

**Niagara River Greenway Commission
Consultation and Review Form**

Date of Submittal: Project Registration Number (office use only):

Type of Review Required (please check one):

Mandatory Consultation for proposals seeking Greenway Funding

Voluntary Review and/or Endorsement for proposals not seeking Greenway Funding

PROJECT SPONSOR INFORMATION

Name:	<u>Somerset Union Museum</u>
Mailing Address:	9093 Lakeshore Drive, Barker
State:	New York
Zip Code:	14012
Federal ID#:	37-1635648
Charities Registration #:	42-93-59

PROJECT TYPE (Please check only ONE)

Trail Development / Improvement

Interpretation / Cultural Monuments

Ecosystem / Riparian Habitat Restoration

Stewardship

Niagara River Greenway Placemaking / Public Access / Wayfinding

FUNDING COMMITTEE

Host Community Standing Committee

Ecological Standing Committee

Buffalo and Erie County Standing Committee

State Parks Standing Committee

Unsure at this time / N/A

TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED

ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM OTHER SOURCES

Source	Amount
Museum Board of Trustees	\$ 20,000
AES Somerset Solar Project	\$4,631

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name:	<u>Somerset Union Museum Nave Renovation</u>
Location (include GPS coordinates if possible):	43.347756 (latitude), -78.558300 (longitude)
Project Site Address:	8501 Lake Road, Barker
State:	New York
Zip Code:	14012
Minor Civil Division(s):	Town of Somerset
County:	Niagara
Project Proponent Property Interest (own, lease, easement or other):	own

AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

Name:	<u>Darlene M Dombroski</u>
Title:	President
Business Address:	9093 Lakeshore Drive, Barker
State:	New York
Zip Code:	14012
Work Number:	716-795-5101
Cell Number:	716-253-7341
E-Mail Address:	dmd2@buffalo.edu

PROJECT POINT OF CONTACT

Name:	<u>Andrew Poss</u>
Title:	Treasurer
Organization / Firm:	Somerset Union Museum
Business Address:	9093 Lakeshore Drive, Barker
State:	New York
Zip Code:	14012
Work Number:	716-795-5101
Cell Number:	716-253-7341
E-Mail Address:	android9093@outlook.com

Somerset Union Museum



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*****In each section, a one sentence answer to the topic is in bold letters.*****

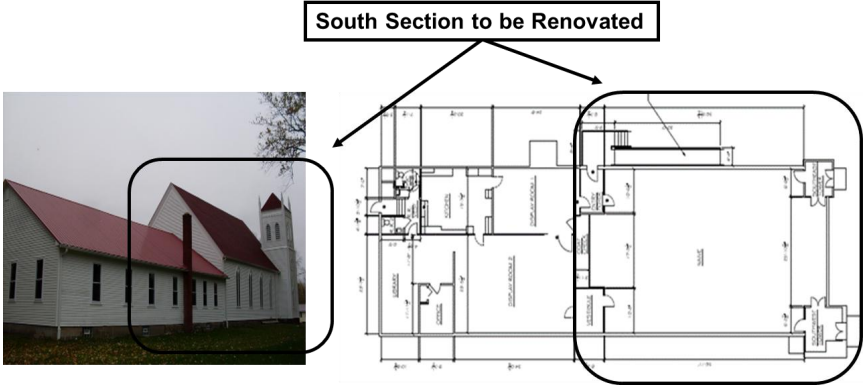
1. PROJECT NARRATIVE

The Somerset Union Museum is requesting Niagara River Greenway funds to renovate the nave of the former Somerset Methodist church and convert it into a modern museum. The Museum has completed three of four phases of its renovation plan.

The four phase conversion plan consisted of:

- Phase 1 -- The stabilization of the exterior building structure - complete
- Phase 2 -- Renovation of the northern half of the building - complete
- Phase 3 -- Renovation of the nave of the building - funding request**
- Phase 4 -- Display cases and relocation of museum collection - complete/ongoing

At the completion of this project the Somerset Union Museum will become the home of the approximately 5,000 item unique artifact and antique collection of the Dombroski family. The Museum located on NY Route 18 is situated on the Great Lakes Seaway Trail. The Somerset Union Museum envisions becoming a vibrant social, cultural and economic centerpiece of the Town of Somerset and the Village of Barker and will be regarded as an entertaining and worthwhile tourist destination. It will be a resource for scholars, historians and educators. The Museum will preserve and catalog important objects and documents and will use these items to provide educational and cultural programs for the local schools and organizations.



Community Need

The Town of Somerset and the Village of Barker are the immediate communities served by the Somerset Union Museum. They are located 50 miles north of Buffalo, 60 miles west of Rochester and 40 miles east of Niagara Falls. The area is rural with a large percentage of active farmland for orchards, vineyards and crops.

Like rural communities throughout the United States, the poverty level in the Barker/Somerset area is elevated. From the 2020 US Census, the median household income of Barker is \$59,375 compared to the state average of \$79,557. About 32.8% of the village population are below the poverty line, including 40.9% of those under age 18 and 38.8% of those age 65 or over. This compares with 14.3% statewide and 12.6% nationally. In the Town of Somerset, 14.4% of the residents were below the poverty line. It has a youth poverty rate of 18.2% and a senior poverty rate of 14.2%. These statistics describe the depressed economic situation in the Barker-Somerset region of Niagara County.

