

SECTION VII – Local Commitment and Consultation

A. Local Commitment

The Town of Somerset initiated its efforts to prepare a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program in November 2002, at which time it established an Advisory Committee to oversee and guide the preparation of the program. The Advisory Committee was comprised of representatives from the Town government and local community, including local residents and business owners. This committee met six times during the planning process.

To strengthen local commitment for the Town's planning efforts, the Advisory Committee held a public information meeting to provide local citizens an opportunity to comments on significant issues and opportunities in the Town. The meeting was held on February 5, 2003. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the LWRP and solicit initial comments from the public about their concerns for the waterfront. This meeting was attended by a total of eighteen people. The information gathered at this meeting was utilized to shape the LWRP policies, as well as the proposed projects and implementation measures outlined in the program.

The Somerset Town Board prior to adoption holds a public hearing on the LWRP. This hearing affords the general public an opportunity to hear a presentation of the study as well as provides the Town Board an opportunity to hear from the residents their general support or remaining issues.

B. Consultation

The Advisory Committee forwarded draft sections of the LWRP to the Department of State for their review and comment. In addition, draft documents were distributed to a number of involved and interested agencies to gather their comments on program findings and recommendations. The agencies that were contacted for their input included the Niagara County Department of Planning, Development and Tourism, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the surrounding municipalities (Town of Newfane, Town of Yates, Village of Barker and the Orleans County Planning Department.

The draft LWRP was reviewed and approved by the Somerset Town Board and forwarded to the New York State Department of State. The Department of State initiated a 60-day review period for the draft program pursuant to the Waterfront Revitalization of Coastal Areas and Inland Waterways Act and the State Environmental Quality Review Act. Copies of the draft LWRP were distributed to all applicable Federal agencies, potentially affected State agencies, Niagara and Orleans Counties, and the Towns of Newfane and Yates and Village of Barker. Comments received on the draft LWRP were reviewed by the Town and the Department of State, and changes were made, as required, to reflect the substantive comments.