side of the street to the other. Like I
15 said, it also matches the configuration of
16 the road on the other side. It also allows
17 us the opportunity to if we bumped these out
18 have a little bit of extra parking along
19 these streets too that's protected.

20 So, now, alternative 2. We will
21 talk about Midland to Seymour just in
22 general. Alternative 2 would have utilized
23 the existing right-of-way along Midland Avenue
24 along the sidewalk. We would have widened
25 the sidewalk. And probably would have wound



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1
2 up narrowing the existing green space that's
3 there between the sidewalk and the curb. We
4 would have more than a dozen driveway
5 crossings from up and down driveway
6 reconstruction we would have to do in order
7 to accomplish that. We would rebuild at
8 least seven sets of stairs. One of the
9 upsides, it was less property acquisitions
10 for us than the preferred alternative. But
11 when we talked to the community advisor
12 group, they indicated a reference of a path
13 location behind the houses along the creek
14 bank. Keep it as close to the creek as
15 possible. Keep it straight. Keep it out of
16 the existing roadway, which I can tell from
17 driving up and down is a little congested to
18 begin with. So try to fit everybody
19 together may not have been the best idea.
20 And this wasn't chosen due to the driveway
21 impacts and the input of the community
22 advisory group.

23 So our last section, Section 3,
24 Seymour Street to Armory Square. So let's
25 talk about the Seymour to Walton Street. If



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1
2 anybody is familiar with the area some
3 existing cycling track there on your side
4 roadway parallel to West Street. We would
5 utilize that existing cycle track. We would
6 improve the sidewalk that is there. We have
7 stripped islands. Those would be converted
8 to curbed islands with plantings. So kind
9 of up the game a little bit in terms of
10 landscaping through there. We would
11 supplement the existing lighting. Again, as
12 I mentioned the survey that we did. And we
13 wind up crossing under the railroad bridge
14 and join with the Walton Street sidewalk by
15 going through the tail end of the connecting
16 corridor. Then obviously come down to Walton
17 Street sidewalk and we will hit the Phase 1.
18 One little note about this connection there
19 is a little bit of city-owned property that's
20 being used as parking. That necessarily
21 would have to go for us to be able to
22 create our path. We would have selectively
23 rehabilitation of this sidewalk along Walton
24 Street if it's needed. And because of the
25 fact this is a pretty heavily traveled area



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1
2 the City has done a really good job of
3 maintaining lighting through here. One of
4 the side benefits is we don't need additional
5 lighting through this area. So what was
6 alternative 2? Why didn't we go with it?
7 We would utilize the West Onondaga Street
8 sidewalk within the existing right-of-way.
9 So once we cross here at the old Onondaga
10 place we would come down to this
11 intersection. We would wind up crossing
12 twice, this major intersection of Onondaga
13 Ave and Seymour and Shonnard. At that point
14 we would cut across some of the rec center's
15 property for Onondaga Street and cross over
16 to the Trolley lot. We don't have a current
17 area of this. But, basically, the way the
18 Trolley lot is configured is that there is a
19 five-foot sidewalk that runs along the
20 perimeter. And it goes through a crosswalk
21 that goes into the tunnel that meets West
22 Jefferson Street. Unfortunately, because of
23 all infrastructure that's already been built
24 there, we didn't have a lot of opportunity
25 to look at widening that sidewalk because we



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1
2 would be moving drainage structures. Things
3 that the county already spent a lot of money
4 on trying to get into their treatment
5 facility. So the option that we have come
6 up with was actually running along the
7 elevated rail in this section. The only
8 downside to that is that anyone familiar with
9 this knows we have stall parking running
10 alongside here. So we would end up wiping
11 out those parking spaces all the way up to
12 the tunnel.

13 Then we get to our second to last
14 issue with this which is the tunnel itself.
15 That tunnel is barely wide enough for a
16 sidewalk and a lane of traffic in each
17 direction. It became almost prohibited for
18 us to pass bicycles and pedestrians through
19 there and maintain two-way traffic. Then by
20 the time we get to West Jefferson Street, we
21 would still need some kind of sidewalk
22 running through here, which is fine down
23 where the tunnel is, but by the time we get
24 up to the actual trailhead, again, anyone
25 familiar with the area knows that we got a



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1
2 pinch point right here. And it wasn't
3 really conducive to pushing bicycles,
4 pedestrians and two-way traffic through.
5 Which meant we may have had to go to a
6 one-way condition or on West Jefferson. So
7 obviously due to the challenges that I just
8 listed, we decided not to go with this
9 alternative. With that, I have gone through
10 full technical presentation. And I would
11 like to hand it over to Eileen.

12 MS. MOORE: Good evening. I think
13 you can hear me because I can hear myself
14 really loud. I am going to be giving a
15 brief overview of how this State acquires for
16 the Creekwalk under the Eminent Domain
17 Procedure Law and the Federal Uniform
18 Relocation Act. So in order to accomplish
19 the City's proposed next phase of the
20 Creekwalk it will be necessary to acquire
21 portions of residential, commercial and some
22 county-owned property. In addition to the
23 county-owned parcels, this project will
24 require the acquisition of one residential
25 building and depending upon the alternative,



PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 chosen up to three commercial buildings,
3 three vacant parcels and 22 strip
4 acquisitions from private owners.

5 The actual number of properties to
6 be affected and the occupants to be displaced
7 will vary depending upon the option that is
8 finally selected. Review of the relocation
9 requirements for each alternative and the
10 potential problems that maybe encountered will
11 be relevant factors in determining which
12 project final design goes forward.

13 So the real estate transactions on
14 this project can be categorized into two
15 different categories. One, is regular strip
16 acquisition, which can be land in fee title,
17 permanent easements and/or temporary easements
18 and the other is relocation. So the State
19 will be acting of an agent of the City to
20 acquire the property for the city. The role
21 of the right-of-way group will be to acquire
22 the property rights needed to determine the
23 compensation due for the property rights
24 acquired and payment of that compensation.

25 In order to do this we have a very



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2 prescribed process. We need to inspect. We
3 need to appraise and we need to offer,
4 acquire and pay. We're going to go through
5 each one of these in a little more detail.
6 The inspection of the property: All owners
7 from whom we need to acquire property will
8 be contacted by a representative of our
9 right-of-way group. They will be given a
10 preliminary copy of their individual
11 acquisition map and an information packet.
12 At that time representatives from the State
13 DOT will explain the effects of the proposed
14 construction on their property, the appraisal
15 and acquisition processes as well as the
16 relocation process, if applicable. During a
17 site visit, we also determine all physical
18 characteristics and legal interests that need
19 to be considered. This part of the
20 right-of-way work commences only after final
21 design has been selected and right-of-way
22 requirements finalized. This is usually a
23 year to a year and a half before a project
24 in advance of the project letting.

25 The next step is to appraise. On



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1
2 this project both independent consultant
3 appraisers and New York State DOT staff
4 appraisers will be valuing the various
5 property interests. They will analyze real
6 estate transactions of comparable properties,
7 income and cost data as well as research
8 local zoning and building codes, existing
9 land usage, trends and any other data that
10 would affect real estate values.

11 The appraiser will inspect each
12 property from which there will be an
13 acquisition and each property owner is
14 assured the opportunity to accompany the
15 appraiser during inspection.

16 Once the inspections are completed,
17 analysis of the market data can be applied
18 in determining the fair market value of the
19 property rights being acquired. If it is
20 determined that a property is diminished in
21 any way other than by the acquisition, the
22 evaluation will also take into account any
23 loss in value from that as well.

24 All property owners are entitled to
25 be paid fair market value of the property



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2 rights being acquired as the date the State
3 acquires the property. Property owners bear
4 no cost for the appraisal nor for preparation
5 of documents required to pay the claim.
6 However, this does not include fees for those
7 who may wish to retain their own legal
8 counsel. Protection is provided to all
9 property owners through review and approval
10 of all settlements by both the New York
11 State Attorney General's Office and through
12 the State Comptroller's Office.

13 Then we make our offer. We use a
14 one offer system meaning each property owner
15 receives an offer of the full approved
16 appraisal with a description of the
17 appropriated area and an evaluation of the
18 damages.

19 The majority of offers are made by
20 mail, however, anyone requiring relocation
21 will have their offers made in person and
22 full explanation of relocation benefits
23 available to them.

24 Two agreements are available for the
25 payment of claims. An agreement of



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1 adjustment and an agreement for advanced
2 payment. By signing the agreement of
3 adjustment you are agreeing to the offer in
4 full settlement of the claim. However,
5 signing an agreement for advance payment you
6 are reserving your right to continue
7 negotiation settlements while still being able
8 to collect the full amount offered to you.
9 If a property owner believes that there are
10 aspects of their real estate that merit
11 further reconsideration, this information and
12 supporting evidence should be provided at the
13 earliest opportunity so that it can be
14 reviewed with the new data. The results of
15 this review would then be shared with the
16 property owner.

17
18 After we make our offer we will
19 follow up in about two weeks after the offer
20 has been made to see if you have any
21 questions and make sure that you understand
22 the offer.

23 Then we acquire. After the offer is
24 made a copy of the map is filed in the
25 County Clerks's Office, which officially



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1
2 transfers the property rights acquired to the
3 People of the State of New York. After the
4 map is filed, an official notice of the
5 transfer and a copy of the map is sent by
6 certified mail to the property owner, which
7 completes our service requirement.

8 Then we can pay. In order for the
9 State to pay for the property acquisition,
10 you will need to sign one of the two
11 agreements that I discussed earlier and any
12 closing papers that are required by the
13 Attorney General's Office. And in addition
14 to your fair market value offer you will be
15 paid a statutory interest on the offered
16 amount, subject to certain regulations, as
17 well as a reimbursement of any portion of
18 paid, unused real estate taxes.

19 When an agreement is signed and
20 closing paper requirements are satisfied to
21 the Department of Law, payment can be
22 certified and your checks are sent from
23 Albany usually within four to six weeks.

24 If neither agreement is signed, the
25 New York State DOT will request the State



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2 Comptroller's Office to deposit the full
3 amount of your offered compensation into an
4 interest-bearing account.

5 So after the filing of the map in
6 the Clerk's office and either acceptance of
7 agreement or deposit by the State
8 Comptroller's Office, the acquisition is
9 complete and the City contractors are allowed
10 on the property for construction purposes.

11 So outside of the payment for strip
12 acquisitions. If a residential property you
13 own is identified as requiring relocation and
14 in addition to that process I've just
15 reviewed, you or your tenants will also be
16 entitled to receive individual relocation
17 assistance.

18 Residential owners or tenants will be
19 personally interviewed to determine their
20 specific relocation needs and assisted in
21 finding comparable housing. No occupants are
22 required to move without comparable housing
23 immediately available. And occupants will be
24 given a minimum of 90 days to move. Usually
25 there is much more time than that.



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2 All residential occupants are eligible
3 to receive a supplemental housing payment to
4 assist them with either purchasing or renting
5 a replacement dwelling. This payment can
6 consist of: A supplemental housing payment,
7 eligible closings costs if applicable and
8 loss of favorable mortgage financing also if
9 it's applicable.

10 How the supplement payment is
11 determined is explained in the booklets that
12 we have available and will be explained in
13 further detail when the real estate
14 specialist meets with the site occupant.

15 On top of that, all residential
16 occupants will be paid moving expenses.
17 Occupants have a choice of taking a self-move
18 payment, which is a dollar amount based on
19 the number of rooms they have to move or an
20 actual move payment which is where we approve
21 estimates and you hire someone to move your
22 belongings within the approved dollar amount.

23 If a commercial property you own is
24 identified as requiring relocation, in
25 addition to the standard acquisition process



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2 I reviewed earlier, you will also be entitled
3 to receive relocation assistance. Again, all
4 commercial site occupants will be personally
5 interviewed to determine their specific
6 relocation needs.

7 Commercial property owners or their
8 tenants are entitled to either moving and
9 re-establishment or a payment in lieu of
10 moving experiences.

11 Moving expenses can include the
12 actual packing and unpacking of your personal
13 items, disconnecting and reconnecting
14 equipment, storage charges and more. Along
15 with that, expenses of up to \$25,000 can be
16 reimbursed for re-establishment for expenses
17 such as a new signage, stationary, office
18 remodeling and so on. The real estate
19 specialist assisting you will work with you
20 to identify any eligible relocation expenses.

21 Alternately, for any commercial
22 occupants who experience problems with
23 relocating their business, a payment in lieu
24 of moving can be obtained. The Office of
25 Right-of-way will extensively work with all



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1
2 occupants to make sure relocation is as
3 trouble free as we can.