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) defines economically disadvantaged as “those who participate in, or whose family participates in, economic assistance programs.” NYSED notes “if one student in a family is identified as low-income, all students from that household...may be identified as low income.” The Barker High School, which includes the Town of Somerset and the Village of Barker, has an economically disadvantaged rate of 48.3% of the student population (US News). Half the families with school age children in the Barker School system qualify for free meals and therefore live at a low income level.

To make matters worse, the largest industry and taxpayer located in Somerset NY for the past 30-plus years, the Kintigh Generating Station, has closed. The electric power generating plant went bankrupt in 2019 which resulted in a loss of all of its 163 jobs and \$13.8 million in taxes to the Barker Central School District, the Town of Somerset and Niagara County (Buffalo Business First). The huge reduction in tax revenue has resulted in cuts and discontinuing instructional, athletic and extracurricular programs at the Barker School. In a 2015 interview with the Lockport Journal, the former Town Supervisor Daniel Engert reported that “The Town Board responded to the revenue loss by cutting expenses, spending cash reserves and investing in infrastructure improvements in the hope of luring new businesses to Somerset. The state's economic development focus is on urban areas, meaning the town is largely on its own in trying to call attention to itself as a place for commerce.”

Attracting tourism is one way for the Somerset and Barker communities to create economic vitality and increase employment. The rural tourist industry is dependent upon marketing dispersed attractions that together offer a splendid tourist experience. The museum expects to attract a portion of the visitors who wish to make a cultural excursion during a wine tour or scenic drive. The Museum will also have a significant impact on the local economy and will help to increase the diversity of attractions in northeastern Niagara County.

2. ADVANCING THE NIAGARA RIVER GREENWAY VISION

The Somerset Union Museum Nave Renovation Project is consistent in advancing numerous principles, goals, and criteria set forth by the Niagara River Greenway Plan.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Accessibility

The Museum is committed to making its facilities and programs accessible to all visitors. The renovation of the north section of the building installed an **ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) bathroom for visitors with disabilities**. In 2021, a new handicapped access entryway was erected replacing the dilapidated crumbling concrete steps situated at the east entry to the building.

No entry fee will be charged but the Somerset Union Museum will ask for a voluntary contribution. The Museum does not want an admission fee to act as a barrier to entry and thus reduce the number of people that would be drawn to the cultural experience of a museum visit.

Connectivity

The location of the Somerset Union Museum at 8501 Lake Road (NY Route 18), Barker NY is strategically **located on the Great Lakes Seaway Trail**. It will become the northeastern entrance to the Niagara River Greenway Corridor. Brochures will be available in the lobby of the Museum highlighting the Greenway attractions and the Seaway Trail.

Restoration

The upgrade and repair of the former Somerset Methodist Church represents the **revitalization of existing urban centers along the corridor**. The existing infrastructure, building frame and layout will work well in the conversion to a modern museum. The 40 ft X 69 ft original church was completed in June of 1878. The first addition to the rear of the building was added in 1906 and a major expansion of the building with an enlarged dining room, new kitchen, new restrooms and a larger basement was completed in 1950. The electrical wiring is a combination of ca. 1922 and 1950. There is no working furnace and all water piping has broken from years of freezing winters. The building has been abandoned since 1969. The exterior building renovation has been completed and the north half of the former church was renovated in 2022.

Partnerships

The rural tourist industry is dependent upon marketing dispersed attractions that together offer a splendid tourist experience. The Somerset Union Museum is a focal point ideally located on NY Route 18. It serves as a bridging attraction located half way between the Babcock House Museum and the Thirty Mile Point Lighthouse. Its location acts as a link between The Winery at Marjim Manor in Appleton NY and Donovan Orchards Estate Ciders in Barker NY. **The Museum will partner with the Great Lake Seaways Trail**, and local merchants to create an impressive tourist experience and favorable image of the Western New York area.

Community Based

The **Town of Somerset Comprehensive Plan** advocates the use of the Hamlet of **Somerset for business development**. It also recommends that business activities be concentrated in the Haight St., Quaker Rd., Route 18 section, augmented by commercial activities in the Village of Barker. The use of 8501 Lake Road as a museum follows this plan and helps with the strengthening of the Hamlet and Route 18 as a center of business activities.

GREENWAY GOALS

Make Connections

This project is a link for **connecting destinations along the Great Lakes Seaway Trail**. The location of this cultural institute in northeastern Niagara County becomes an excellent beacon from which to navigate westward to all the points of interest, accommodations and restaurants along the Niagara River Greenway Corridor.

Promote Long-Term Sustainability

This project makes adaptive reuse of the former Somerset Methodist Church built in 1878 and vacated by the congregation in 1969. It was abandoned for 40 years before the conversion to a museum started. The choice of a museum is important to the community because it is in an area where alternative uses for such large structures are hard to find and the church is integrated within the historical identity of this rural community. **The renovation of the building is an investment in an existing resource and improvement of an aging facility** on Lake Road in Somerset that will result in a world class facility to serve both current and future generations.

Celebrate History and Heritage

Part of the Somerset Union Museum's mission statement is to convert the former Somerset Methodist Church into a museum to house, conserve, research, communicate, interpret and exhibit, for the purposes of study, education and enjoyment, the collections of the Dombroski family. Another section of its mission is to **provide exhibitions, publications, classes and workshops creating opportunities for the surrounding community to enjoy and appreciate this historical property and extensive collection.** Through exhibitions, the Museum offers its visitors an opportunity to celebrate their past and gain a unique sense of their heritage.

