

**MINUTES OF THE INNOVATION DISTRICT
DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE MEETING #5**

Thursday, June 24, 2010 at 2:30 p.m.

**Holyoke Heritage State Park, Visitors Center Exhibit Hall
221 Appleton Street, Holyoke, Massachusetts**

Task Force Members Present:

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tim Brennan, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> William Ward, Regional Employment Board |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kathy Anderson, City of Holyoke | <input type="checkbox"/> John Judge, Springfield Office of Planning and Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Robert Gilbert, James Dowd and Sons/Holyoke Chamber of Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Felix Morales, Premier Accounting |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> William Messner, Holyoke Community College | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gladys Lebron-Martinez, CareerPoint |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kip Foley, Cover Technologies, Inc. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dan D'Alma, IBEW, Local 7 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Larry Bay, Holyoke Works | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elaine Pluta, City of Holyoke |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Malone, University of Massachusetts | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eric Nakajima, Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Doyle, CPA Consultant | <input type="checkbox"/> Patrick Larkin, John Adams Innovation Institute – Massachusetts Technology Collaborative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> James Lavelle, Holyoke Gas & Electric | <input type="checkbox"/> Michael Vedovelli, Massachusetts Office of Business Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Douglas Bowen, Peoples Bank (Holyoke) | <input type="checkbox"/> Richard Henderson, MassDevelopment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allan Blair, Western Mass. Economic Development Council | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Kurose, UMass/Dept. Computer Science |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Linda Dunlavy, Franklin Regional Council of Governments/Pioneer Valley Connect | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Helene Florio, Office of State Senator Michael Knapik |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Mullin, UMass Amherst | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natalie Blais, Office of U.S. Congressman John Olver |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dianne Fuller Doherty, Western Mass. Regional Office – Small Business Development Center | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brenna E. Murphy, Office of State Representative Michael Kane |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ira Rubenzahl, Springfield Technical Community College | <input type="checkbox"/> Kevin Kennedy, Office of U.S. Congressman Richard Neal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carlos Gonzalez, Western Mass. Latino Chamber of Commerce (Holyoke & Springfield) | <input type="checkbox"/> Donald R. Welch, Holyoke City Council |

Guests Present:

Scott Bates, Tishman Construction	Robert Kispert, Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
Jeff Brancato, University of Massachusetts Amherst	Paul Kneedler, Skanska
Ann Burke, Western Mass. Economic Development Council	Maryann Lombardi, UMass
Jeff Burkott, City of Holyoke	Carlos Martinez-Vela, Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
Tom Creed, Holyoke Redevelopment Authority	Kathy McCabe, McCabe Enterprises
Mary Curtin, Community Enterprises	Ellen Moriarty, Holyoke Public Library
Pat Duffy, Holyoke Redevelopment Authority	Beth Murphy, MassDevelopment
Carl Eger, HRA/HEDK/HCC	Fred Pulitzer, RKG Associates
Bill Ennen, Massachusetts Technology Collaborative	David Scher, The Canal Gallery
Jef Fasser, VHB, Inc.	Michael Sirard, Energy Storage Tech
Louis P. Girard, Energy Storage Tech	Lori Tanner, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Jack Jemsek, Sovereign Consulting	Linda Vacon, Holyoke City Councilor

1. Call to Order and Welcome With Brief Opening Remarks/Announcements by Co-Chairs

The fifth meeting of the Innovation District Design and Development Task Force was called to order at 2:02 p.m. by the Task Force's Co-Chair Tim Brennan who welcomed all those present. Mr. Brennan noted that several Task Force members could not attend today's meeting due to scheduling and vacation conflicts. Mr. Brennan then asked Mayor Elaine Pluta if she had any opening remarks. Mayor Pluta stated that she was eager to move forward and was interested in hearing about the latest project updates.

2. Minutes of the Previous Task Force Meeting Which Was Held on May 13, 2010

Mr. Brennan called for a motion to approve the minutes of the fourth Innovation District Task Force meeting which was held on Thursday, May 13, 2010.

MOVED BY LINDA DUNLAVY, SECONDED BY MAYOR ELAINE PLUTA, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE INNOVATION DISTRICT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE MEETING HELD ON MAY 13, 2010.