4 Important points to remember: To be
5 eligible for relocation expenses for
6 commercial or residential, we must initiate
7 negotiations first. That means we will be
8 out meeting with you well in advance to
9 this. But we need to make the offer before
10 you can move. By moving ahead of that,
11 you're forfeiting your benefits and we don't
12 want anyone to do that. So if you are
13 identified as needing to be relocated, you
14 need to speak with the real estate
15 representative before you move anywhere. And
16 remember that no site occupants, commercial
17 or residential, will be required to move
18 without at least 90 days notice.

19 So you're welcome to take home a
20 copy of the books we have in the back or in
21 the front, how New York State acquires
22 property for public purposes and if you must
23 move we can help. They explain how we come
24 up with the compensation, the relocation
25 benefits. And the other thing I just wanted



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2 to mention we noted that the handout that
3 you prepared for tonight had our wrong
4 address in there. But these booklets have
5 our correct address in there. So please use
6 these. The phone number and address in our
7 booklets are correct. With that, I am done.

8 MR. STANTON: Thank you. So where
9 do we go from here? What are our next
10 steps? After tonight we will compile the
11 official minutes of the public hearing
12 including the comments. That's going to take
13 approximately a three-week period. We will
14 publish the official minutes on the City of
15 Syracuse website. That's approximately three
16 weeks from today again. We will review the
17 comments and evaluate them for incorporation
18 into the final design report. Again, based
19 on those criteria that I discussed before.

20 We plan on submitting the final
21 design report to New York State DOT in late
22 August of this year. And when design
23 approval is issued we make the property
24 acquisition and final design then eventually
25 construction.



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1
2 So in a second here I am going to
3 open the public comment section of the
4 hearing. And I just want to go over again
5 a few housekeeping notes. In an effort to
6 allow everyone to hear their statements we've
7 provided a microphone up in front. Please
8 speak directly into that. If you feel more
9 comfortable facing the other direction, fine.
10 We will turn the microphone around for you.
11 We have a Spanish language interpreter
12 available also for you in the back of the
13 room. If you have not used one of the
14 pre-registration cards, please state your name
15 and address. Someone will take that down
16 for incorporation into the record. Because
17 again this is a public record of what went
18 on. Again, those who filled out cards to
19 reserve a spot, we will call them first in
20 the order they turned them in. Then open it
21 up for everybody else. We would appreciate
22 if you don't shout out questions or interrupt
23 the speakers. And we're really only allowed
24 to address the speaker who is speaking. We
25 also have a stenographer. Like I said, she



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1
2 will be taking down what everybody says
3 during the meeting and if you don't feel
4 comfortable talking in front of everyone, you
5 can obviously pull her aside afterwards and
6 talk to her about that. The very last thing
7 of this is specifically comments. The actual
8 question portion of it is going to be during
9 informal open house at the end of this. We
10 will all be available to talk to you. And
11 we will be able to talk to you one on one
12 about it. So with that, we will open up
13 the formal comment session.

14 If I did my filing right, we have a
15 Ms. Finch.

16 MR. HOUCK: I think she left.

17 MR. STANTON: Jamie Howley.

18 MS. HOWLEY: Hi. I was at the TNT
19 meeting last night and I said that I would
20 bring their survey along to let people know.
21 I don't have a lot of printed copies, but
22 there is an Internet -- an e-mail address
23 where you can go and fill out the survey
24 online, which probably is easier because you
25 don't have to mail it back in. So I can



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1
2 give you that address if you haven't filled
3 out the TNT survey. The south side has gone
4 without a plan -- the only section of the
5 city that has gone without a plan for 19
6 years. We're finally getting around to doing
7 it. So the survey is going to help us get
8 our goals and whatnot together. So we need
9 as much input as we can. And that internet
10 address is Syrgov.net/TNT/neighborhoodsurvey.
11 Again, it's Syrgov.net/TNT/neighborhoodsurvey.
12 And we're hoping to get more than 200
13 surveys back. They currently have about a
14 100. So we need your input if you haven't
15 done it yet.

16 MR. STANTON: Thank you.

17 MS. HOWLEY: And I will put the
18 extra in the back if you need a paper copy.

19 MR. STANTON: I forgot to ask people
20 to print their names. I believe it might be
21 Moore.

22 MS. MOORE: My penmanship is not
23 quite that bad.

24 MR. STANTON: I'm sorry. Thank you.

25 MS. MOORE: Good evening. My name



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1
2 is Phyllis Moore and I am a life-long
3 resident of the City of Syracuse. I retired
4 from the Syracuse City School District after
5 37 years as an educator. I have been
6 blessed. Having grown-up in this area I
7 often walk down West Onondaga, but never
8 imagined that I would have the opportunity to
9 own property along this corridor. I now own
10 property along this corridor. I have worked
11 hard and invested much of my time and
12 finances on West Onondaga Street to acquire
13 property and improve the neighborhood. I
14 have purchased four properties over the last
15 seven years all adjacent to one another. I
16 have slowly been improving the properties in
17 my area. My crew maintains a flower bed and
18 twice daily picks up all the trash at the
19 intersection of West Street and West
20 Onondaga, which I believe adds to the beauty
21 of a very busy intersection. I intend on
22 opening a restaurant at 415 West Onondaga
23 Street in September. As part of my plans
24 the last parcel I purchased was in August
25 2015. It was a vacant parcel, which would



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1
2 tie all of my properties together. I have
3 been trying to acquire this vacant parcel for
4 seven years. The parcel is desirable for me
5 as it is adjacent to the creek and will give
6 me many options for revitalization in my
7 neighborhood. Phase 2 of the Creekwalk
8 project has slated my property for use in
9 the Creekwalk. Although, the lot is
10 currently vacant, I have plans for the
11 property. The lot along with my other
12 adjacent properties has given me 3.5 acres in
13 the City of Syracuse.

14 Now the Creekwalk designers and
15 powers that be want to take my lot so they
16 can provide green space with a park like
17 setting as part of the project. I don't
18 want to give up any of my property as I am
19 sure none of other residents who are affected
20 want to give up their property either. The
21 designers indicate they need my land as green
22 space. Yet the next portion of the
23 Creekwalk adjacent to my property from Temple
24 Street to Midland Avenue is also slated for
25 green space. Combined this would be the



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1
2 equivalent of approximately 2.4 acres of
3 green space, 1.4 acres from me and 1 acre
4 from Temple to Taylor and Midland area.
5 This area will be about the equivalent of
6 the green space at City Park. At this
7 targeted location it is in proximity to the
8 rescue mission and Central New York State
9 Services. There already exists a high needs
10 population being serviced in this area. And
11 the Salvation Army is doing a renovation on
12 West Onondaga Street that will bring even
13 more high needs people into the area. Take
14 into account the green and resting space that
15 currently exists in this immediate area and
16 what they have become. Clinton and Salina,
17 a homeless and loitering area. The Billings
18 Park, a homeless and loitering area. Clinton
19 and West Onondaga a homeless and loitering
20 area, 500 South Salina building a homeless
21 and loitering area. The area on Adams
22 Street is a homeless encampment. The vacant
23 lot on South Ave near West Onondaga Street
24 is a loitering area. The vacant lot on
25 South Ave near Tallman is a loitering area.



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1
2 There appears to be enough green space and
3 resting areas in this neighborhood already.
4 In this area the Creekwalk needs to be true
5 to its name and remain a walking path along
6 the creek. Not a destination green space to
7 provide additional areas for loitering and
8 living. I slowly and patiently purchased
9 properties adjacent to me for a purpose. I
10 have intended on revitalizing my area and the
11 loss of this lot will irreparably harm me
12 and my ability to move forward in
13 revitalizing my neighborhood as I had
14 planned. Although, I do not want to sell
15 any of my properties, I was willing to
16 compromise and offer a 30-foot strip, which
17 would take away all of my access to the
18 creek and the entrance to Temple Street.
19 This offer was not enough and was rejected
20 by the City of Syracuse representatives.
21 I've had a vision for a long time of what I
22 wanted this space to become, but did not
23 want to disclose it until all the pieces
24 were in place. I have modeled my
25 revitalization of this 3.5 acre parcel after



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1
2 the very successful Larkin Square renovation
3 in Buffalo. The Larkin project really
4 illustrates in a very contemporary way how a
5 once forgotten neighborhood can become vital
6 again. I think my neighborhood needs to be
7 celebrated and developed.

8 After getting my restaurant open, the
9 next phase is to start revitalizing the lot
10 and the building for renovation into a mixed
11 use business residential, cultural and special
12 event space. Included in my renovation plan
13 is my life-long vision of an African American
14 museum. I envision a space dedicated to the
15 African American experience where African
16 American history can be explored and
17 celebrated where an adventure in culture,
18 art, history and achievement can be shared.
19 I have been collecting African American
20 memorabilia for decades in anticipation for
21 the opportunity to share it with the
22 community. I see a location that is open
23 year around and not just during African
24 American history month. That is complete
25 with world wide history as well as local



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history.

For the past year, I have been a volunteer interim executive director for the Dunbar Association. I work six days a week and receive no financial compensation. This commitment that I have made has delayed many of my plans as my time and finances have been on helping Dunbar and not-for-profit African American associations that provide services to the elderly and the youth in the community. However, your plans to take my property are forcing me into a schedule that is not in line with my project planning and will totally stop the revitalization as I have been planning for years. If the City takes my property by eminent domain it will be the second time in my life that the creek has displaced me. When I was seven years old, my home was taken by eminent domain for creek development. And now, once again, my property shall be taken by eminent domain 55 years later for creek development. I do not know what is going to happen to my property, but I am respectfully objecting to taking of



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1
2 my lot for the Creekwalk. I am requesting
3 that the City reconsider their demands and
4 their designs as there are other alternatives
5 whereby Phase 2 of the Creekwalk can still
6 exist and I can use the private property
7 that I have acquired to fulfill my desire
8 for my neighborhood. Put the Creekwalk on
9 the creek. Thank you.

10 MR. STANTON: Thank you. Can
11 everybody hear the speaker up there? It's
12 hard for me to hear where I am. Jamie Lou
13 McKinney?

14 MS. MCKINNEY: My name is Jamie Lou
15 McKinney. I have a business at 415 West
16 Onondaga Street. I am also a member of
17 WOSA, which is the West Onondaga Street
18 Association, whereby we come together and we
19 have been working to make West Onondaga
20 Street an area that would be desirable for
21 people to live in, have businesses in and
22 otherwise just be a pretty great
23 neighborhood. I am objecting to the green
24 space at 405/393 area that they're suggesting
25 for similar reasons as Ms. Moore. And that



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2 is there is plenty of green space on the
3 trail. And we're not in position to
4 exercise any more green space that will
5 attract people to the neighborhood in places
6 to sit. A year ago I was held up at gun
7 point at my residence as I was leaving my
8 office, which was a pretty scary thing. And
9 it's by people who were in the neighborhood
10 who are homeless who is coming to areas that
11 attract them where they can sit and rest and
12 not do anything of any value. So I am just
13 concerned that the additional green space
14 that they want to continue to put in this
15 area based on where my office is that it's
16 going to continue to attract more people. I
17 can't leave my office right now without at
18 least being begged by three or four different
19 people for money every single day. And that
20 intercession has become a massive amount of
21 people begging. And I just think that by
22 putting this additional green space that they
23 want there with the benches and trees for
24 the shade, which is great, but based on the
25 area, I am totally objectionable to that.



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Thank you.

MR. STANTON: Thank you. Thomas
Pierce?

MR. PIERCE: So I think Jamie
actually said it very well. Ms. Moore said
it excellent. The Creekwalk really should
stay on the creek. And I am here to
support that. I think that's where it
should be. There is plenty of enough green
space. I am part West Onondaga Street
Alliance on the board. And we did a
clean-up day. She is right. I mean we
were cleaning up and asked several times for
money. So there is plenty enough areas just
for green space just to move people. It's
pretty sad. But thank you.

MR. STANTON: Thank you. Robert
Bucklin Pierce?

MR. PIERCE: Good evening. My name
is Robert Bucklin Pierce and I am the
president of the West Onondaga Street
Alliance. We have a current membership of
57 members, which include people living and
who work in our area. We have an



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2 organization that is adamantly opposed to
3 taking the Creekwalk from the creek and
4 moving it through our neighborhood. We want
5 the Creekwalk to stay on the creek. Our
6 street has many amazing and exciting things
7 happening to it. We have actor Bronson
8 Pinchot renovating Baum-Neal house into the
9 International OZ Museum. We are planning a
10 yellow brick road walk and run through our
11 neighborhood. West side farmers market,
12 innovation house, my great-great-grandfather's
13 mansion, the new Leavenworth fountain with an
14 interactive fountain and park, three new
15 businesses and two new restaurants, a
16 community ceramics shop and even Mr. Ed
17 Reilly from the Syracuse Marriott is looking
18 to the mansion for his corporate offices.