CRITERIA

1. Consistency with Niagara River Greenway Principles

The Somerset Union Museum Restoration Project meets the guiding principles of the Niagara River Greenway Plan, **specifically the principles of Restoration, Connectivity and Community Based.**

2. Priority Status

The proposed project is best characterized as **the revitalization of an urban center**, namely, the Town of Somerset. It promotes tourism and improves the overall quality of life in northeastern Niagara County. This area is rural with a large percentage of active farmland for orchards, vineyards and crops. The presence of a museum in the Town of Somerset will spur a tourist economy and help redress issues of economic decline that have so plagued the area.

3. Focus Area

The location of the Somerset Union Museum at 8501 Lake Road (NY Route 18), Barker NY is strategically **located on the Great Lake Seaways Trail.** The New York Seaway Trail follows Lake Road (NYS Route 18) in northeastern Niagara County. The Seaway Trail is a recognized scenic route paralleling Lake Erie, the Niagara River, Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. This corridor is a designated National Scenic By-Way. The Seaway Trail route is well marked and promoted as a tourism destination and as an alternative to the NYS Thruway and other interstate highways.

4. Environmental Soundness

The Somerset Union Museum is located in an existing developed area on previously disturbed soils and **will not cause any adverse affects to the surrounding environment and ecosystems.** The Museum will be a flagship in the revitalization of the Hamlet of Somerset. It is expected to transform the village's business area into an upbeat and energetic place by increasing tourism.

5. Implementable

The Board of Trustees has approved a four-phase plan to convert the former Somerset Methodist Church into a museum. **Phase 1, the stabilization of the building structure, is complete. The back half of the building (Phase 2) has been renovated and display cases have been purchased (Phase 4).** The proposed project for the Niagara River Greenway funds is to complete the renovation and conversion of the nave (Phase 3). A building condition assessment has been completed and the outcome of this study was a list of renovations. Construction quotes for all aspects of the nave renewal have been obtained. All town permits for the renovation of the church have been issued.

6. Economic Viability

The Somerset Union Museum understands the importance of being economically viable and has a committed donation base. These funds are used for both capital improvements and building maintenance. As capital improvements to the building are completed, more funds will become available for any increase in operating costs. The Board of Trustees is intensely aware of the importance of fiscal responsibility and has made a major commitment to keep the Museum from acquiring any debt during the renovation of the building.

The Board of Trustees also understands the need for long term financial security through endowment, diversity of income streams, and responsible use of one-time funds. They will focus the Museum's planned giving program on bequests. Legacy donations will be solicited by mailings, advertisements in our publications and on our website. A planned giving information packet will be available at the Museum. Blockbuster exhibits and special events, such as those provided by the Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) will be used to showcase the Museum and generate additional revenue.

An endowment fund has been established in order to build a reserve for the purpose of creating a financial bedrock for the organization. The Museum's endowment fund is large enough to fund yearly operating expenses while maintaining principal. The Museum also owns land that has leased income from EDF Renewables Ridge View Solar and Storage Project in Hartland NY.

7. Local Sponsor or Partner

The Somerset Union Museum and the Niagara County Historical Society have developed a collaboration effort to help ensure the long-term viability of the Somerset Museum. In the near term, the history center has been sharing best practices and experience in software, accounting, and policies. Once the Somerset Union Museum is renovated and open to the public, the collaboration is expected to expand into marketing, publicity, and exhibits. The cooperation will not only strengthen its individual participating organizations but also benefit Niagara County by attracting new audiences, improving public perception of the area, and finding new ways to encourage cultural heritage and preservation. By developing this affiliation with an established historical society, the Somerset Union Museum will be able to bolster and sustain its place as a modern museum in northeastern Niagara County.

The Somerset Union Museum has a **collaboration with the University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences.** Any artifacts that are donated to the UB Apothecary and Historical Exhibits and duplicates their collection or they lack the capacity to store the object are offered to enhance the Somerset Union Museum scientific collection. This cooperation has resulted in meaningful additions to the museum's repository of chemistry and pharmacy memorabilia.

The Town of Somerset Board has endorsed the Somerset Union Museum's application for Greenway funding with a resolution on August 15, 2024. In addition, the Mayor of Barker and the Somerset Town Supervisor have advocated the project with letters of support.

8. Matching Funds / Leveraging

The Somerset Union Museum has been committed to leveraging the funds dedicated to the conversion of the former Somerset Methodist Church into a modern museum. The Museum Board of Trustees has contributed their own investment thus far in property, Phase 1 renovation of the building and the Phase 2 and Phase 4 costs, as well as, the general maintenance costs. Any overages in costs for Phase 3 beyond grant funds will be the

responsibility of the Museum's Board of Trustees and reserve funds are available in the event that they are necessary.

The fund-raising activities have been led by the Museum's financial committee made up of the Treasurer and Members of the Board of Trustees. They have been successful in obtaining unrestricted funding from Honeywell International and EDF Renewables. The Museum received a grant from the Verizon Media Community Benefit Fund to build a new handicapped accessible entrance to the former church building. The Niagara County Facade Program provided a 1:1 matching grant for a project to put vinyl siding on the front of the former church building and repair a stained glass window. An Arts Services Inc. Give for Greatness Grant was awarded to the Museum to purchase a sign in front of the building and three grants from the EDF Renewables, Ridge View Share the Sun Fund helped with the cost of the sign installation, the purchase of a new door and window for the foyer entrance and window blinds. The New York State Council on the Arts awarded the Museum a grant to fund the renovation of the foyer entrance to the building. Recently, AES Somerset Solar Project has agreed to fund the cost to update ceiling lights in the nave and the Niagara County Facade Program 2.0 provided a 1:1 matching grant for a project to finish the vinyl siding on the former church building.