Mr. Brennan asked if there were any questions, comments, or corrections regarding the subject minutes but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR CORRECTIONS, THE MINUTES OF THE INNOVATION DISTRICT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE MEETING HELD ON MAY 13, 2010 WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

3. Progress Report From the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) on the Completion and June 8th Posting of the Final Request for Proposals (RFP) Document Being Used to Engage an Innovation District Consultant or Consultant Team

Mr. Brennan stated that the principal work item over the last several months has been working with MTC on the development of an RFP to retain a consultant or consultant team which will be working with the Task Force over the next year on a comprehensive strategy that can leverage job growth and ancillary economic benefits for the Innovation District. Mr. Brennan mentioned that the final version of the subject RFP, which has benefited from a great deal of thoughtful input and changes suggested by several Task Force members, has been completed and posted on the Innovate Holyoke and MTC web sites. Mr. Brennan also noted that hard copies of this RFP were available at this meeting for any Task Force member needing one. Mr. Brennan then asked Carlos Martinez-Vela of MTC to provide more details on the RFP development process. Mr. Martinez-Vela stated that the RFP was posted on June 8th and a bidders conference call session was held last Monday regarding the RFP which involved an estimated 23 to 25 participants. Mr. Martinez-Vela further noted that the RFP has been well received in terms of its content in addressing the challenge of establishing an Innovation District in Holyoke. Mr. Martinez-Vela further explained that in the next phase of the process the MTC will field questions related to the RFP. Mr. Martinez-Vela added that responses to these questions will be posted to the website on July 2nd. The due date for the MTC to receive responses to the RFP has been set for July 15th and after that MTC staff will need to develop a process by which the proposals received can be reviewed, ranked and a final selection can be achieved. Following Mr. Martinez-Vela's presentation, Eric Nakajima asked Mr. Brennan to review the timing after the RFP process. Mr. Brennan stated that responses to the RFP are due by July 15th and there is a 60-day window between July 15th and September 15th for the RFP evaluation and selection process to be completed. Mr. Brennan further explained that the expectation is that by mid-September a consultant or consultant team will be under contract with MTC and can begin work. Mr. Brennan added that one of the first activities after the consultant or consultant team has been retained will be to engage the Innovation District Task Force in order to insure the Task Force is directly involved at the outset in shaping a comprehensive strategy that can maximize job growth and economic development benefits for not only the City of Holyoke but the greater Pioneer Valley area.

Mr. Brennan then asked Task Force members to introduce themselves for the benefit of today's guest speakers as well as other guests in the audience. Following introductions, Mr. Brennan also requested that Task Force members sign the attendance sheet which was being circulated so that there will be an accurate attendance record for this particular meeting. Mr. Brennan then moved to take up the next item on today's agenda.

4. Presentation by and Task Force Dialogue With Representatives of the Consultant Firm VHB, Inc. which is in the Initial Phase of Preparing an Urban Renewal Plan for the City of Holyoke's Four Lower Census Tracts (i.e., Churchill, South Holyoke, Prospect and the Flats) Including Potential Linkages of the Urban Renewal Plan to the Holyoke Innovation District and High-Performance Computing Center (HPCC) Facility

Mr. Brennan called on Co-Chair Kathy Anderson to introduce the next agenda item. Ms. Anderson noted that in 2007 former Holyoke Mayor Michael Sullivan had initiated the process of establishing the Holyoke Redevelopment Authority (HRA) and around that same time the City was starting to gain traction on various downtown improvements and investments. However, Ms. Anderson observed it took approximately one year for the HRA to get formally established and to be legally recognized by the State of Massachusetts as an official and fully recognized redevelopment authority. Ms. Anderson added that all the planning work that's been done in Holyoke over the past decade has put the City in a good position to compete for funding opportunities such as the new, federal sustainability initiative which is provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Ms. Anderson then noted that Tom Creed, Vice Chairperson of the HRA, is at today's meeting so he can give an overview on what the HRA is working on and what has led up to Holyoke undertaking the development of an Urban Renewal Plan. Ms. Anderson added that the City's consultant on this project, Jeff Fasser of VHB, Inc., will get into the details of Holyoke's new Urban Renewal Plan as this work has just recently gotten underway. Ms. Anderson also stated that Mr. Fasser will talk about how the Task Force's work and other Holyoke initiatives will be included into the City's final Urban Renewal Plan document. Lastly, Ms. Anderson stated that after these two presentations, there will be an opportunity for questions and comments from Task Force members and then others in the audience. Ms. Anderson then introduced and called on Holyoke Redevelopment Authority Chairman Tom Creed to begin his presentation.