19 In addition to that, there are three
20 homes and mansions on the 600 or 700 blocks
21 which will be renovated by new owners over
22 the next two years. As a resident of
23 Syracuse for the last 22 years, I am
24 respectfully requesting that you keep the
25 Creekwalk on the creek. If the plans do go



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2 forward to remove the Creekwalk, we will have
3 no choice but to contact our friend David
4 Muir from ABC news and ask him to bring
5 international media attention to this matter.
6 We will also stage and camp on the property
7 and we will stay there to which time the
8 City changes or we are forcefully removed and
9 arrested. Thank you.

10 MR. STANTON: Thank you. J.B.
11 McCampbell?

12 MR. McCAMPBELL: Hello. My name is
13 J.B. McCampbell. I am an officer of 100
14 Black Men of Syracuse. And the reason I am
15 here is that our organization will be
16 sponsoring the Winston Gaskin Community Walk
17 for wellness stroke prevention on September
18 19th. And by the way, all of you are
19 invited to participate in that. In the
20 planning for the walk, I had a chance to go
21 for most of the Creekwalk from Armory Square
22 to the lake and it's beautiful. I can see
23 the possibilities that this could be an asset
24 to the community if Phase 2 is done
25 properly. I have heard some of the concerns



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1 here today, which I wanted to kind of
2 briefly just mention three points. And I
3 think this may connect in some way with what
4 some of the other folks have said.

5
6 Public safety is going to be, in our
7 opinion, a huge consideration. So I am glad
8 to see that there will be proper lighting.
9 There will be call boxes. We were urging
10 that the City of Syracuse do provide the
11 funding so that cameras are also installed
12 along Phase 2 of the Creekwalk. Because
13 folks will not use the Creekwalk if they
14 don't feel safe on it. So that's one of
15 our concerns. The other concern has to do
16 with seeing that the final phase or I should
17 say what I have seen is that there is a --
18 we would like to see a minimum number of
19 homes and private properties affected by the
20 final design. We don't want to see folks
21 impacted negatively by eminent domain.
22 That's a consideration, you know, we want
23 this to be a totally fair process. And I've
24 heard the previous speaker talk about how she
25 would be affected by this. We don't want to



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2 see folks like her harmed by the Creekwalk
3 even though we see that the Creekwalk can be
4 potentially a great asset to the community.

5 The last point I wanted to talk
6 about was I saw this evening that Phase 2
7 calls for 3.8 percent minority participation
8 in the terms of the work force. For a
9 community that has large concentrations of
10 poverty, much of the extension will go
11 through that community, we think that 3.8
12 percent falls well short of what we think
13 would be right and fair for the community.
14 And so we're hopeful that, that number does
15 not turn out to be the final number because
16 jobs are needed in this community our
17 organization besides the mentoring and
18 education programs that we offer, we also are
19 concerned with economic empowerment. That
20 starts with having a job. If this 3.8
21 percent number is maintained that's a missed
22 opportunity for this community once again.
23 Almost the slap in the face. So we're just
24 hopeful. We urge the City to do whatever is
25 necessary to increase that number because



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it's way short. Thank you.

MR. STANTON: Thank you. Aggie Lane?

MS. LANE: I'm Aggie Lane and I live at 340 Midland Avenue. I am also the President of the Urban Jobs Task Force. And I want to piggyback on his comment because even those are the Federal requirements that you have to make, we are already trying to lobby, advocate that this project figures out how to get local people on the project. And by local, I mean people in this community. That this community sees their own working. And it's possible and I think I will let the next speaker speak to that -- maybe that is going to be Gregory Michael. But there are -- people described how that can be possible because the Federal government controls this project. And they say there can't be any local mandate, but there is a way we found out actually through Gregory Michael. And so instead of me trying to detail that if he is the next speaker, I will let him speak to that. But, anyway, we need to work and make



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1
2 sure as you say that people in this
3 community get to work.

4 MR. STANTON: Thank you. You were
5 right. Gregory Michael?

6 MR. MICHAEL: My name is Gregory
7 Michael. I am the Executive Director of the
8 Onondaga Earth Corp, which is a youth
9 conservation corp program that started with
10 Eli MacDonald who used to be the building
11 superintendent at the Dunbar Center in an
12 effort to uplift and empower youth in this
13 community and provide them with work
14 experience. And since Eli started the
15 program we have joined a national effort with
16 programs like ours that have taken on the
17 legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corp in,
18 again, empowering young people to help build
19 the infrastructure in this country and
20 maintain the infrastructure in this country.
21 We have been in operation since 2004 and
22 have been instrumental in installations of a
23 lot of green infrastructure and tree planting
24 in some of our hardest hit neighborhoods.
25 Starting on the south side moving to the



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2 west side and now all over the city and some
3 of our suburbs as well. Providing job
4 training experience for young people and then
5 implementing real projects that have impact
6 in the neighborhoods for improving amenities
7 and as well as providing employment and
8 training for community members. So we're
9 part of a broader network of conservation
10 corp programs. And we see ourselves not as
11 a replacement for other contract work that is
12 going to be on these projects, but we see
13 ourselves as a piece of the puzzle to uplift
14 and employ young people.

15 So I don't get it wrong, the moving
16 ahead for progress in the 21st Century Act
17 is part of Federal highway bill and it
18 requires USDOT to encourage State and
19 regional transportation planning agencies to
20 use qualified conservation corp programs like
21 Onondaga Earth Corp to perform appropriate
22 transportation related projects that have an
23 educational element for young people so that
24 they can go through our program, receive
25 training, do project work and then hopefully



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2 go onto work for contractors in New York
3 State and more broadly. And there are some
4 pretty specific language at the Federal level
5 that supports work with conservation corps.
6 And we would like to work both with our
7 local officials. And we've already been in
8 a lot of the planning or brainstorming
9 meetings around this. But we just want to
10 make it known to all our partners in the
11 community that we're here. We don't think
12 we're the answer to everything, but we think
13 we can be a big piece of the puzzle in
14 getting some young people from these
15 neighborhoods out on the projects.

16 The language in Section 1524 allows
17 for direct contract work and cooperative
18 agreements with conservation corps from
19 Federal highway aid program contracting
20 requirements. And actually there is some
21 sole sourcing language in here, which would
22 make some of the contracting processes very
23 easy to hire young people. So, again, we're
24 happy to be here and happy to be a partner
25 in the process. And look forward to working



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1 with everyone here. Thank you.

2 MR. STANTON: Great. Thank you.

3 And last but not least on the cards is Helen
4 Dewey.

5 MS. DEWEY: My name is Helen Dewey.
6 I live at 377 West Onondaga Street, which is
7 the co-op building. We are a mix of 26
8 residential units and four commercial
9 properties on the ground floor. And we are
10 next door neighbors to lot 393 and our
11 friends over at 415. And I have several
12 concerns that I wanted to express.

13 First, I did want to reiterate both
14 the enthusiasm and also the concerns that
15 both Ms. Moore and Ms. McKinney shared. I
16 left suburbia and deliberately moved to the
17 co-op building because I was so entranced by
18 the transformation that's happening on the
19 near west side. I wanted to be a part of
20 it. I believe in what our city can be.
21 But our city can't be great if everyone
22 lives out in suburbia. So I made the choice
23 to move to the co-op building, renovate an
24 apartment and join 26 other individuals who
25



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2 have also bought property. And see what the
3 co-op can be. It's this wonderful crowned
4 jewel on West Onondaga Street. And see the
5 potential of what else is happening on West
6 Onondaga Street. The lot next door to us to
7 me is this enchanting opportunity to do
8 something fabulous. And I don't know what
9 the plans are that Jamie and Ms. Moore have
10 been working on, but they have spent a lot
11 of time and they show tremendous commitment
12 to the neighborhood. And they have a very
13 good understanding of the balance of both
14 having urban space beautification but also
15 security. And so as much as I am very
16 enthusiastic about our neighborhood, I also
17 am concerned that we do continue to get a
18 disproportionate percentage of our population
19 is extremely vulnerable. They have high
20 needs. And yet with the successes of
21 community and urban planning projects, there
22 is not the sensitivity that at some point we
23 can't take on too much more here. Because
24 it is affecting the quality life. There is
25 loitering issues. We are very concerned



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2 about what happens on the lot next to us
3 because where the creek will go through runs
4 along the edge of our backyard. Our
5 building goes all the way back to the creek.
6 We do have parking back there. We have a
7 fenced area. There is perennial gardens back
8 there. We have a nice private space for our
9 neighbors to enjoy one another and enjoy the
10 evening as well as if we want to scoot
11 downtown. You know, just skip out the front
12 door and head down the street. In heading
13 down the street just walking past those areas
14 where there are concentrations of people who
15 are loitering there has not been a good
16 maintenance plan. And that's one of my
17 other big concerns for the Creekwalk. What
18 is the maintenance plan for the trash
19 removal? Gardening? You know, rain gardens
20 need to be weeded. There are weed beds
21 growing up from where Save the Rain went
22 through. And put in these wonderful rain
23 gardens and I love the concept, but the
24 maintenance plan was not in place. So who
25 is responsible for mowing, trash removal,



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1
2 picking up the litter because that right now
3 is falling on individual landowners. And I
4 have not heard of the plans that I have been
5 exposed to as of yet what that long-term
6 maintenance plan is.

7 Also the interest of property owners
8 who are along the way we got an overview of
9 what is the fair acquisition cost process.
10 It didn't really include a lot on what if
11 the homeowner disagrees. Because quite
12 frankly the City's track record when it comes
13 to eminent domain and declares what a fair
14 value is, is a little uneasy for me. And I
15 just want to make sure that property owners
16 are protected, rights and their financial
17 interests are protected and as well the
18 security, privacy and our overall quality of
19 life. Thank you very much.

20 MR. STANTON: Thank you. Okay.
21 With that if there is anyone else who wishes
22 to come up and talk, now is the time.
23 Going once? Just for the interest of
24 everyone, if you can state your name and we
25 can get it on the record.



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1
2 MR. KING: I am Peter King. I am
3 actually not a resident of the south side.
4 I am on outer Comstock. So I am in
5 Comstock. But I am also a member of Bike
6 NY. And I am -- we are, as far as I know,
7 the only bicycling organization that has been
8 pursuing policy advocacy with the City of
9 Syracuse. We generally favor the idea of a
10 greenway network. Greenways in general. But
11 I am going to speak here as a private
12 individual. I think the one thing that is
13 bothering me about the project is the lack
14 of -- and I am not sure so much as I can
15 say lack, but I think that the incomplete
16 involvement of residents in the planning I
17 think the City took that criticism and
18 possibly improved your process. But I think
19 the City could gain by involving citizens in
20 directly planning it by gaining the insight
21 -- where the issues are already there that
22 which the design could improve and certainly
23 the privacy and eminent domain issues and the
24 less private properties the City has to take
25 the better. You know, I am not going to



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1
2 get more specific than that.

3 But the only other comments I might
4 have here at this session is I think this is
5 an opportunity for green infrastructure. And
6 somebody may have spoken to this already, I
7 was at another event tonight. But I think
8 the City's Save the Rain program was kind of
9 a first step of green infrastructure. It's
10 going to be an ongoing potential for cities
11 because of claimant change because of
12 different other things, which might even
13 create jobs. And so I am favorable to
14 creating local. If the city can create
15 local jobs through this effort I think that
16 will be a plus especially for green
17 infrastructure or innovated jobs. Thank you.
18 That is about all I have to say. Thank
19 you.

20 MR. STANTON: Thank you. Anyone
21 else? Okay. Going once? Going twice? We
22 are going to close the public comment
23 section. Just in closing as a reminder the
24 public comment the written public comment is
25 open for two weeks from the meeting today.



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1 We're going to close that on August 9, 2016.
2 The comments should be sent to either
3 comments@Onondagacreekwalk.com and Russ Houck,
4 we have his address in your brochure. Just
5 a quick note, comments said elsewhere may not
6 make it to us. There has been a couple of
7 people that have come up to me in this
8 process and said: Well, I sent a letter to
9 my common Counselor, to so and so. You
10 know, why don't you have that? They don't
11 necessarily send it us. By all means copy
12 them, if you feel they need to be copied.
13 Make sure we get something. Otherwise, we
14 can't incorporate it into the record. We
15 don't know it exists. And as I said, we
16 will have staff available afterwards. We
17 have an informal open house. We're here to
18 answer questions and if anyone wants to make
19 a private statement we will hang on here and
20 you can do that off to the side. But with
21 that, I want to thank everyone for coming
22 tonight. We do appreciate your input.

23
24 **(Whereupon, the Public Meeting**
25 **concluded at 8:34 p.m.)**



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CERTIFICATE

1
2
3
4 STATE OF NEW YORK

5 COUNTY OF SENECA

6
7 I, LEAH C. DIDSBURY, a Stenotype
8 Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public in the
9 State of New York, do hereby certify that
10 the foregoing record taken by me at the time
11 and place as noted in the heading hereof, is
12 a true and accurate transcript of same, to
13 the best of my knowledge and belief.