9. Consideration of Other Planning Efforts

The Town of Somerset Comprehensive Plan advocates the use of the Hamlet of Somerset for business development. It recommends that business activities be concentrated in the Haight, Quaker, Route 18 section, augmented by commercial activities in the Village of Barker. The use of 8501 Lake Road as a museum follows this plan and helps with the strengthening of the Hamlet and Route 18 section as a center of business activities. The project is also consistent with the strategies and priorities of smart growth and tourism outlined in the Western New York Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan developed by the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council.

10. Clear Benefits

The presence of the Museum in the Town of Somerset will also provide many social values other than the increase in tourism. These include:

- Option Value. People value the possibility of enjoying the objects exhibited in the Museum at some future time.
- Existence value. The community benefits from knowing that a museum exists and can help attract tourists and employers.
- Bequest value. The area derives satisfaction from the knowledge that their descendants and other members of the community will in the future be able to enjoy the Museum.
- Prestige value. Residents derive comfort from knowing that a museum is cherished by persons living outside their community.
- Education value. People are aware the Museum contributes to their own or to other people's sense of culture and therefore value it.

The traditional method for determining the economic impact of the Somerset Union Museum on the local economy is to base calculations on data from surveys by visitors to the cultural institution. It is too early to determine the impact in terms of visitor expenditure. The Golden Hill State Park which is also located on the Seaways Trail four miles east of the Museum, attracted 50,058 visitors in 2022 (data.ny.gov). The Winery at Marjim Manor, located 4 miles west of the Museum on Route 18, attracts approximately 40,000 people per annum (2014 Lockport Union Sun). The Somerset Union Museum expects to attract a portion of these

visitors who wish to make a cultural excursion during a wine tour or scenic drive. For example, if 25% of the tourists that visit the museum stop in the town for food or gasoline and spend \$25 on average, the impact to the community will be over a quarter of a million dollars per year. The museum will have a significant impact on the local economy and will help to increase the diversity of attractions in northeastern Niagara County.

3. BUDGET FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT

1. Define the budget for the total proposed project and include costs for the following:

Planning	\$ -0-
Construction	\$ 171,000
Acquisition	\$ -0-
Administration	\$ -0-
Operation and Maintenance / Year	\$ -0-
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$ 171,000

Identify all sources of funding and the amount of funding expected from each source.

AES Somerset Solar -- \$4,630 for new lighting (received)
 Terawulf Lake Mariner Data -- \$15,100 for floor (requested)
 Grigg Lewis Foundation, Inc. -- \$77,050 for nave restoration (requested)

Identify and quantify funds that are already on hand or have been allocated for the proposed project. Explain how the project will be operated and maintained.

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Objective	Exterior	North Annex	Nave	Display
Cost	\$360,000.00	\$160,000.00	est. \$171,000	\$16,000.00
	<i>Complete</i>	<i>Complete</i>		<i>Complete</i>
Renovations	new roof	ADA bathroom	drywall towers	50 display cases
	driveway and parking lot	water and heater	stained glass windows	collection relocation
	storm windows,	electrical	2 HVAC units	
	glass block basement windows	HVAC	floor	
	security and fire monitoring,	insulation	paint walls and ceiling	
	removal of trees	drywall		
	gutters	paint		
	Lexan window g	drop ceiling		
	vinyl siding	new flooring		
	ADA entrance			

This funding request is for monies to complete the remodeling of the front section, Phase 3, of the building. The budget for this phase of the building renovation is:

NAVE RENOVATION		
EXPENSES		
ACTIVITY	CONTRACTOR	QUOTE
repair windows, paint, drywall, repair framing, tin work	Swiatek Studios	\$77,050.00
ceiling insulation	Town Building systems	\$6,650.00
wall insulation	Town Building systems	\$8,750.00
floor receptacles	H. R. Johnson	\$4,090.00
ceiling lighting	H. R. Johnson	\$6,211.00
flooring	M Carter	\$15,110.00
HVAC	Drum	\$28,080.00
stained glass window, rough vents & electrical, floors	various	\$25,000.00
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$170,941.00
INCOME		
GRANTS	AGENCY	FUNDING
	AES	\$ 4,630.00
DONATIONS	Trustees	\$20,000.00
	TOTAL INCOME	\$24,630.00
	INCOME - EXPENSES	(\$147,000.00)

The south or front section of the building is the nave or the main body of a church once used for worship. The renovation of this portion of the building, Phase 3, is estimated to cost \$170,941. The budget is based on bids from subcontractors.

The stained glass window needs repair and replacement. The front towers of the nave need to be drywalled and painted. The other walls need insulation, painting and tin repair. To keep costs under control, the existing decorative tin will be removed from the towers and used to repair west and east walls. The floor needs the plywood repaired and a new floor installed. This section of the building needs two heating and air conditioning units. New electrical outlets for exhibits have to be installed in the floor.

Funding Sources

AES Somerset Solar -- \$4,630 for new lighting (received)

Museum Trustees -- \$20,000 for nave restoration (requested)

Operations and Maintenance Plan

The Somerset Union Museum is committed to funding ongoing operating and additional administration expenses incurred by the opening of the north annex of the building. The museum has an annual review of its finances and submits annual IRS 990-EZ's. It is expected that completion of this renovation will not have a material change on the financial situation of the organization. The Somerset Union Museum has a dedicated donation base. Completion of the nave renovation will accomplish all the foreseeable capital improvements to the building and all funds will become available for any increase in operating costs. For the next ten years, the Museum should have a limited need for major repairs and will establish a "Reserve for Replacement Fund" by setting aside annual sums for maintenance in the future.