Mr. Creed stated that the HRA was formed in the latter part of 2008 and he noted that the HRA's first task was to put together a mission statement which reads as follows: "The Holyoke Redevelopment Authority's mission is developing and implementing urban renewal plans thus eliminating blighted conditions that inhibit neighborhood reinvestment; improving the quality of life in our neighborhoods; fostering and promoting business expansion and job creation; and maintaining and attracting development that will revitalize Holyoke's economy and cultural growth while making our community more attractive, prosperous and self sufficient." Mr. Creed explained that the most important component of understanding the HRA's mission is to recognize that the HRA is trying to identify necessary projects in Holyoke neighborhoods that through public investments are able to foster private investment. Mr. Creed added that after the development of the mission statement, the HRA next initiated a community visioning process to put together, with substantial public input, what the specific focus of the HRA should be in carrying out its mission.

Mr. Creed commented that when the HRA was first established it quickly became clear that the City's four census tracks of Churchill, South Holyoke, Prospect and the Flats needed to be the Authority's focus from the very beginning. Mr. Creed stated that the HRA knew that a consultant was needed for the visioning work and after conducting an extensive interview process the firm VHB, Inc. was selected for this assignment. Mr. Creed added that since the visioning process needed funding support to move forward, HRA was fortunate to be awarded a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to make this process happen. Mr. Creed noted that three public hearings were held and ultimately Holyoke's vision plan document was finalized and presented to the City. Mr. Creed said that more recently the HRA's focus has transitioned to the urban renewal plan and a process to accomplish this in a very open and engaging way. Mr. Creed further stated that this work in concert with VHB again required funding support and thus the HRA received a grant from NeighborWorks America through HAPHousing for this next step. Mr. Creed then asked Mr. Fasser to review the vision plan and explain how this plan will be used as input to the City's urban renewal planning process that has just been launched.

Mr. Fasser explained that Holyoke's urban renewal process began with the identification of an appropriate target area that will be the focus of Holyoke's new Urban Renewal Plan. Mr. Fasser then displayed a PowerPoint slide presentation which indicated the four census tracks in Holyoke which he noted is the beginning point of a target area for the Urban Renewal Plan. Mr. Fasser also explained that the intent of Holyoke's urban renewal process is to focus on the most distressed properties and neighborhoods in the City of Holyoke and to create an implementation plan for economic investment and revitalization.

Mr. Fasser stated that the Urban Renewal Program is a Massachusetts program and noted that Massachusetts has its own rules and regulations for developing an Urban Renewal Plan which is covered by Chapter 121B of the MGL. Mr. Fasser further stated that Massachusetts Urban Renewal Plans have to comply with the applicable regulations developed by the state given that the intent of Chapter 121B is to revitalize neighborhoods and to address substandard decadent areas. Mr. Fasser also stated that Chapter 121B of the MGL constitutes a framework for setting forth which public actions are necessary to stimulate private development. Mr. Fasser then explained that what needs to be done with an Urban Renewal Plan is essentially to make the case that an area is stagnant economically and has not been moving forward on its own through the courses of private enterprise and therefore public action is needed to stimulate private investment.

Mr. Fasser stated that Holyoke's new Urban Renewal Plan will build from Holyoke's completed Vision Plan for its city center area which would encompass the City's proposed Innovation District. Mr. Fasser commented that the Vision Plan leads to an Urban Renewal Plan which sets the framework for implementation. Mr. Fasser stated that the vision planning process was an inclusive one involving a series of public meetings and focus groups. Ms. Fasser then reviewed the principles that came out of Holyoke's Vision Plan and which will get folded into the Urban Renewal Plan. These principles include: revitalize downtown Holyoke by increasing density and types of development; create more jobs in the downtown area; preserve downtown Holyoke's historic urban character; provide a variety of housing in the downtown area; and, promote green technologies.

Mr. Fasser briefly reviewed the key recommendations that went into the Vision Plan and which will get folded into the City's Urban Renewal Plan. These include: actions to make the streets pedestrian friendly and improve vehicular access into the area; develop key modes of transportation which would be connected to each other; enhance the Arts and Innovation District; expand open space amenities; transform the riverfront; and restore the urban neighborhoods.