14 I further certify that I am neither
15 attorney nor counsel for any of the parties,
16 nor a relative or employee of any attorney
17 or counsel connected with the action, nor
18 financially interested in the outcome of the
19 action.

20 

21
22 LEAH C. DIDSBURY

23 Shorthand Reporter

24 Notary Public

25 DATED: August 11, 2016



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4 PUBLIC HEARING
5
6 FOR
7 PHASE II OF THE ONONDAGA CREEKWALK
8
9
10
11 Held on Tuesday, July 26, 2016, taken at the
12 Southwest Community Center, 401 South Avenue, Syracuse,
13 New York, 13204, commencing at 7:00 p.m., before Leah C.
14 Didsbury, a Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public in and
15 for the State of New York.
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Page 2

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2 PARTICIPANTS:
3
4 Russell Houck
5
6 Chuck Stanton
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8 Eileen Moore
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10 Rich Sawczak
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12 Doug Stansbury
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14 Mike Gridley
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16 Dustin Trivisonno
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Page 3

1
2 PUBLIC HEARING
3 JULY 26, 2016
4 MR. HOUCK: Good evening and welcome
5 to Southwest. We're here for the Creekwalk
6 Phase 2 Public Hearing. Thank you Southwest
7 for hosting us here. And I am Russell Houck
8 with the City of Syracuse Engineering
9 Department, project manager for this project.
10 Our design engineers are C&S Engineers. I
11 am going to briefly introduce you guys.
12 Chuck Stanton here, Doug Stansbury, Mike
13 Gridley, Dustin Trivisonno, he is also here.
14 They can answer your questions after the
15 formal hearing here. And also from the New
16 York State Department of Transportation we
17 have Rich Sawczak, project manager, and
18 Diane Miller and also Eileen Moore will be
19 talking about right-of-way property
20 acquisition.
21 So, briefly, we're nearing the end
22 of the preliminary design phase of this
23 project and we're looking for design approval
24 from New York State, which we would expect
25 in a few months. In general, this phase of

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1
2 the Creekwalk extends the first phase two
3 miles from downtown to the Kirk Park Holden
4 area. It's a federal aid project. We're
5 looking at eighty percent paid for by federal
6 dollars, twenty percent local. And tonight
7 we're going to be looking at the preferred
8 alternative. We will discuss a little bit
9 of the other alternatives that were done.
10 The preferred alternative routing and we have
11 some concepts for green space development.
12 To date, we've had a large amount of
13 public input of public meetings the last
14 couple of years. We have feasibility studies
15 with public input and we had a community
16 advisory group give us some guidance as well.
17 So tonight's format Chuck went into a little
18 bit. Chuck Stanton from C&S Design Engineers
19 will provide an overview, a good detailed
20 summary of the project at this point. Go
21 through the preferred alternative. Following
22 that there will be a presentation by New
23 York State DOT on the right-of-way
24 acquisition. And, finally, people can
25 formally make a comment. We have a



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1
2 stenographer who will record your comments.
3 It's not a question and answer at that
4 point, but we will be available after the
5 formal hearing to answer any questions that
6 the board hears. We are having a formal
7 hearing based on the potential for the number
8 of right-of-way property acquisitions that
9 could be part of this either partial parcels
10 or whole parcels, but on that I would like
11 to turn over to Chuck Stanton from C&S
12 Engineers.

13 MR. STANTON: Thanks Russ. And
14 thanks everybody for coming tonight and
15 sacrificing what's turning out to be a great
16 evening sitting here in this hot room. I
17 will try to cut down on the hot air. First
18 off, can everyone hear me okay? I tend to
19 trail off during these meetings. Just let
20 me know if at any time you can't hear me.
21 We've already talked about who was here. So
22 we will get by that. Again, just a few
23 record keeping things. Make sure we sign
24 in. Fire exits, one behind me and obviously
25 one where you came in. It's actually behind

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1
2 the screen here. We have a stenographer
3 present right now to record our meeting.
4 And with this public hearing format, unlike
5 the other eight meetings that we've had, we
6 can't really address questions during the
7 formal presentation. There will be a formal
8 comment period afterwards. Again, like I
9 said, please fill out the comment forms if
10 you want to get in the formal line.
11 Otherwise, just wait until everybody is done.
12 You can come up. There is no problem.

13 So we talked a little bit about
14 housekeeping. Russ talked about the purpose
15 of the meeting. I am going to give you
16 some project background then to the technical
17 presentation. DOT is going to have a
18 right-of-way acquisition procedure. We will
19 talk about the next steps for this project
20 and where we go from here. We will have
21 public comment then we will close the meeting
22 with closing statements then after that we
23 will have our informal open house and the
24 ability for people to ask questions. Russ
25 also talked about this. So we will skip

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1
2 past that.

3 So what is the Onondaga Creekwalk?
4 A lot of you who have been here have heard
5 this before, but please bear with me. The
6 vision for this trail that runs from Onondaga
7 Lake to Dorwin Ave where possible should
8 follow Onondaga Creek. It's in three phases
9 -- at least three planned phases. First
10 phase Onondaga Lake to Armory Square. That's
11 the one that's completed. Hopefully some of
12 you have utilized that. Phase 2 is the
13 phase that we're talking about now, Armory
14 Square to Kirk Park. Then there is a future
15 Phase 3 in planning from Kirk Park to Dorwin
16 Avenue. That's the southern city limits.
17 So if you imagine this, this would form the
18 backbone of a future interconnected trail
19 system. This would hook into Loop the Lake
20 Trail. This would hook into an extension of
21 the Erie Canal trail way. This would hook
22 into local neighborhood networks as well as
23 bike networks. And we definitely want to
24 have an emphasis on connection with
25 neighborhoods. This is one of the main

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1
2 purposes of having this trail.

3 Again, Russ talked a little bit
4 about this, but why do we have the public
5 input process? This is part of the
6 requirement for all projects that have
7 federal money. So we will review the
8 project plan. We will talk about the
9 impacts. This is designed to allow people
10 to voice their opinion. We want to make
11 sure we have it structure to allow comments
12 to be incorporated into design. So we don't
13 just have a final report ready to slap down
14 and move on from here. We're actually going
15 to take your comments, look at them and if
16 we can incorporate them in a reasonable way
17 into the project, we will. We will have a
18 complete record of this meeting and comments.
19 And we will incorporate those in the final
20 design report.

21 And, again, this public hearing is
22 required to use a number of potential
23 property acquisitions. Right now we have
24 approximately 34. How are we going to do
25 this? All comments are welcome. You can



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1
2 mail the provided form again, that I talked
3 about, on the back of the brochure. You can
4 also e-mail your comments to
5 Onondagacreekwalk.com. Both Russ and I get
6 those. Those will be incorporated into the
7 design report and we have a two-week comment
8 period from today.
9 So what do we do when we get those
10 comments? We evaluate them. It's based on
11 do they fit within the project goals? Do
12 they fit within the funding criteria? We
13 look at the feasibility of the suggestion.
14 And we do an engineering review. We look at
15 the practicality of it. And we also compare
16 that against the overall project budgets. So
17 it would be nice to have a trail on both
18 sides of the creek with interconnected
19 bridges going at each block. Unfortunately,
20 that doesn't fit within our funding resources
21 and it doesn't fit the project criteria,
22 which is to provide a trail from point A to
23 point B. So we divided this public input
24 process into three steps.
25 The first one that -- I am seeing

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1
2 some familiar faces around here. We had a
3 series of three meetings to present the 2008
4 study alternatives. After that we had a
5 second series of three meetings to present
6 the revised alternatives, which incorporated
7 those public comments. Then we took a
8 little bit of a step back in the process and
9 decided to form a community advisory group
10 that met here at the Southwest Community
11 Center. We had two meetings. They provided
12 input on specific sections that we still had
13 some questions about what alternatives we
14 wanted to choose. And then tonight is the
15 public hearing and presentation of the
16 preferred alternative. So we have eight
17 total meetings completed for steps one and
18 two. This one final meeting tonight for
19 nine and we can move on.
20 So, again, as I said our Phase 2 is
21 the continuation of Phase 1 from Armory
22 Square to Onondaga Lake. Current concept
23 plans are a result of the study completed in
24 2008 comments from previous meetings. What
25 we're talking about tonight encompasses the

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1
2 area from Colvin Street to most of West
3 Jefferson Street. Just a little about our
4 timeline. In early 2015 we had our first
5 series of meetings. Mid-2015 our second
6 series. Late last year we started our
7 survey and mapping. So we could start some
8 of the preliminary design process going.
9 Obviously, tonight in July, we have the
10 public hearing. By September 2016 we
11 anticipate having the final design report.
12 And then moving along in fall 2016 the start
13 of final design. Between now and 2018 would
14 be the property acquisition phase. And the
15 2018 to 2020 will be construction. So
16 overall goals -- we want a continuous
17 pedestrian bicycle trail. This section of
18 the project is approximately 2.2 miles long.
19 We want to generally follow Onondaga Creek,
20 what we call the Onondaga Creek corridor.
21 We can't always be right on or right at the
22 creek, but we try to stay there as much as
23 practical.
24 We also want to provide access to
25 city neighborhoods, which would be near the

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1
2 west side, which you will see that. And
3 provide possible opportunities for trailheads
4 or nodes or parks and access points along
5 the trails, green space, picnic areas, things
6 like that. So our design considerations,
7 when we looked at it, while we were
8 developing this weren't practical. We wanted
9 a dedicated trail with a desirable
10 thirteen-foot wide path for bicycles and
11 pedestrians. Basically, six and a half feet
12 in one direction, six and a half feet in the
13 other with a stripe down the middle. Two
14 lanes very similar to a roadway. If we
15 can't meet that thirteen foot width we're
16 allowed to go down to eight to ten feet
17 wide. Where a dedicated trail is not
18 practical, we would utilize streets for
19 bicycles and sidewalks for pedestrians. We
20 do ADA upgrades all along this. Which means
21 sidewalk ramps, detectable warnings. Public
22 safety, we want to make sure we have
23 dedicated street crossings and lighting.
24 Increasing the visibility of this so that
25 everyone can see who is on the trail. And



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1
2 when you're on the trail you can see who is
3 off the trail.
4 We're also investigating the use of
5 cop cameras. This is going to require some
6 additional funding outside of the project and
7 some coordination with the Syracuse Police
8 Department. And we are also investigating
9 the use of emergency lights or call boxes at
10 strategic locations along the path. So on
11 our draft design report we've reviewed
12 available space and multiple routes. We
13 identified our two feasibility alternatives.
14 And through the source of six public meetings
15 and two community advisory meetings we
16 selected segments of two feasibility
17 alternatives to make a preferred alternative.
18 And we have just for reference afterwards we
19 have a comparison -- the big board on my
20 right here on your guys' left is the two
21 conceptional alternatives that we used. And
22 on my left and your right is the preferred
23 alternative, which is really a melding of
24 what we thought was the best pieces of those
25 two.