2. Describe the measures taken at the local level to gain community and government support for this project (hearings, petitions, public surveys, resolutions of support or other methods). If this project has been cited or described in a local planning document or some equivalent thereof, attach copies of that documentation highlighting the sections that are relevant to the proposed project. Describe the role of municipal agencies, stakeholder groups, consultants, volunteers or others who will be involved in the proposed project.

The Town of Somerset Comprehensive Plan advocates the use of the Hamlet of Somerset for business development. It also recommends that business activities be concentrated in the Haight, Quaker, Route 18 section, augmented by commercial activities in the Village of Barker. The use of 8501 Lake Road as a museum follows this plan and helps with the strengthening of the Hamlet as a center of business activities.

Community and Government Support

The Board of Trustees of the Somerset Union Museum have worked for the past months to pursue the necessary planning to complete the renovation of the former Somerset Methodist Church in to a modern museum. This has involved meetings with NYS Senator Robert Ortt, Assemblyman Michael J. Norris, Niagara County Legislator Shawn A. Foti, Town of Somerset Supervisor Jeffery Dewart, former Village of Barker Mayor Aaron Nellist and the current Mayor Seanna Corwin-Bradley all of whom pledged their support to see this plan become a reality. The Secretary/Treasurer of the Museum presented an update of building renovations to the Barker Senior Citizens organization. The representatives of the Somerset Union Museum met with the Somerset Historical Society President Terry Upton and Vice President Mike Diez as well as with the Town of Somerset/Village of Barker Historian Amy Dewart for the purpose of understanding the mission of the Museum and mutual areas of cooperation. In addition to providing a letter of support, the Town Board of Somerset passed a resolution in support of the Greenway Grant Application on August 15, 2024. (Resolution attached.)

The Somerset Union Museum understands that the county can invest greenway money in non-profit projects but some entity has to agree to guarantee the projects go forward and are maintained in the event the non-profit fails. The Town of Somerset has experienced significant financial stress with the closing of the Somerset Power Plant and therefore is unable to agree to guarantee the Museum renovation project. The Somerset Union Museum owns its collection, building on Lake Road and land on Hartland Road outright. The Museum Board of Trustees suggests that a limited time lien be placed on its property for the grant amount in the event that the museum fails. In this way, the first money from sales of museum possessions and property would reimburse Niagara County and NYPA for the granted funds.

3. Describe and document the environmental setting and existing conditions at the proposed project site. If you are not the owner of the property include a letter(s) or resolution(s) evidencing support for the project by the owner. Provide photographs, conceptual plans and drawings that show the site as it presently exists and how the site will change with the addition of the proposed project. Describe how your project will comply with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The existence of wetlands, significant upland and aquatic habitats, and plant or animal species that are classified as rare, threatened, or endangered should be noted. Explain how such natural resources will be protected and/or enhanced. Cite any relevant project-related studies.

The Somerset Union Museum is located at 8501 Lake Road in the Town of Somerset. The Town is situated at the northeastern most corner of Niagara County. It is located 50 miles north of Buffalo, 60 miles west of Rochester and 40 miles east of Niagara Falls.

The development parcel contains a church that was built in 1878. The first addition to the rear of the building was added in 1906 and a major expansion of the building was completed in 1950. The building has been abandoned since 1969. The nave or south section of the building has no working furnace and significance water damage to the interior walls and towers. The electrical wiring is a combination of ca. 1922 and 1950. The exterior of the building and its site will not be changed with the implementation of this project.

The Somerset Union Museum owns the building outright. The former church building was purchased in 2010 by the Dombroski Family and donated to the Somerset Union Museum, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation. The deed is dated January 25, 2012 and the liber number is 2012-01886.

There are no SEQRA requirements for this project. The museum will continue to work with the Town of Somerset to fulfill all necessary conditions of the NYS Building Code. There are no wetlands, natural habitats or plant and animal species that will be threatened.

4. **Please attach the proposed project timeline, identify any relevant milestones, and provide an estimated date for project completion/opening. If funded, it is expected that the project sponsor or point of contact will notify the Commission of the project opening date as it nears completion. (*Note: This addition to the application was made September 2018.*)**

