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From: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation <nysdec@public.govdelivery.com>
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To: Mcpherson, Benjamin J (DEC)
Subject: DEC and Town of Tonawanda Announce New Community Working Group to Support Cleanup and Revitalization of Former Tonawanda Coke Site



DEC and Town of Tonawanda Announce New Community Working Group to Support Cleanup and Revitalization of Former Tonawanda Coke Site

Local Residents and Organizations Encouraged to Participate

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the town of Tonawanda today announced a new Tonawanda Community Working Group (TCWG) that will be comprised of community residents and key stakeholders to support the remediation and revitalization of the former site of the Tonawanda Coke Corporation.

"Community engagement is the hallmark of DEC's cleanup programs and we are pleased to be partnering with the town of Tonawanda to announce this new community working group," **DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos** said. "The Tonawanda Community Working Group will provide local residents with a meaningful opportunity to actively participate in the comprehensive cleanup and revitalization of this critical piece of property along the Niagara River shoreline. DEC values the community's unique perspectives and insights, and through the Working Group, the Tonawanda community will be involved and engaged in the remediation process every step of the way."

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to remedy a site that has long been a black eye along our Waterfront corridor. We are looking forward to working with all of our community partners to find the best possible solution to the environmental issues on the site and plan for a better future for our town," said **Town of Tonawanda Supervisor Joseph Emminger**.

The TCWG will provide a forum for the Tonawanda community to inform, receive input, make recommendations, and discuss the remediation of the former Tonawanda Coke site at 3875 River Road, Tonawanda. Portions of the site are being remediated through the State's Brownfield Cleanup Program by Riverview Innovation & Technology Campus (RITC). The adjacent State Superfund site, comprised of three operable units, is being remediated pursuant to a Consent Order with Honeywell International.

The TCWG will be a self-governing and voluntary body chaired by the town of Tonawanda. The Working Group will be supported by DEC and the New York State Department of Health. RITC

and Honeywell will provide periodic up-to-date information to the Working Group about the ongoing remedial investigations and cleanup efforts at the sites.

TCWG will fully integrate the community into the remediation process and ensure stakeholders are engaged in the planned comprehensive investigation and remediation of the former Tonawanda Coke property. The TCWG will foster meaningful participation that reflects the diversity of interests and perspectives from the Tonawanda community and encourage public input in the cleanup and redevelopment of this site.

The TCWG's purpose is to provide a forum for robust public engagement including:

1. Enhancing public dialogue, fostering public understanding, and encouraging discussion about the site's investigation and cleanup;
2. Informing project progress in a structured forum and soliciting community feedback;
3. Making recommendations and providing relevant community input regarding community concerns and perceptions as the remedial projects are being performed; and
4. Providing recommendations and input as to appropriate and effective strategies for communication to the residents and the public regarding the technical aspects of the remedial activities or public health implications.

Working Group members will include local residents, and environmental, academic, business, and municipal organizations selected by DEC and the town based on interest, knowledge, and experience in the Tonawanda community. The goal is to create a group with varied perspectives and backgrounds. Selected organizations must be committed to participating in six to eight meetings per year. The meeting schedule will be determined by members of the Working Group. In addition, the public will be invited to attend Working Group meetings in order to augment at-large community engagement opportunities. Working Group member term limits and specific TCWG methods of operation will be determined autonomously by TCWG membership.

Individuals or organizations interested in serving on the TCWG should submit a letter of interest, detailing background interest, knowledge, and experience relating to the cleanup and redevelopment projects, either electronically to region9@dec.ny.gov, or by mail to NYSDEC Region 9, Division of Public Affairs, 270 Michigan Ave., Buffalo, N.Y. 14203, no later than September 11, 2020.

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/press/77537.html>

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Basil Seggos, Commissioner

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