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1
2 So our preliminary cost estimate of
3 today we're looking at about \$7.6 million
4 construction for this 2.2 miles. About \$1.9
5 million for right-of-way acquisition cost.
6 This is all estimated. We anticipate a
7 federal contribution of eighty percent of the
8 total project cost. So right now what that
9 means is the City would be responsible for
10 twenty percent of the project cost or .40
11 cents on the dollar. This works out to
12 about \$1.9 million for the City's
13 contribution to this project. And just for
14 comparison on Phase 1 it was \$6.2 million
15 for construction. So you can see we upped
16 the game a little bit here as far as the
17 funding for the project and potentially what
18 we can include in it.
19 Just a little bit about contracting
20 goals because I know that's been a recurring
21 question here. During our design phase we
22 have a 20 percent disadvantage business
23 enterprise goal. DBE, that's an actual firm
24 that does professional services to help us
25 out with the design. Right now we have

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1
2 exceeded that at about 32.7 percent. That's
3 surveying, mapping and environmental
4 professional services. During the
5 construction phase we have two different
6 goals we have been working on. First is a
7 work-force goal. So of the work force that
8 works on the project 6.9 of that work force
9 has to be female, 3.8 percent of that has to
10 be minority. And then on top of that there
11 is a six percent disadvantage business goal.
12 So on top of the actual work force
13 requirement, the contractor will be required
14 to hire at least six percent disadvantaged
15 businesses to work on this project.
16 Unfortunately, at this point the current
17 process doesn't allow for the requirements
18 for local work force. But I can tell you
19 that the City's made that request. DOT is
20 being researched to see if we can get into
21 the USDOT pilot program. We obviously can't
22 make any promises about that, but I wanted
23 to let you folks know that that is being
24 researched. And on top of that, when you
25 look at from when the project is built and

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1
2 in the future we're also looking at
3 opportunities to get local work force
4 involved in the actual maintenance of the
5 trail as well as maintaining the plants and
6 providing additional plants.
7 So now we can talk about the
8 alternative. So we have common elements to
9 every alternative. First, is that we want
10 to do selective thinning of the vegetation
11 along the bank of the creek. So we have
12 this great resource, which is Onondaga Creek,
13 but you can't see it because of all the tree
14 growth along it. The idea is to go in
15 there and selectively pull out trees and thin
16 out bushes and whatnot so that everybody can
17 see there is actually water in front of you.
18 Obviously, ADA accessible ramps and walks.
19 We want to minimize the number of changes in
20 pedestrian bicycle patterns. What that means
21 is that 13-foot wide path concept that I was
22 talking to everybody about six and a half
23 foot in one direction and six and a half
24 foot in the other, we don't want to have
25 unnecessary splits from that to people



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1 walking on sidewalks and bikes going in the
 2 road. Because you wind up having to cross
 3 each other. So we want to try to minimize
 4 that as much as possible. Lighting -- and
 5 if I could put it in here -- I probably
 6 should have put it in here three times.
 7 Lighting, lighting and lighting. We want to
 8 make sure we have lighting along here.
 9 We've set people out to do a photometric
 10 survey of the area. We will be adding new
 11 lighting. We will be supplanting --
 12 supplementing existing lighting. We will
 13 provide striping to delineate the path and
 14 channelize vehicles away from pedestrians
 15 where practical.
 16 We also want to focus moving
 17 pedestrians from point A to point B.
 18 Basically, from the beginning of the trail to
 19 the end of the trail. But we also want to
 20 provide some kind of facility for stopping,
 21 resting along the way. And, obviously,
 22 way-finding signs. We have this great trail,
 23 but if we don't have signs telling you where
 24 it is, it's pretty easy to get off the
 25

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1 trail. We've broken this up into three
 2 sections.
 3 First street is Colvin to Midland
 4 Ave. And we got a -- thank you, Dustin.
 5 We actually have a map up here now. If you
 6 wouldn't mind zooming in down on the south
 7 end if you can. Thank you, sir. So let's
 8 talk about the Onondaga Creek Boulevard to
 9 South Ave, which I can get my -- so Onondaga
 10 Creek Boulevard where the trailhead is up to
 11 South Avenue. Talk about this section first.
 12 What we want to do is accomplish dedicated
 13 parking, a trailhead at Hunt Avenue. This
 14 gives us for people to park and walk for the
 15 day. To do something that my family likes
 16 to do which is we park one vehicle down at
 17 the south end and one vehicle down at the
 18 north end and we walk down, hop in the
 19 vehicle, drive ourselves back. Also gives us
 20 room to bring in and use the kayaks because
 21 what we plan on doing is what we call a
 22 boat launch, really a canoe and kayak launch.
 23 So right down here at Hunt Ave have a port
 24 edge from our parking lot all the way to the
 25

Page 19

1 boat launch. A very short distance from the
 2 boat launch. Dropping your canoe or kayak,
 3 utilize the creek and then come pull out at
 4 the end of the day. We're going to run the
 5 path -- what we call the Park's Facility
 6 Building some of you may know as travelers'
 7 rest -- we're going to actually utilize the
 8 area behind that to run the trail through.
 9 Again, 13-foot wide. And then we decided to
 10 keep ourselves close to the creek at this
 11 point. We're actually going to run the
 12 trail under the South Avenue bridge.
 13 Obviously, we will provide lighting there.
 14 This is going to require all new lighting.
 15 So now we will talk to South Avenue
 16 to Rich Street. So here to here
 17 (indicating). Again, we will provide a
 18 13-foot wide asphalt path. There will be a
 19 section of lower Onondaga Park Drive that
 20 gets closed as a result of this. The path
 21 is going to be separate until it hits this
 22 intersection, but it will combine with
 23 Onondaga Park Drive. And by the time it
 24 reaches this spot right here (indicating)
 25

Page 20

1 we're actually going to have a one-way-in
 2 condition. So the parks' vehicles and
 3 visitors can come in, but bikes and
 4 pedestrians can still get out. And,
 5 obviously, we will have lighting again. All
 6 new lighting through here.
 7 Let's talk about Rich Street to
 8 Midland Avenue because of some space
 9 constraints here we will be providing a
 10 10-foot wide path running up to South Avenue.
 11 In this area here we have an open lawn right
 12 now. We're thinking about this as a
 13 possible potential green space. And you will
 14 see some renderings scattered across the room
 15 and in a slide show at the end of this.
 16 We're thinking possibly we have potential
 17 uses as a dog walk, fishing access or picnic
 18 day-use area or some combination of all of
 19 them. Once we reach South Avenue we're
 20 going to widen this existing sidewalk to
 21 13-foot wide. And some of you are actually
 22 familiar with this area. The county came
 23 through and put in a very nice somewhat
 24 narrow path running from here to here
 25



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1
2 (indicating) as part of their RTF project.
3 What we plan on doing is actually widening
4 that to 13 feet and changing the alignment a
5 little bit to get us a little bit closer to
6 the creek. Doing selective thinning and
7 whatnot. And one important feature of this
8 was this is part of Save the Rain project.
9 So this has impermeable concrete. So we
10 will be replacing that with permeable
11 concrete actually increasing the water
12 quality, volume and treatment, if you will.
13 We will supplement the existing lighting.
14 And we will cross the Midland Avenue bridge
15 by widening this southern sidewalk and
16 shifting all the traffic to the north a
17 little bit. The important thing there is
18 that we're not going to narrow lanes below
19 12 feet. And we're not going to effect the
20 traffic patterns through there. You will
21 still be able to drive one lane in each
22 direction. There will just be a much wider
23 sidewalk on the one side than you're accustom
24 to.
25 Then the very last thing I want to

Page 23

1
2 actual creek level and running all the way
3 up to basically Midland where we come back
4 up to street level. We've looked at that.
5 That was part of what our focus group here
6 at the Southwest Community Center looked at.
7 We would have acquired some significant
8 retaining walls and a lot of cost to the
9 project. And because of that we ended up
10 not choosing it because of the cost, the
11 limit to access at Marginal and Hovey. And,
12 frankly, because we had another path already
13 made along Martin Luther King Street.
14 So Section 2, Midland Ave to Seymour
15 -- so, Section 2, we will talk about Midland
16 Ave to Temple Street. So we're talking
17 Midland Avenue to Temple. What we're
18 planning on doing is having a 13-foot wide
19 asphalt path. The standard width that we
20 wanted. We would cross Midland Avenue near
21 Hovey Street right here. And we have what
22 they call a hawk signal. It is not a full
23 traffic signal. But it is considered a stop
24 sign under New York State Law. So when you
25 add mast arms and drop down flashing red

Page 22

1
2 talk about in this section is the question
3 you might be asking is what was the
4 alternative to that? So let's talk about
5 our alternative 2. That alternative 2 would
6 have used Onondaga Creek Boulevard and lower
7 Onondaga Park Drive. So we would have used
8 Onondaga Creek Boulevard all the way through.
9 This would have required either a partial
10 closure or a full closure to traffic. We
11 would have utilized most of the roadway. At
12 South Avenue that would have required a
13 crossing signal for us to get across South
14 Avenue. And then when we get up to Marginal
15 and Hovey, over here, we would have been on
16 this side of the creek. That presented some
17 unique challenges. We would have had to
18 share use of vehicles. That could have
19 included a one-way condition on Marginal and
20 Hovey in order to give us enough room to put
21 the path in. It also likely would have
22 required us to close down a portion of Hovey
23 to be able to get past. We also
24 contemplated along Hovey Street once we got
25 down past this point coming down to the

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1
2 beacons that cover each way. Someone walks
3 up. They press the signal crossing button.
4 It times out, they start flashing and you're
5 allowed to walk across the crosswalk.
6 Anybody going through that gets a nice ticket
7 from a Syracuse Police Officer. We will run
8 the path at the top of the bank slightly
9 depressed nearby by two or three feet to
10 allow some separation between backyards and
11 the path. This is where the majority of our
12 property acquisition is focused at this
13 point. We will talk more about the property
14 acquisition process later in this
15 presentation. But I will cover some things
16 briefly here.
17 And we will also have lighting here.
18 I want to let everybody know that we intend
19 to shield on the backside, the lighting.
20 The lighting that faces people's backyards to
21 keep light spill over from going into
22 people's backyards and into their houses.
23 Here is some conceptions. This is a very
24 good conception of what it would look like.
25 We would have a thirteen-foot wide path.



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1
2 About a seven-foot wide planted slope that's
3 slightly depressed. Our lighting and actual
4 physical barrier between our path and
5 people's backyards. So with that, just the
6 rough idea on the property acquisitions the
7 Old Oxford Inn, we would plan on demolishing
8 that and turning that into green space.
9 What used to be a printing company that's
10 currently vacant that would go also. And be
11 wrapped into a much larger green space area,
12 which we have a section of that, that we
13 would be more than happy to point out to you
14 after the meeting. Also 427 Midland Avenue,
15 a warehouse kind of an eyesore at this
16 point. It's right up against the creek
17 where we need to be. So because of this,
18 that building would have to go to be able to
19 build this path. No green space though is
20 planned at this point here because we have a
21 pretty big opportunity for green space here.
22 But in talking with Russ and the City this
23 could be the potential area for future
24 development by the City of Syracuse.
25 When we get up around Tallman, it's

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1
2 obvious we're very close to the existing
3 residents here. We're planning right now on
4 having a retaining wall on either side of
5 this to kind of build out our area. So the
6 path can go by and not really affect these
7 people's side yards too much. And by the
8 time we get out to Temple Street, we really
9 don't have a choice here with the way
10 restrictions would go for building a
11 retaining wall and the hydraulics on the
12 creek. So at this point this alternative
13 would have the 401-403 Temple Street house
14 demolished and converted to green space.
15 And then in terms of minor
16 acquisitions basically every property around
17 along here will have a strip of roughly, I
18 believe we were talking about 18 to 20 feet
19 from the backyard in order to allow the
20 Creekwalk to be built. This will be
21 basically purchased and owned and maintained
22 by the City of Syracuse.
23 So let's talk about Temple Street to
24 West Onondaga Street, which is the end of
25 our Section 2. So, again, we plan our

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1
2 13-foot asphalt path. There are a couple of
3 different alternatives for this because we
4 have a rather wide green space here. You
5 will see the actual one -- the preferred
6 alternative over here. The idea here is to
7 convert at least a portion of this lot to
8 green space in a day-use area. Potential
9 Creekwalk overlook down at the southern end
10 of it. And along the northern end creating
11 a gateway to the Creekwalk and rendering of
12 that as we go along.
13 So, now, Section 2. A very short
14 section still Midland Ave -- West Onondaga to
15 Seymour Street. At this point we will wind
16 up using the existing pedestrian crossing to
17 get across to West Street. We will widen
18 the existing concrete sidewalk to 10 feet
19 between West Onondaga and Shonnard Street.
20 And also Seymour Street where we will
21 gradually blend over to match the existing
22 cycle track that is along West Street. At
23 Shonnard Street and Seymour Street
24 intersections, we're going to narrow the
25 crossing there. The idea is to take

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1
2 Shonnard down from three lanes to two lanes.
3 And Seymour from about four and a half lanes
4 to three lanes. Now, you may ask why we're
5 doing this? What we did was actually looked
6 at the other side of the West Street and saw
7 that Seymour and Shonnard leading into West
8 Street have almost a completely different
9 configuration from this side. So what we're
10 going to do is match these two together.
11 There is an added benefit to us in that it
12 decreases the crossing distances that
13 pedestrians and bikes need to get from one
14 side of the street to the other. Like I
15 said, it also matches the configuration of
16 the road on the other side. It also allows
17 us the opportunity to if we bumped these out
18 have a little bit of extra parking along
19 these streets too that's protected.
20 So, now, alternative 2. We will
21 talk about Midland to Seymour just in
22 general. Alternative 2 would have utilized
23 the existing right-of-way along Midland Avenue
24 along the sidewalk. We would have widened
25 the sidewalk. And probably would have wound



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1
2 up narrowing the existing green space that's
3 there between the sidewalk and the curb. We
4 would have more than a dozen driveway
5 crossings from up and down driveway
6 reconstruction we would have to do in order
7 to accomplish that. We would rebuild at
8 least seven sets of stairs. One of the
9 upsides, it was less property acquisitions
10 for us than the preferred alternative. But
11 when we talked to the community advisor
12 group, they indicated a reference of a path
13 location behind the houses along the creek
14 bank. Keep it as close to the creek as
15 possible. Keep it straight. Keep it out of
16 the existing roadway, which I can tell from
17 driving up and down is a little congested to
18 begin with. So try to fit everybody
19 together may not have been the best idea.
20 And this wasn't chosen due to the driveway
21 impacts and the input of the community
22 advisory group.
23 So our last section, Section 3,
24 Seymour Street to Armory Square. So let's
25 talk about the Seymour to Walton Street. If