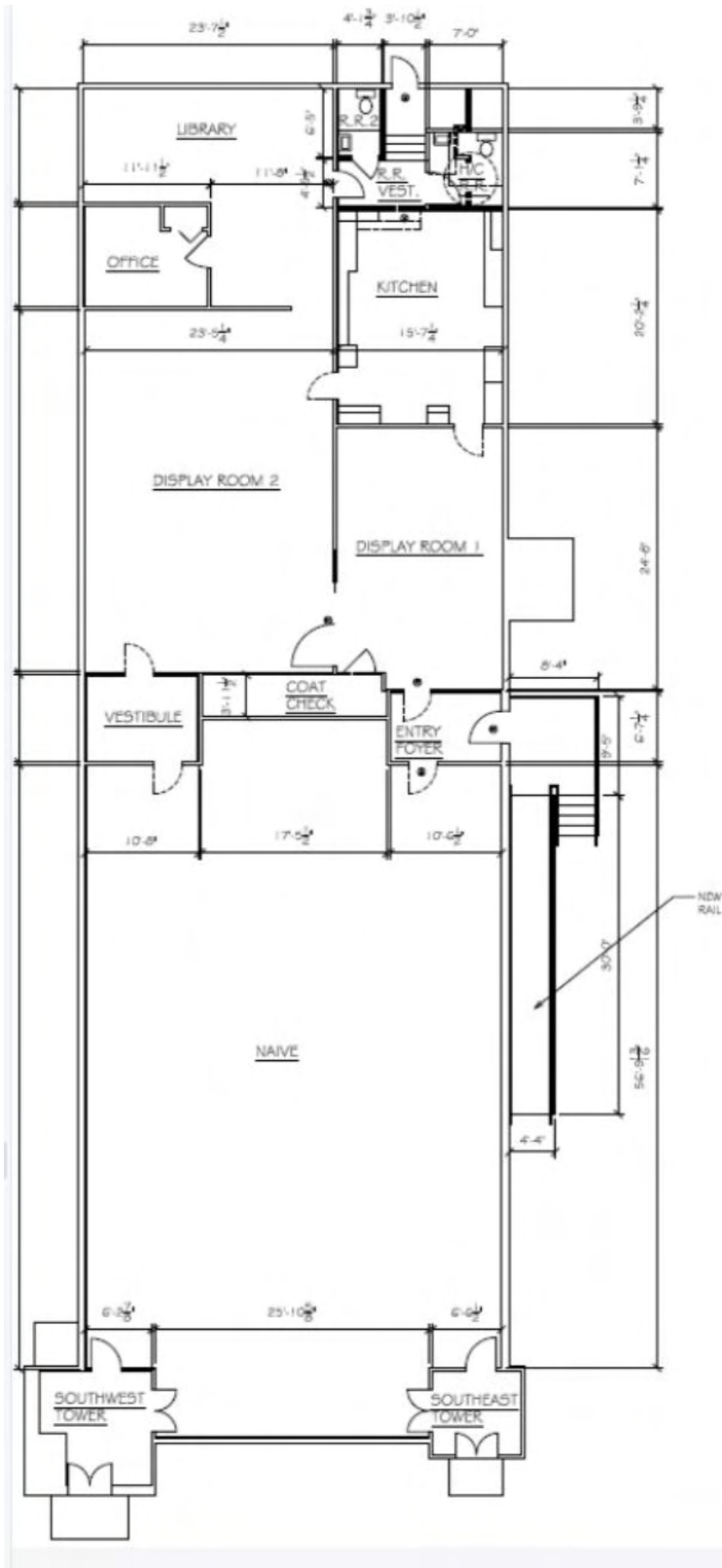
Gantt Timeline attached on page 17.

Milestones:

1. Painting walls, ceiling and wainscoting
2. HVAC installation
3. New flooring
4. Installation of display cabinets

Estimate Museum opening May 2026.

Somerset Union Museum Floor Plan



Nave, North wall:



Nave, South Wall:



INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **SEP 07 2011**

SOMERSET UNION MUSIEM
C/O ANDREW POSS
62 DEERHURST PARK BLVD
KENMORE, NY 14217

Employer Identification Number:
37-1635648
DLN:
101203011
Contact Person:
RACHEL M LEIFHEIT ID# 31617
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
December 31
Public Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
Form 990 Required:
Yes
Effective Date of Exemption:
December 14, 2010
Contribution Deductibility:
Yes
Addendum Applies:
No

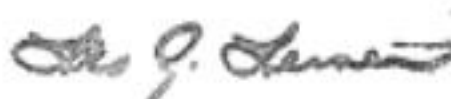
Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2056, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

Please see enclosed Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, for some helpful information about your responsibilities as an exempt organization.

Sincerely,



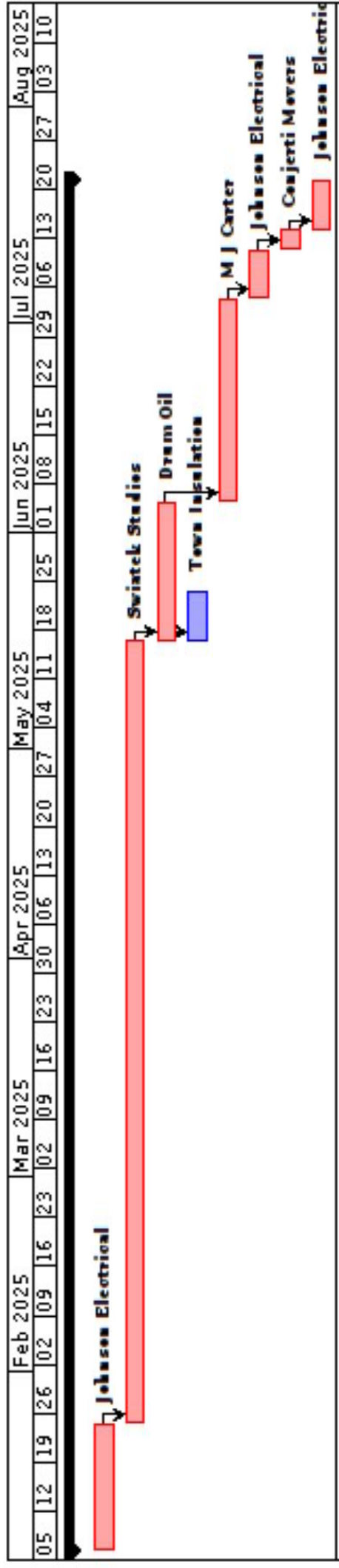
Lois G. Lerner
Director, Exempt Organizations