Mr. Fasser noted that the components of Holyoke's Urban Renewal Plan will include: defining the area; doing a parcel and building evaluation; making specific recommendations; creating a financing plan; and a phased implementation of the recommendations. Mr. Fasser then displayed a PowerPoint slide which indicated the characteristics of each building, parcel and roadway within Holyoke's Urban Renewal Plan project target area noting that VHB had determined in its initial assessment and will recommend to the State that this area should be declared as "decadent" per the Commonwealth's established Urban Renewal Plan guidelines.

Mr. Fasser reviewed the scope of work applicable to Holyoke's Urban Renewal Plan which begins with a kick-off meeting and project-specific area assessment. Mr. Fasser stated that there will also be a market analysis conducted which will look at the greater Holyoke area in order to determine what its market characteristics are now and how this part of Holyoke might be able to capture some of the market demands of the region. Mr. Fasser said that another part of the Urban Renewal Plan's scope of work consists of collecting data for urban renewal justification and preparation of urban renewal plan elements. Mr. Fasser then displayed a PowerPoint slide which listed components of the Urban Renewal Plan Scope which consists of the chapters that will need to be included in the City's Urban Renewal Plan as mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Mr. Fasser emphasized that another important component outlined in the scope of work is the development of a financial plan because it is critical to cite the potential funding sources for the various actions listed in the City's Urban Renewal Plan which typically would encompass a combination of sources at the federal, state, local levels and possible private funding. Mr. Fasser also noted that another critical component of Holyoke's Urban Renewal Plan scope of work will be the fact that the HRA will be establishing a citizens participation committee which will have a seat at the table along with the HRA as this Urban Renewal Plan is developed. Mr. Fasser also noted that although the HRA has the final say on what goes into the Urban Renewal Plan, the citizens participation committee will clearly have a central role in providing input and guidance and will produce their own chapter for this planning document.

Mr. Fasser stated that the City of Holyoke clearly wants the development of the City's Urban Renewal Plan to be done using an open and inclusive process, and so there will be a number of citizen participation committee meetings, open HRA meetings and other types of neighborhood-scale meetings. Additionally, there will be public meetings at which the Urban Renewal Plan's process and core elements need to be presented and explained along with a formal public hearing which is a state requirement. Ultimately, Mr. Fasser stated that Holyoke's planning board will need

to review the Urban Renewal Plan that's developed to make sure that it conforms to the City's master plan and the Planning Board will need to vote to adopt it. Mr. Fasser also noted that City Council will need to endorse the final version of Holyoke's Urban Renewal Plan once this extensive planning process has been concluded.

Mr. Fasser then reviewed VHB's project schedule and he stated that over next few months, field work will be underway and that by the end of the of 2010 a final draft plan will be created which will be submitted to the Planning Board and City Council for their review and endorsement. Mr. Fasser added that formal submittal to the Commonwealth's DHCD is anticipated at the outset of 2011 and the DHCD's review and approval of the Urban Renewal Plan is a mandate.

Ms. Anderson emphasized that the citizens participation committee is a very important group and she noted that a press release had been sent out recently which asked people to submit a paragraph on why they would want to be part of this advisory group. Ms. Anderson noted that the City of Holyoke's planning work produces results and she said that Holyoke had been recently formally designated as a "Green Community" and was awarded a \$321,000 energy grant to make municipal buildings, traffic signals and street lights much more energy efficient and cost effective.

At this point, Ms. Anderson asked if Task Force members had any questions or comments for Mr. Fasser and Mr. Creed and she noted that guests in the audience will have the opportunity to ask questions as well after Task Force members are afforded this opportunity. John Doyle observed that if the Task Force is successful the City of Holyoke will need to provide large amounts of space for businesses that will want to relocate here. Given this, Mr. Doyle wondered how the City would be able to accommodate such space requests. Mr. Fasser responded that although urban renewal plans vary from community to community Mr. Fasser observed that one of the similarities is that developers are often looking for larger parcels in a city or region. Accordingly, many urban renewal plans often recommend that the local redevelopment authority buy up smaller parcels that are adjacent to each other in order to assemble them into one or more larger parcels and then to sell them so that the developer(s) looking for a larger site are able to purchase a larger parcel. Mr. Fasser also noted that in other instances where there are buildings on parcels that have outlived their useful life, the local redevelopment authority may choose to demolish them. However, Mr. Fasser stated that it is important not to get rid of building stock unless there is a clear and compelling need to do so in order to attract private investment. Mr. Fasser added that there may be other instances where buildings are older but it might be worthwhile for the redevelopment authority to purchase them and then find the resources to shore them up so that they can be eventually rehabilitated by a private developer at a later time.