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1
2 anybody is familiar with the area some
3 existing cycling track there on your side
4 roadway parallel to West Street. We would
5 utilize that existing cycle track. We would
6 improve the sidewalk that is there. We have
7 stripped islands. Those would be converted
8 to curbed islands with plantings. So kind
9 of up the game a little bit in terms of
10 landscaping through there. We would
11 supplement the existing lighting. Again, as
12 I mentioned the survey that we did. And we
13 wind up crossing under the railroad bridge
14 and join with the Walton Street sidewalk by
15 going through the tail end of the connecting
16 corridor. Then obviously come down to Walton
17 Street sidewalk and we will hit the Phase 1.
18 One little note about this connection there
19 is a little bit of city-owned property that's
20 being used as parking. That necessarily
21 would have to go for us to be able to
22 create our path. We would have selectively
23 rehabilitation of this sidewalk along Walton
24 Street if it's needed. And because of the
25 fact this is a pretty heavily traveled area

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1
2 the City has done a really good job of
3 maintaining lighting through here. One of
4 the side benefits is we don't need additional
5 lighting through this area. So what was
6 alternative 2? Why didn't we go with it?
7 We would utilize the West Onondaga Street
8 sidewalk within the existing right-of-way.
9 So once we cross here at the old Onondaga
10 place we would come down to this
11 intersection. We would wind up crossing
12 twice, this major intersection of Onondaga
13 Ave and Seymour and Shonnard. At that point
14 we would cut across some of the rec center's
15 property for Onondaga Street and cross over
16 to the Trolley lot. We don't have a current
17 area of this. But, basically, the way the
18 Trolley lot is configured is that there is a
19 five-foot sidewalk that runs along the
20 perimeter. And it goes through a crosswalk
21 that goes into the tunnel that meets West
22 Jefferson Street. Unfortunately, because of
23 all infrastructure that's already been built
24 there, we didn't have a lot of opportunity
25 to look at widening that sidewalk because we

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1
2 would be moving drainage structures. Things
3 that the county already spent a lot of money
4 on trying to get into their treatment
5 facility. So the option that we have come
6 up with was actually running along the
7 elevated rail in this section. The only
8 downside to that is that anyone familiar with
9 this knows we have stall parking running
10 alongside here. So we would end up wiping
11 out those parking spaces all the way up to
12 the tunnel.
13 Then we get to our second to last
14 issue with this which is the tunnel itself.
15 That tunnel is barely wide enough for a
16 sidewalk and a lane of traffic in each
17 direction. It became almost prohibited for
18 us to pass bicycles and pedestrians through
19 there and maintain two-way traffic. Then by
20 the time we get to West Jefferson Street, we
21 would still need some kind of sidewalk
22 running through here, which is fine down
23 where the tunnel is, but by the time we get
24 up to the actual trailhead, again, anyone
25 familiar with the area knows that we got a



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1
2 pinch point right here. And it wasn't
3 really conducive to pushing bicycles,
4 pedestrians and two-way traffic through.
5 Which meant we may have had to go to a
6 one-way condition or on West Jefferson. So
7 obviously due to the challenges that I just
8 listed, we decided not to go with this
9 alternative. With that, I have gone through
10 full technical presentation. And I would
11 like to hand it over to Eileen.

12 MS. MOORE: Good evening. I think
13 you can hear me because I can hear myself
14 really loud. I am going to be giving a
15 brief overview of how this State acquires for
16 the Creekwalk under the Eminent Domain
17 Procedure Law and the Federal Uniform
18 Relocation Act. So in order to accomplish
19 the City's proposed next phase of the
20 Creekwalk it will be necessary to acquire
21 portions of residential, commercial and some
22 county-owned property. In addition to the
23 county-owned parcels, this project will
24 require the acquisition of one residential
25 building and depending upon the alternative,

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1
2 chosen up to three commercial buildings,
3 three vacant parcels and 22 strip
4 acquisitions from private owners.

5 The actual number of properties to
6 be affected and the occupants to be displaced
7 will vary depending upon the option that is
8 finally selected. Review of the relocation
9 requirements for each alternative and the
10 potential problems that maybe encountered will
11 be relevant factors in determining which
12 project final design goes forward.

13 So the real estate transactions on
14 this project can be categorized into two
15 different categories. One, is regular strip
16 acquisition, which can be land in fee title,
17 permanent easements and/or temporary easements
18 and the other is relocation. So the State
19 will be acting of an agent of the City to
20 acquire the property for the city. The role
21 of the right-of-way group will be to acquire
22 the property rights needed to determine the
23 compensation due for the property rights
24 acquired and payment of that compensation.
25 In order to do this we have a very

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1
2 prescribed process. We need to inspect. We
3 need to appraise and we need to offer,
4 acquire and pay. We're going to go through
5 each one of these in a little more detail.

6 The inspection of the property: All owners
7 from whom we need to acquire property will
8 be contacted by a representative of our
9 right-of-way group. They will be given a
10 preliminary copy of their individual
11 acquisition map and an information packet.

12 At that time representatives from the State
13 DOT will explain the effects of the proposed
14 construction on their property, the appraisal
15 and acquisition processes as well as the
16 relocation process, if applicable. During a
17 site visit, we also determine all physical
18 characteristics and legal interests that need
19 to be considered. This part of the
20 right-of-way work commences only after final
21 design has been selected and right-of-way
22 requirements finalized. This is usually a
23 year to a year and a half before a project
24 in advance of the project letting.
25 The next step is to appraise. On

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1
2 this project both independent consultant
3 appraisers and New York State DOT staff
4 appraisers will be valuing the various
5 property interests. They will analyze real
6 estate transactions of comparable properties,
7 income and cost data as well as research
8 local zoning and building codes, existing
9 land usage, trends and any other data that
10 would affect real estate values.

11 The appraiser will inspect each
12 property from which there will be an
13 acquisition and each property owner is
14 assured the opportunity to accompany the
15 appraiser during inspection.

16 Once the inspections are completed,
17 analysis of the market data can be applied
18 in determining the fair market value of the
19 property rights being acquired. If it is
20 determined that a property is diminished in
21 any way other than by the acquisition, the
22 evaluation will also take into account any
23 loss in value from that as well.
24 All property owners are entitled to
25 be paid fair market value of the property



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1
2 rights being acquired as the date the State
3 acquires the property. Property owners bear
4 no cost for the appraisal nor for preparation
5 of documents required to pay the claim.
6 However, this does not include fees for those
7 who may wish to retain their own legal
8 counsel. Protection is provided to all
9 property owners through review and approval
10 of all settlements by both the New York
11 State Attorney General's Office and through
12 the State Comptroller's Office.
13 Then we make our offer. We use a
14 one offer system meaning each property owner
15 receives an offer of the full approved
16 appraisal with a description of the
17 appropriated area and an evaluation of the
18 damages.
19 The majority of offers are made by
20 mail, however, anyone requiring relocation
21 will have their offers made in person and
22 full explanation of relocation benefits
23 available to them.
24 Two agreements are available for the
25 payment of claims. An agreement of

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1
2 adjustment and an agreement for advanced
3 payment. By signing the agreement of
4 adjustment you are agreeing to the offer in
5 full settlement of the claim. However,
6 signing an agreement for advance payment you
7 are reserving your right to continue
8 negotiation settlements while still being able
9 to collect the full amount offered to you.
10 If a property owner believes that there are
11 aspects of their real estate that merit
12 further reconsideration, this information and
13 supporting evidence should be provided at the
14 earliest opportunity so that it can be
15 reviewed with the new data. The results of
16 this review would then be shared with the
17 property owner.
18 After we make our offer we will
19 follow up in about two weeks after the offer
20 has been made to see if you have any
21 questions and make sure that you understand
22 the offer.
23 Then we acquire. After the offer is
24 made a copy of the map is filed in the
25 County Clerks's Office, which officially

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1
2 transfers the property rights acquired to the
3 People of the State of New York. After the
4 map is filed, an official notice of the
5 transfer and a copy of the map is sent by
6 certified mail to the property owner, which
7 completes our service requirement.
8 Then we can pay. In order for the
9 State to pay for the property acquisition,
10 you will need to sign one of the two
11 agreements that I discussed earlier and any
12 closing papers that are required by the
13 Attorney General's Office. And in addition
14 to your fair market value offer you will be
15 paid a statutory interest on the offered
16 amount, subject to certain regulations, as
17 well as a reimbursement of any portion of
18 paid, unused real estate taxes.
19 When an agreement is signed and
20 closing paper requirements are satisfied to
21 the Department of Law, payment can be
22 certified and your checks are sent from
23 Albany usually within four to six weeks.
24 If neither agreement is signed, the
25 New York State DOT will request the State

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1
2 Comptroller's Office to deposit the full
3 amount of your offered compensation into an
4 interest-bearing account.
5 So after the filing of the map in
6 the Clerk's office and either acceptance of
7 agreement or deposit by the State
8 Comptroller's Office, the acquisition is
9 complete and the City contractors are allowed
10 on the property for construction purposes.
11 So outside of the payment for strip
12 acquisitions. If a residential property you
13 own is identified as requiring relocation and
14 in addition to that process I've just
15 reviewed, you or your tenants will also be
16 entitled to receive individual relocation
17 assistance.
18 Residential owners or tenants will be
19 personally interviewed to determine their
20 specific relocation needs and assisted in
21 finding comparable housing. No occupants are
22 required to move without comparable housing
23 immediately available. And occupants will be
24 given a minimum of 90 days to move. Usually
25 there is much more time than that.



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1
2 All residential occupants are eligible
3 to receive a supplemental housing payment to
4 assist them with either purchasing or renting
5 a replacement dwelling. This payment can
6 consist of: A supplemental housing payment,
7 eligible closings costs if applicable and
8 loss of favorable mortgage financing also if
9 it's applicable.

10 How the supplement payment is
11 determined is explained in the booklets that
12 we have available and will be explained in
13 further detail when the real estate
14 specialist meets with the site occupant.

15 On top of that, all residential
16 occupants will be paid moving expenses.
17 Occupants have a choice of taking a self-move
18 payment, which is a dollar amount based on
19 the number of rooms they have to move or an
20 actual move payment which is where we approve
21 estimates and you hire someone to move your
22 belongings within the approved dollar amount.

23 If a commercial property you own is
24 identified as requiring relocation, in
25 addition to the standard acquisition process

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1
2 I reviewed earlier, you will also be entitled
3 to receive relocation assistance. Again, all
4 commercial site occupants will be personally
5 interviewed to determine their specific
6 relocation needs.

7 Commercial property owners or their
8 tenants are entitled to either moving and
9 re-establishment or a payment in lieu of
10 moving experiences.

11 Moving expenses can include the
12 actual packing and unpacking of your personal
13 items, disconnecting and reconnecting
14 equipment, storage charges and more. Along
15 with that, expenses of up to \$25,000 can be
16 reimbursed for re-establishment for expenses
17 such as a new signage, stationary, office
18 remodeling and so on. The real estate
19 specialist assisting you will work with you
20 to identify any eligible relocation expenses.

21 Alternately, for any commercial
22 occupants who experience problems with
23 relocating their business, a payment in lieu
24 of moving can be obtained. The Office of
25 Right-of-way will extensively work with all

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1
2 occupants to make sure relocation is as
3 trouble free as we can.

4 Important points to remember: To be
5 eligible for relocation expenses for
6 commercial or residential, we must initiate
7 negotiations first. That means we will be
8 out meeting with you well in advance to
9 this. But we need to make the offer before
10 you can move. By moving ahead of that,
11 you're forfeiting your benefits and we don't
12 want anyone to do that. So if you are
13 identified as needing to be relocated, you
14 need to speak with the real estate
15 representative before you move anywhere. And
16 remember that no site occupants, commercial
17 or residential, will be required to move
18 without at least 90 days notice.

19 So you're welcome to take home a
20 copy of the books we have in the back or in
21 the front, how New York State acquires
22 property for public purposes and if you must
23 move we can help. They explain how we come
24 up with the compensation, the relocation
25 benefits. And the other thing I just wanted

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1
2 to mention we noted that the handout that
3 you prepared for tonight had our wrong
4 address in there. But these booklets have
5 our correct address in there. So please use
6 these. The phone number and address in our
7 booklets are correct. With that, I am done.