Enclosure: Publication 4221-PC

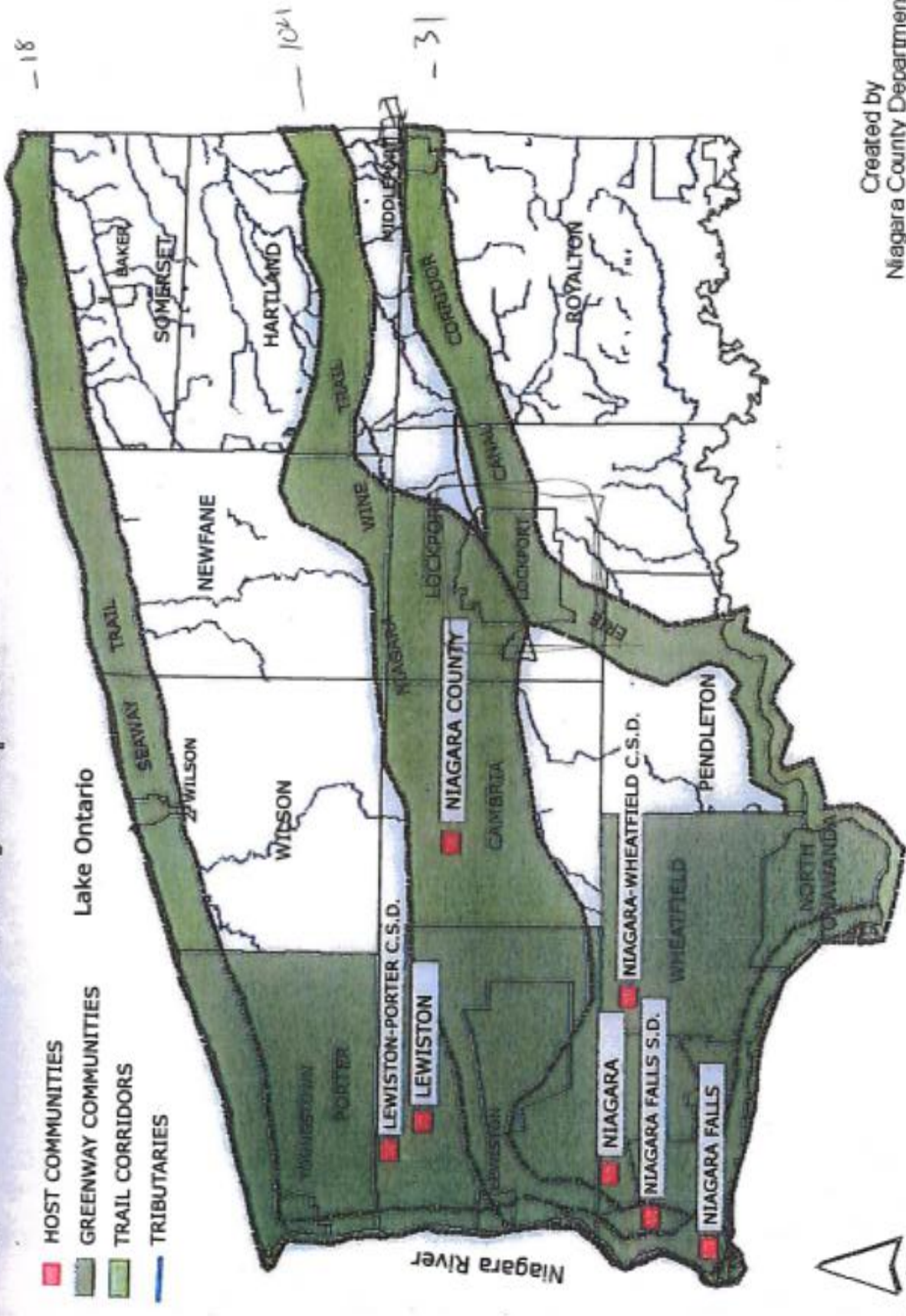
Letter 947 (DD/CG)