William Messner asked, given this urban renewal plan process, what is the purpose and need for the Innovation District's Task Force's efforts? Mr. Brennan responded that the Task Force will need to develop a comprehensive action strategy to take the HPCC asset that's going to be located in the City's downtown area and leverage it to maximum economic advantage for the City and the surrounding area in the long term. Ms. Anderson added that the Urban Renewal Plan specifically deals with bricks and mortar rather than policies, programs and strategies. Mr. Brennan then stated that an important component of Mr. Messner's question is how this Urban Renewal Plan connects to the Innovation District Task Force's work so that both strategies can complement each other. Ms. Brennan further noted that this was the reason why Ms. Anderson had invited representatives from the HRA and VHB to be connected to the Innovation District Task Force at the beginning of its work. Mr. Fasser stated that his assignment entails taking the recommendations of the Innovation District Task Force and integrating them into Holyoke's new Urban Renewal Plan. Ms. Anderson added that the Urban Renewal Plan is the base plan that the City will be following in the downtown area over the next 20 years and that any of the other strategies such as the Task Force's work and Cisco's Smart and Connected Community Initiative will contribute to this plan and give it a jump start looking to the future.

Larry Bay asked if Holyoke's Office of Planning and Development is coordinating the formation of the citizens participation committee for the Urban Renewal Plan. Ms. Anderson noted that her office is gathering recommendations and forwarding them onto the HRA which will make the final decisions on the composition of this group. Kip Foley wondered if the purpose of getting the Urban Renewal Plan approved by DHCD is to qualify for access to funding. Mr. Fasser noted that DHCD staff makes it clear that it does not have funding and there is no DHCD grant money to fund Urban Renewal Plan implementation. However, the DHCD's approval establishes the City's designated urban renewal area and it gives the HRA permission to undertake actions proposed in the Urban Renewal Plan to stimulate private investment in the area.

Ms. Anderson asked if any guests in the audience had questions or comments for Mr. Fasser and Mr. Creed. An audience member asked which part of the Urban Renewal Plan outlines how Holyoke is going to benefit economically regarding the acquisition of parcels. Mr. Fasser noted that there will be a part of the plan that will outline recommended public and private actions. However, Mr. Fasser cautioned that the HRA will not likely want to acquire all vacant parcels in order to take action on them since the HRA could identify key vacant or partially vacant parcels that could be targeted for private investment. Mr. Fasser also stated that regarding acquisitions, urban renewal plans are often mistakenly associated with eminent domain, and he emphasized that oftentimes this is not necessarily the case. In fact Mr. Fasser stated that many redevelopment authorities prefer negotiated sales with private property owners. However, Mr. Fasser stressed that if there are key parcels that are critical to allowing larger development that can benefit the host community and the owner doesn't want to sell their property the redevelopment authority could consider an eminent domain taking given that an approved Urban Renewal Plan does allow this type of action to take place. Mr. Fasser then explained that any such acquisitions will be spelled out in the Urban Renewal Plan before it goes to the Planning Board, City Council and the DHCD for approval so it remains an open and public process.

Another guest in the audience asked if there would be anything in the City's Urban Renewal Plan regarding financial assistance for property owners to help them with making building improvements. Ms. Anderson explained that the plan may or may not recommend these kinds of assistance programs for property owners but the City will always continue to look for funding assistance that can help its residents and business owners to thrive.

There being no further comments or questions for Mr. Creed of the HRA or Mr. Fasser of the VHB consulting firm, Ms. Anderson and Mr. Brennan thanked them for their timely and informative presentation and moved to take up the next item on the agenda.

5. Informational Updates from Two Key Innovation District Task Force Partners

Mr. Brennan then welcomed and called on Jeff Brancato, Associate Vice President for Economic Development at the University of Massachusetts to begin his project update on behalf of the Higher Ed Consortium. Mr. Brancato noted that the University Consortium has formally submitted the paperwork needed to become incorporated so at this time the legal entity for the Consortium will now be called the Massachusetts Green High-Performance Computing Center, Inc. Mr. Brancato further stated that in addition to Consortium members MIT, University of Massachusetts, Boston University and Northeastern University, Harvard University has recently decided to become a new member the University Consortium which is a positive development.