8 MR. STANTON: Thank you. So where
9 do we go from here? What are our next
10 steps? After tonight we will compile the
11 official minutes of the public hearing
12 including the comments. That's going to take
13 approximately a three-week period. We will
14 publish the official minutes on the City of
15 Syracuse website. That's approximately three
16 weeks from today again. We will review the
17 comments and evaluate them for incorporation
18 into the final design report. Again, based
19 on those criteria that I discussed before.

20 We plan on submitting the final
21 design report to New York State DOT in late
22 August of this year. And when design
23 approval is issued we make the property
24 acquisition and final design then eventually
25 construction.



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1
2 So in a second here I am going to
3 open the public comment section of the
4 hearing. And I just want to go over again
5 a few housekeeping notes. In an effort to
6 allow everyone to hear their statements we've
7 provided a microphone up in front. Please
8 speak directly into that. If you feel more
9 comfortable facing the other direction, fine.
10 We will turn the microphone around for you.
11 We have a Spanish language interpreter
12 available also for you in the back of the
13 room. If you have not used one of the
14 pre-registration cards, please state your name
15 and address. Someone will take that down
16 for incorporation into the record. Because
17 again this is a public record of what went
18 on. Again, those who filled out cards to
19 reserve a spot, we will call them first in
20 the order they turned them in. Then open it
21 up for everybody else. We would appreciate
22 if you don't shout out questions or interrupt
23 the speakers. And we're really only allowed
24 to address the speaker who is speaking. We
25 also have a stenographer. Like I said, she

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1
2 will be taking down what everybody says
3 during the meeting and if you don't feel
4 comfortable talking in front of everyone, you
5 can obviously pull her aside afterwards and
6 talk to her about that. The very last thing
7 of this is specifically comments. The actual
8 question portion of it is going to be during
9 informal open house at the end of this. We
10 will all be available to talk to you. And
11 we will be able to talk to you one on one
12 about it. So with that, we will open up
13 the formal comment session.
14 If I did my filing right, we have a
15 Ms. Finch.
16 MR. HOUCK: I think she left.
17 MR. STANTON: Jamie Howley.
18 MS. HOWLEY: Hi. I was at the TNT
19 meeting last night and I said that I would
20 bring their survey along to let people know.
21 I don't have a lot of printed copies, but
22 there is an Internet -- an e-mail address
23 where you can go and fill out the survey
24 online, which probably is easier because you
25 don't have to mail it back in. So I can

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1
2 give you that address if you haven't filled
3 out the TNT survey. The south side has gone
4 without a plan -- the only section of the
5 city that has gone without a plan for 19
6 years. We're finally getting around to doing
7 it. So the survey is going to help us get
8 our goals and whatnot together. So we need
9 as much input as we can. And that internet
10 address is Syrgov.net/TNT/neighborhoodsurvey.
11 Again, it's Syrgov.net/TNT/neighborhoodsurvey.
12 And we're hoping to get more than 200
13 surveys back. They currently have about a
14 100. So we need your input if you haven't
15 done it yet.
16 MR. STANTON: Thank you.
17 MS. HOWLEY: And I will put the
18 extra in the back if you need a paper copy.
19 MR. STANTON: I forgot to ask people
20 to print their names. I believe it might be
21 Moore.
22 MS. MOORE: My penmanship is not
23 quite that bad.
24 MR. STANTON: I'm sorry. Thank you.
25 MS. MOORE: Good evening. My name

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1
2 is Phyllis Moore and I am a life-long
3 resident of the City of Syracuse. I retired
4 from the Syracuse City School District after
5 37 years as an educator. I have been
6 blessed. Having grown-up in this area I
7 often walk down West Onondaga, but never
8 imagined that I would have the opportunity to
9 own property along this corridor. I now own
10 property along this corridor. I have worked
11 hard and invested much of my time and
12 finances on West Onondaga Street to acquire
13 property and improve the neighborhood. I
14 have purchased four properties over the last
15 seven years all adjacent to one another. I
16 have slowly been improving the properties in
17 my area. My crew maintains a flower bed and
18 twice daily picks up all the trash at the
19 intersection of West Street and West
20 Onondaga, which I believe adds to the beauty
21 of a very busy intersection. I intend on
22 opening a restaurant at 415 West Onondaga
23 Street in September. As part of my plans
24 the last parcel I purchased was in August
25 2015. It was a vacant parcel, which would



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1
2 tie all of my properties together. I have
3 been trying to acquire this vacant parcel for
4 seven years. The parcel is desirable for me
5 as it is adjacent to the creek and will give
6 me many options for revitalization in my
7 neighborhood. Phase 2 of the Creekwalk
8 project has slated my property for use in
9 the Creekwalk. Although, the lot is
10 currently vacant, I have plans for the
11 property. The lot along with my other
12 adjacent properties has given me 3.5 acres in
13 the City of Syracuse.

14 Now the Creekwalk designers and
15 powers that be want to take my lot so they
16 can provide green space with a park like
17 setting as part of the project. I don't
18 want to give up any of my property as I am
19 sure none of other residents who are affected
20 want to give up their property either. The
21 designers indicate they need my land as green
22 space. Yet the next portion of the
23 Creekwalk adjacent to my property from Temple
24 Street to Midland Avenue is also slated for
25 green space. Combined this would be the

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1
2 equivalent of approximately 2.4 acres of
3 green space, 1.4 acres from me and 1 acre
4 from Temple to Taylor and Midland area.
5 This area will be about the equivalent of
6 the green space at City Park. At this
7 targeted location it is in proximity to the
8 rescue mission and Central New York State
9 Services. There already exists a high needs
10 population being serviced in this area. And
11 the Salvation Army is doing a renovation on
12 West Onondaga Street that will bring even
13 more high needs people into the area. Take
14 into account the green and resting space that
15 currently exists in this immediate area and
16 what they have become. Clinton and Salina,
17 a homeless and loitering area. The Billings
18 Park, a homeless and loitering area. Clinton
19 and West Onondaga a homeless and loitering
20 area, 500 South Salina building a homeless
21 and loitering area. The area on Adams
22 Street is a homeless encampment. The vacant
23 lot on South Ave near West Onondaga Street
24 is a loitering area. The vacant lot on
25 South Ave near Tallman is a loitering area.

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1
2 There appears to be enough green space and
3 resting areas in this neighborhood already.
4 In this area the Creekwalk needs to be true
5 to its name and remain a walking path along
6 the creek. Not a destination green space to
7 provide additional areas for loitering and
8 living. I slowly and patiently purchased
9 properties adjacent to me for a purpose. I
10 have intended on revitalizing my area and the
11 loss of this lot will irreparably harm me
12 and my ability to move forward in
13 revitalizing my neighborhood as I had
14 planned. Although, I do not want to sell
15 any of my properties, I was willing to
16 compromise and offer a 30-foot strip, which
17 would take away all of my access to the
18 creek and the entrance to Temple Street.
19 This offer was not enough and was rejected
20 by the City of Syracuse representatives.
21 I've had a vision for a long time of what I
22 wanted this space to become, but did not
23 want to disclose it until all the pieces
24 were in place. I have modeled my
25 revitalization of this 3.5 acre parcel after

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1
2 the very successful Larkin Square renovation
3 in Buffalo. The Larkin project really
4 illustrates in a very contemporary way how a
5 once forgotten neighborhood can become vital
6 again. I think my neighborhood needs to be
7 celebrated and developed.

8 After getting my restaurant open, the
9 next phase is to start revitalizing the lot
10 and the building for renovation into a mixed
11 use business residential, cultural and special
12 event space. Included in my renovation plan
13 is my life-long vision of an African American
14 museum. I envision a space dedicated to the
15 African American experience where African
16 American history can be explored and
17 celebrated where an adventure in culture,
18 art, history and achievement can be shared.
19 I have been collecting African American
20 memorabilia for decades in anticipation for
21 the opportunity to share it with the
22 community. I see a location that is open
23 year around and not just during African
24 American history month. That is complete
25 with world wide history as well as local



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1
2 history.

3 For the past year, I have been a
4 volunteer interim executive director for the
5 Dunbar Association. I work six days a week
6 and receive no financial compensation. This
7 commitment that I have made has delayed many
8 of my plans as my time and finances have
9 been on helping Dunbar and not-for-profit
10 African American associations that provide
11 services to the elderly and the youth in the
12 community. However, your plans to take my
13 property are forcing me into a schedule that
14 is not in line with my project planning and
15 will totally stop the revitalization as I
16 have been planning for years. If the City
17 takes my property by eminent domain it will
18 be the second time in my life that the creek
19 has displaced me. When I was seven years
20 old, my home was taken by eminent domain for
21 creek development. And now, once again, my
22 property shall be taken by eminent domain 55
23 years later for creek development. I do not
24 know what is going to happen to my property,
25 but I am respectfully objecting to taking of

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1
2 my lot for the Creekwalk. I am requesting
3 that the City reconsider their demands and
4 their designs as there are other alternatives
5 whereby Phase 2 of the Creekwalk can still
6 exist and I can use the private property
7 that I have acquired to fulfill my desire
8 for my neighborhood. Put the Creekwalk on
9 the creek. Thank you.

10 MR. STANTON: Thank you. Can
11 everybody hear the speaker up there? It's
12 hard for me to hear where I am. Jamie Lou
13 McKinney?

14 MS. MCKINNEY: My name is Jamie Lou
15 McKinney. I have a business at 415 West
16 Onondaga Street. I am also a member of
17 WOSA, which is the West Onondaga Street
18 Association, whereby we come together and we
19 have been working to make West Onondaga
20 Street an area that would be desirable for
21 people to live in, have businesses in and
22 otherwise just be a pretty great
23 neighborhood. I am objecting to the green
24 space at 405/393 area that they're suggesting
25 for similar reasons as Ms. Moore. And that

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1
2 is there is plenty of green space on the
3 trail. And we're not in position to
4 exercise any more green space that will
5 attract people to the neighborhood in places
6 to sit. A year ago I was held up at gun
7 point at my residence as I was leaving my
8 office, which was a pretty scary thing. And
9 it's by people who were in the neighborhood
10 who are homeless who is coming to areas that
11 attract them where they can sit and rest and
12 not do anything of any value. So I am just
13 concerned that the additional green space
14 that they want to continue to put in this
15 area based on where my office is that it's
16 going to continue to attract more people. I
17 can't leave my office right now without at
18 least being begged by three or four different
19 people for money every single day. And that
20 intercession has become a massive amount of
21 people begging. And I just think that by
22 putting this additional green space that they
23 want there with the benches and trees for
24 the shade, which is great, but based on the
25 area, I am totally objectionable to that.

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1
2 Thank you.

3 MR. STANTON: Thank you. Thomas
4 Pierce?

5 MR. PIERCE: So I think Jamie
6 actually said it very well. Ms. Moore said
7 it excellent. The Creekwalk really should
8 stay on the creek. And I am here to
9 support that. I think that's where it
10 should be. There is plenty of enough green
11 space. I am part West Onondaga Street
12 Alliance on the board. And we did a
13 clean-up day. She is right. I mean we
14 were cleaning up and asked several times for
15 money. So there is plenty enough areas just
16 for green space just to move people. It's
17 pretty sad. But thank you.

18 MR. STANTON: Thank you. Robert
19 Bucklin Pierce?

20 MR. PIERCE: Good evening. My name
21 is Robert Bucklin Pierce and I am the
22 president of the West Onondaga Street
23 Alliance. We have a current membership of
24 57 members, which include people living and
25 who work in our area. We have an



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1
2 organization that is adamantly opposed to
3 taking the Creekwalk from the creek and
4 moving it through our neighborhood. We want
5 the Creekwalk to stay on the creek. Our
6 street has many amazing and exciting things
7 happening to it. We have actor Bronson
8 Pinchot renovating Baum-Neal house into the
9 International OZ Museum. We are planning a
10 yellow brick road walk and run through our
11 neighborhood. West side farmers market,
12 innovation house, my great-great-grandfather's
13 mansion, the new Leavenworth fountain with an
14 interactive fountain and park, three new
15 businesses and two new restaurants, a
16 community ceramics shop and even Mr. Ed
17 Reilly from the Syracuse Marriott is looking
18 to the mansion for his corporate offices.

19 In addition to that, there are three
20 homes and mansions on the 600 or 700 blocks
21 which will be renovated by new owners over
22 the next two years. As a resident of
23 Syracuse for the last 22 years, I am
24 respectfully requesting that you keep the
25 Creekwalk on the creek. If the plans do go

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1
2 forward to remove the Creekwalk, we will have
3 no choice but to contact our friend David
4 Muir from ABC news and ask him to bring
5 international media attention to this matter.
6 We will also stage and camp on the property
7 and we will stay there to which time the
8 City changes or we are forcefully removed and
9 arrested. Thank you.

10 MR. STANTON: Thank you. J.B.
11 McCampbell?

12 MR. McCAMPBELL: Hello. My name is
13 J.B. McCampbell. I am an officer of 100
14 Black Men of Syracuse. And the reason I am
15 here is that our organization will be
16 sponsoring the Winston Gaskin Community Walk
17 for wellness stroke prevention on September
18 19th. And by the way, all of you are
19 invited to participate in that. In the
20 planning for the walk, I had a chance to go
21 for most of the Creekwalk from Armory Square
22 to the lake and it's beautiful. I can see
23 the possibilities that this could be an asset
24 to the community if Phase 2 is done
25 properly. I have heard some of the concerns

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1
2 here today, which I wanted to kind of
3 briefly just mention three points. And I
4 think this may connect in some way with what
5 some of the other folks have said.

6 Public safety is going to be, in our
7 opinion, a huge consideration. So I am glad
8 to see that there will be proper lighting.
9 There will be call boxes. We were urging
10 that the City of Syracuse do provide the
11 funding so that cameras are also installed
12 along Phase 2 of the Creekwalk. Because
13 folks will not use the Creekwalk if they
14 don't feel safe on it. So that's one of
15 our concerns. The other concern has to do
16 with seeing that the final phase or I should
17 say what I have seen is that there is a --
18 we would like to see a minimum number of
19 homes and private properties affected by the
20 final design. We don't want to see folks
21 impacted negatively by eminent domain.
22 That's a consideration, you know, we want
23 this to be a totally fair process. And I've
24 heard the previous speaker talk about how she
25 would be affected by this. We don't want to

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1
2 see folks like her harmed by the Creekwalk
3 even though we see that the Creekwalk can be
4 potentially a great asset to the community.

5 The last point I wanted to talk
6 about was I saw this evening that Phase 2
7 calls for 3.8 percent minority participation
8 in the terms of the work force. For a
9 community that has large concentrations of
10 poverty, much of the extension will go
11 through that community, we think that 3.8
12 percent falls well short of what we think
13 would be right and fair for the community.
14 And so we're hopeful that, that number does
15 not turn out to be the final number because
16 jobs are needed in this community our
17 organization besides the mentoring and
18 education programs that we offer, we also are
19 concerned with economic empowerment. That
20 starts with having a job. If this 3.8
21 percent number is maintained that's a missed
22 opportunity for this community once again.
23 Almost the slap in the face. So we're just
24 hopeful. We urge the City to do whatever is
25 necessary to increase that number because



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1
2 it's way short. Thank you.
3 MR. STANTON: Thank you. Aggie
4 Lane?
5 MS. LANE: I'm Aggie Lane and I
6 live at 340 Midland Avenue. I am also the
7 President of the Urban Jobs Task Force. And
8 I want to piggyback on his comment because
9 even those are the Federal requirements that
10 you have to make, we are already trying to
11 lobby, advocate that this project figures out
12 how to get local people on the project. And
13 by local, I mean people in this community.
14 That this community sees their own working.
15 And it's possible and I think I will let the
16 next speaker speak to that -- maybe that is
17 going to be Gregory Michael. But there are
18 -- people described how that can be possible
19 because the Federal government controls this
20 project. And they say there can't be any
21 local mandate, but there is a way we found
22 out actually through Gregory Michael. And so
23 instead of me trying to detail that if he is
24 the next speaker, I will let him speak to
25 that. But, anyway, we need to work and make

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1
2 sure as you say that people in this
3 community get to work.
4 MR. STANTON: Thank you. You were
5 right. Gregory Michael?
6 MR. MICHAEL: My name is Gregory
7 Michael. I am the Executive Director of the
8 Onondaga Earth Corp, which is a youth
9 conservation corp program that started with
10 Eli MacDonald who used to be the building
11 superintendent at the Dunbar Center in an
12 effort to uplift and empower youth in this
13 community and provide them with work
14 experience. And since Eli started the
15 program we have joined a national effort with
16 programs like ours that have taken on the
17 legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corp in,
18 again, empowering young people to help build
19 the infrastructure in this country and
20 maintain the infrastructure in this country.
21 We have been in operation since 2004 and
22 have been instrumental in installations of a
23 lot of green infrastructure and tree planting
24 in some of our hardest hit neighborhoods.
25 Starting on the south side moving to the

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1
2 west side and now all over the city and some
3 of our suburbs as well. Providing job
4 training experience for young people and then
5 implementing real projects that have impact
6 in the neighborhoods for improving amenities
7 and as well as providing employment and
8 training for community members. So we're
9 part of a broader network of conservation
10 corp programs. And we see ourselves not as
11 a replacement for other contract work that is
12 going to be on these projects, but we see
13 ourselves as a piece of the puzzle to uplift
14 and employ young people.
15 So I don't get it wrong, the moving
16 ahead for progress in the 21st Century Act
17 is part of Federal highway bill and it
18 requires USDOT to encourage State and
19 regional transportation planning agencies to
20 use qualified conservation corp programs like
21 Onondaga Earth Corp to perform appropriate
22 transportation related projects that have an
23 educational element for young people so that
24 they can go through our program, receive
25 training, do project work and then hopefully

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1
2 go onto work for contractors in New York
3 State and more broadly. And there are some
4 pretty specific language at the Federal level
5 that supports work with conservation corps.
6 And we would like to work both with our
7 local officials. And we've already been in
8 a lot of the planning or brainstorming
9 meetings around this. But we just want to
10 make it known to all our partners in the
11 community that we're here. We don't think
12 we're the answer to everything, but we think
13 we can be a big piece of the puzzle in
14 getting some young people from these
15 neighborhoods out on the projects.
16 The language in Section 1524 allows
17 for direct contract work and cooperative
18 agreements with conservation corps from
19 Federal highway aid program contracting
20 requirements. And actually there is some
21 sole sourcing language in here, which would
22 make some of the contracting processes very
23 easy to hire young people. So, again, we're
24 happy to be here and happy to be a partner
25 in the process. And look forward to working



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1
2 with everyone here. Thank you.
3 MR. STANTON: Great. Thank you.
4 And last but not least on the cards is Helen
5 Dewey.
6 MS. DEWEY: My name is Helen Dewey.
7 I live at 377 West Onondaga Street, which is
8 the co-op building. We are a mix of 26
9 residential units and four commercial
10 properties on the ground floor. And we are
11 next door neighbors to lot 393 and our
12 friends over at 415. And I have several
13 concerns that I wanted to express.
14 First, I did want to reiterate both
15 the enthusiasm and also the concerns that
16 both Ms. Moore and Ms. McKinney shared. I
17 left suburbia and deliberately moved to the
18 co-op building because I was so entranced by
19 the transformation that's happening on the
20 near west side. I wanted to be a part of
21 it. I believe in what our city can be.
22 But our city can't be great if everyone
23 lives out in suburbia. So I made the choice
24 to move to the co-op building, renovate an
25 apartment and join 26 other individuals who

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1
2 have also bought property. And see what the
3 co-op can be. It's this wonderful crowned
4 jewel on West Onondaga Street. And see the
5 potential of what else is happening on West
6 Onondaga Street. The lot next door to us to
7 me is this enchanting opportunity to do
8 something fabulous. And I don't know what
9 the plans are that Jamie and Ms. Moore have
10 been working on, but they have spent a lot
11 of time and they show tremendous commitment
12 to the neighborhood. And they have a very
13 good understanding of the balance of both
14 having urban space beautification but also
15 security. And so as much as I am very
16 enthusiastic about our neighborhood, I also
17 am concerned that we do continue to get a
18 disproportionate percentage of our population
19 is extremely vulnerable. They have high
20 needs. And yet with the successes of
21 community and urban planning projects, there
22 is not the sensitivity that at some point we
23 can't take on too much more here. Because
24 it is affecting the quality life. There is
25 loitering issues. We are very concerned

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1
2 about what happens on the lot next to us
3 because where the creek will go through runs
4 along the edge of our backyard. Our
5 building goes all the way back to the creek.
6 We do have parking back there. We have a
7 fenced area. There is perennial gardens back
8 there. We have a nice private space for our
9 neighbors to enjoy one another and enjoy the
10 evening as well as if we want to scoot
11 downtown. You know, just skip out the front
12 door and head down the street. In heading
13 down the street just walking past those areas
14 where there are concentrations of people who
15 are loitering there has not been a good
16 maintenance plan. And that's one of my
17 other big concerns for the Creekwalk. What
18 is the maintenance plan for the trash
19 removal? Gardening? You know, rain gardens
20 need to be weeded. There are weed beds
21 growing up from where Save the Rain went
22 through. And put in these wonderful rain
23 gardens and I love the concept, but the
24 maintenance plan was not in place. So who
25 is responsible for mowing, trash removal,

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1
2 picking up the litter because that right now
3 is falling on individual landowners. And I
4 have not heard of the plans that I have been
5 exposed to as of yet what that long-term
6 maintenance plan is.
7 Also the interest of property owners
8 who are along the way we got an overview of
9 what is the fair acquisition cost process.
10 It didn't really include a lot on what if
11 the homeowner disagrees. Because quite
12 frankly the City's track record when it comes
13 to eminent domain and declares what a fair
14 value is, is a little uneasy for me. And I
15 just want to make sure that property owners
16 are protected, rights and their financial
17 interests are protected and as well the
18 security, privacy and our overall quality of
19 life. Thank you very much.
20 MR. STANTON: Thank you. Okay.
21 With that if there is anyone else who wishes
22 to come up and talk, now is the time.
23 Going once? Just for the interest of
24 everyone, if you can state your name and we
25 can get it on the record.



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1
2 MR. KING: I am Peter King. I am
3 actually not a resident of the south side.
4 I am on outer Comstock. So I am in
5 Comstock. But I am also a member of Bike
6 NY. And I am -- we are, as far as I know,
7 the only bicycling organization that has been
8 pursuing policy advocacy with the City of
9 Syracuse. We generally favor the idea of a
10 greenway network. Greenways in general. But
11 I am going to speak here as a private
12 individual. I think the one thing that is
13 bothering me about the project is the lack
14 of -- and I am not sure so much as I can
15 say lack, but I think that the incomplete
16 involvement of residents in the planning I
17 think the City took that criticism and
18 possibly improved your process. But I think
19 the City could gain by involving citizens in
20 directly planning it by gaining the insight
21 -- where the issues are already there that
22 which the design could improve and certainly
23 the privacy and eminent domain issues and the
24 less private properties the City has to take
25 the better. You know, I am not going to

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1
2 We're going to close that on August 9, 2016.
3 The comments should be sent to either
4 comments@Onondagacreekwalk.com and Russ Houck,
5 we have his address in your brochure. Just
6 a quick note, comments said elsewhere may not
7 make it to us. There has been a couple of
8 people that have come up to me in this
9 process and said: Well, I sent a letter to
10 my common Counselor, to so and so. You
11 know, why don't you have that? They don't
12 necessarily send it us. By all means copy
13 them, if you feel they need to be copied.
14 Make sure we get something. Otherwise, we
15 can't incorporate it into the record. We
16 don't know it exists. And as I said, we
17 will have staff available afterwards. We
18 have an informal open house. We're here to
19 answer questions and if anyone wants to make
20 a private statement we will hang on here and
21 you can do that off to the side. But with
22 that, I want to thank everyone for coming
23 tonight. We do appreciate your input.
24 (Whereupon, the Public Meeting
25 concluded at 8:34 p.m.)

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1
2 get more specific than that.
3 But the only other comments I might
4 have here at this session is I think this is
5 an opportunity for green infrastructure. And
6 somebody may have spoken to this already, I
7 was at another event tonight. But I think
8 the City's Save the Rain program was kind of
9 a first step of green infrastructure. It's
10 going to be an ongoing potential for cities
11 because of claimant change because of
12 different other things, which might even
13 create jobs. And so I am favorable to
14 creating local. If the city can create
15 local jobs through this effort I think that
16 will be a plus especially for green
17 infrastructure or innovated jobs. Thank you.
18 That is about all I have to say. Thank
19 you.
20 MR. STANTON: Thank you. Anyone
21 else? Okay. Going once? Going twice? We
22 are going to close the public comment
23 section. Just in closing as a reminder the
24 public comment the written public comment is
25 open for two weeks from the meeting today.

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1
2 CERTIFICATE
3
4 STATE OF NEW YORK
5 COUNTY OF SENECA
6
7 I, LEAH C. DIDSBURY, a Stenotype
8 Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public in the
9 State of New York, do hereby certify that
10 the foregoing record taken by me at the time
11 and place as noted in the heading hereof, is
12 a true and accurate transcript of same, to
13 the best of my knowledge and belief.
14 I further certify that I am neither
15 attorney nor counsel for any of the parties,
16 nor a relative or employee of any attorney
17 or counsel connected with the action, nor
18 financially interested in the outcome of the
19 action.
20
21
22 LEAH C. DIDSBURY
23 Shorthand Reporter
24 Notary Public
25 DATED: August 11, 2016



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