Mr. Brancato updated the Task Force on the site selection process by noting that the Consortium has hired a consulting firm to look at design and engineering planning for the two potential sites under final consideration for the Holyoke HPCC facility. Mr. Brancato also explained that the Consortium has secured a real estate consultant to assist with the final stages of the site selection process and he added that Consortium representatives and their consultants have conducted a thorough walk through of both Holyoke sites. Mr. Brancato added that the Consortium is now reviewing the due diligence studies on both sites by Holyoke Gas & Electric and is in the process of gathering additional information that is needed to make a final site selection. Mr. Brancato commented it is expected that the Consortium's Board will review a recommendation by the end of July and at that point will begin discussions with the owners of one site or the other. Mr. Brancato further stated that the Consortium will make a formal announcement on the final site selection once a legal agreement with the site owner has been agreed to and signed.

Mr. Brancato noted that the Consortium has finalized and submitted a formal proposal to the MTC and he noted that the Consortium has continued to work closely with Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Greg Bialecki, Eric Nakajima, the Secretary's point person for the Holyoke HPCC project, as well as Pat Larkin and his MTC staff on this process. Mr. Brancato further stated that a meeting with Secretary Bialecki has been scheduled for July 9th in order to brief him on the latest specifics of the Consortium's proposal. Mr. Brancato noted that the goal is for the MTC board to act on the proposal in July. Mr. Brancato added that acceptance of this proposal will provide the formal commitment of the Commonwealth to commit funds to the Holyoke HPCC project. Lastly, Mr. Brancato stated that he wanted to publicly thank members of the Massachusetts Legislative Delegation for their strong and ongoing support of the HPCC project. Mr. Brancato then explained that a bill has been introduced in the House of Representatives which includes the recapitalization of the Growth District Initiative Fund. Mr. Brancato further

commented that the Consortium plans to access this fund through MTC and that this is the internal process by which financing for the HPCC project is going to flow.

Mr. Brennan asked if there were any questions for Mr. Brancato from Task Force members. Mr. Messner asked for clarification regarding the funding proposal going before the MTC governing board. Mr. Brancato explained that this proposal formalizes the request from the University Consortium to the State with respect to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' \$25 million funding commitment to the Holyoke HPCC project. Mr. Brancato further noted that this \$25 million is for the financing of capital construction and there will be \$10 million in funding from each of the five participating University Consortium partners. Mr. Brancato further noted that the Holyoke HPCC project will receive financing through the New Markets Tax Credits Program. Mr. Brancato concluded that once all of the financing has been gathered it is expected that this will be a \$95 to \$100 million development project.

Gladys Lebron-Martinez asked Mr. Brancato to explain the difference between the Springfield Data Center and the Holyoke HPCC. Mr. Brancato stated that the State is building a computing data center in Springfield which will provide enterprise computing for the ongoing operations of the Commonwealth and its agencies. Mr. Brancato further stated that HPCC facility is a computing center that will support the academic and research collaborative research projects of the University Consortium's faculty.

Ms. Lebron-Martinez noted it was her recollection that local businesses could utilize the computing power of the HPCC and she asked Mr. Brancato to cite an example of this kind of usage. Mr. Brancato stated that this may involve local businesses or businesses not currently in the region that would want to take advantage of the Holyoke HPCC. For example, Mr. Brancato stated that the University Consortium is holding discussions with Cisco and EMC and the current vision is that these businesses may want to work with the Consortium's faculty members to take advantage of the infrastructure that will be provided by the Holyoke HPCC. Mr. Brancato further noted that there may be smaller local companies that might have particular needs around modeling, simulation or other applications-based research.

Kip Foley commented that this sounds like a change in the original plan for the Holyoke HPCC and noted that at the previous meeting he thought it was discussed that there was not going to be any capacity for local businesses at this facility. Mr. Brennan commented that although Mr. Foley's recollection is correct Mr. Brennan noted that one of the Task Force's principal jobs will be to look at every possible way to leverage the HPCC facility to economic advantage. Mr. Brennan further stated that another part of the Task Force's work is to advocate for the benefits of an HPCC which would go beyond the functions of a solely academic computing center. Mr. Brancato then mentioned that it would be helpful if the Task Force could assist in identifying private sector business entities that would be able to leverage the Consortium's mission.

Ms. Lebron-Martinez inquired about the housing situation around the potential Holyoke HPCC sites. Specifically, has the housing market gone up or down? Mr. Brancato stated that the one of the goals of the University Consortium is to change the current trajectory for the City and region, and he stated that if the Consortium is successful this would lead to greater investment, job creation and growth throughout this area.

A member of the audience asked for clarification on the relationship between MTC and the Growth District Innovation Fund. Eric Nakajima stated that the Growth District Innovation Fund has been a highly productive program which has been housed within the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development. Growth District Innovation Funds go to support infrastructure that catalyses private sector investment and development in growth districts of which Holyoke is the 20th growth district designated by the State. Mr. Nakajima further stated there are several organizations that are permitted to be recipients of Growth District Innovation Funds and MTC is one of them. Mr. Nakajima then noted that MTC's previous experience with innovation and leveraging innovative ideas is the primary reason why the Commonwealth selected the MTC organization as the recipient of Growth District Innovation Funds to be committed to the Holyoke HPCC project.

A member of the audience wondered if there is cluster work that is being done to better understand what the Holyoke's HPCC's research agenda is. This audience member also asked if there were plans for outreach to businesses to align themselves with the HPCC's work. Jim Kurose noted that an educational outreach workshop had been held at Holyoke Community College and that there were plans to do something similar on the research side.

Mr. Brennan then stated that this would be a good topic for the Kitchen Cabinet Work Group to take up at some point.

Larry Bay noted that he thought that the City's efforts to prepare an Urban Renewal Plan were substantive, timely and well done. However, Mr. Bay observed that Holyoke is an economically depressed area and that 20 percent of Holyoke's population struggles with English speaking. Mr. Bay wondered if any consideration is being made for these Holyoke residents. Mr. Kurose explained that an adult education component is being included in the HPCC project plan and the Regional Employment Board has been engaged to assist in the effort to link this with workforce development. Mr. Messner added that the Cisco Smart and Connected Community project has a specific component that uses its technology to better deliver access to adult education and related support services.

Ms. Anderson thanked Mr. Brancato for his remarks and noted that since Andy Liwen of Cisco Systems was not able to attend this meeting due to a previous commitment, she would present his PowerPoint presentation on Cisco's project updates. Ms. Anderson noted that over the last few months discovery sessions have been held with key stakeholders in the community who fit into Cisco's pilot solution. Ms. Anderson then stated that Cisco's Smart and Connected Community Initiative has the following tower solutions in its pilot: connected real estate; connected utilities; connected transportation; connected safety and security; connected health care; connected learning; connected government; and connected sports. Ms. Anderson noted that Cisco representatives have been meeting with key stakeholders involved in each of these tower solutions for months to jointly develop good ideas to pursue in a local pilot. Ms. Anderson noted that these discovery sessions brought out the technology details and business needs of the businesses and entities within the City of Holyoke and she further stated that the discovery sessions introduced stakeholders to additional technology solutions. Ms. Anderson commented these identified needs will be brought together in Cisco's pilot. Ms. Anderson then reviewed the discovery findings that were uncovered in the stakeholder meetings as well as a sampling of innovation discovery findings. Ms. Anderson added that Mr. Liwen's PowerPoint presentation will be posted on the Innovate Holyoke web site should Task Force members want to review this presentation in greater detail.

Ms. Anderson stated that the Smart and Connected Community vision has been identified for Holyoke and a pilot has been identified with a wide mix of solutions and innovation. Ms. Anderson further noted that Cisco is now meeting again with the key stakeholders to make sure that Cisco is on target with its thinking. After those meetings Cisco will deliver the pilot to Mayor Pluta by mid-July and public meetings on the plan will be held afterwards. Ms. Anderson asked if there were any questions or comments on the presentation. Felix Morales asked for clarification on who the stakeholders are. Ms. Anderson noted that within each of Cisco's solution towers Cisco can provide communications and technology that will help provide solutions in these various areas. Ms. Anderson explained that the City of Holyoke reached out to stakeholders in the solution towers that she cited earlier in her presentation. For example, the City reached out to hospitals and health care centers which were the stakeholders within the connected health care solution tower and police and fire chiefs which were the stakeholders within the connected safety and security solution tower.

6. Other Business Including Anticipated Agenda Items for the Next Full Task Force Meeting Tentatively Scheduled for 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 29th in Holyoke

There being no further business to conduct, Ms. Anderson confirmed that the next meeting of the Task Force will be held on Thursday, July 29th at 2:30 p.m. in Holyoke. Ms. Anderson then adjourned the meeting at 3:58 p.m. without objection.