Nave Restoration Timeline

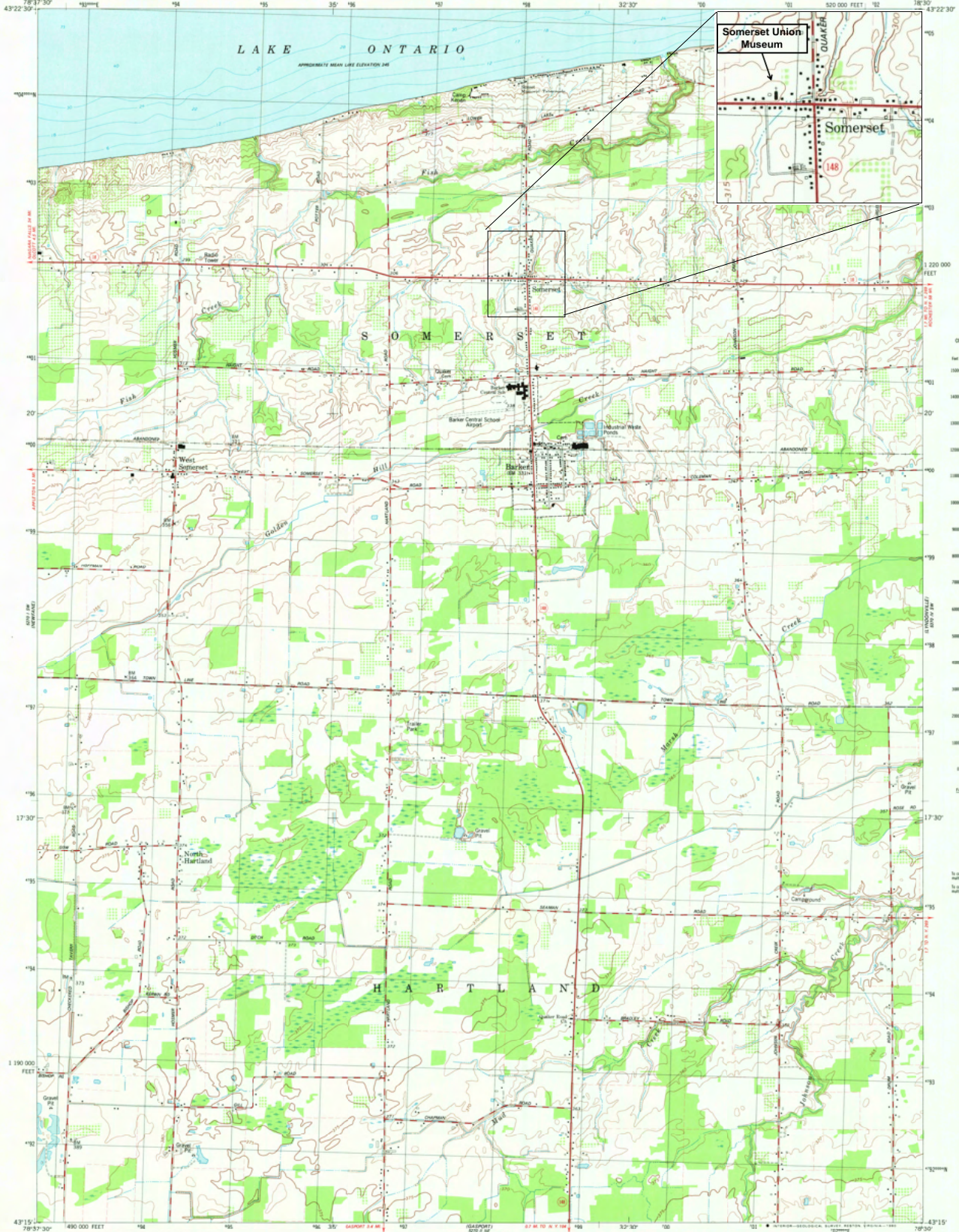
		Name	Duration	Start	Finish	...	Resource Names	F
1		Elkhave Renovation	140 days	1/6/25, 9:00 AM	7/21/25, 9:00 AM			
2		electrical to lights	14 days	1/6/25, 9:00 AM	1/24/25, 9:00 AM		Johnson Electrical	
3		paint walls, ceiling and wainscoting	80 days	1/24/25, 9:00 AM	5/16/25, 9:00 AM	2	Swiatek Studios	
4		HVAC	14 days	5/16/25, 9:00 AM	6/5/25, 9:00 AM	3	Drum Oil	
5		ceiling insulation	5 days	5/16/25, 9:00 AM	5/23/25, 9:00 AM	3	Town Insulation	
6		flooring	21 days	6/5/25, 9:00 AM	7/4/25, 9:00 AM	4	M J Carter	
7		floor electrical	5 days	7/4/25, 9:00 AM	7/11/25, 9:00 AM	6	Johnson Electrical	
8		install display cabinets	1 day	7/11/25, 9:00 AM	7/14/25, 9:00 AM	7	Conjerti Movers	
9		LED lighting for cabinets	5 days	7/14/25, 9:00 AM	7/21/25, 9:00 AM	8	Johnson Electrical	



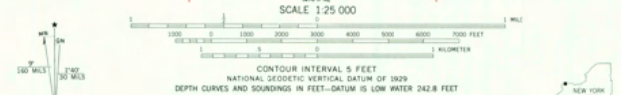
Niagara River Greenway Proposal



Created by
Niagara County Department
of Economic Development



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1972. Field checked 1973. Map edited 1980
Supersedes 1:24 000-scale map dated 1965
Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS chart 14806 (1978). This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks, New York coordinate system, west zone (transverse Mercator)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 17 1977 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 2 meters south and 21 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Light duty road, hard or improved surface
Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route

USGS
Historical File
Topographic Database

BARKER, N. Y.
NEW ALLOTT 19 QUADRANGLE
N4315-W7830.75
1980
DMA 5270 1 SE-SERIES 9821

OCT - 3 1980

2470

TOWN OF SOMERSET
2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



Adopted – 12/21/16



Town of Somerset Town Board

SECTION V

IMPLEMENTATION

A. TARGET AREAS

In developing the Comprehensive Plan, the Town identified some concepts that represent higher priority target areas for implementation. Other recommendations and ideas remain valid, but the areas outlined below are the focus areas that merit more emphasis. Based on the research and discussions during the development of the Plan, these concepts emerged as having the greatest potential to help ensure that the Town achieves its vision, and represent the topics most likely to be prioritized as initial implementation actions.

1. Protection of the Rural, Agricultural, and Residential Character of the Town

The protection of Somerset's rural, agricultural, and residential character should be the primary consideration in any land use or planning decision. Proposed uses that are facially inconsistent with this goal, or that will have a substantial impact on the character of the Town, should be discouraged. Other important components of this character are the environmental resources of the Town; waterfront areas, woodlands, wetlands, stream corridors, wildlife habitats, bird corridors, etc. and features such as the Seaway Trail.

2. Development and redevelopment in and around the Village of Barker

As noted in the Framework for Regional Growth, the Village of Barker is a Rural Center. Rural Centers are targeted growth areas; they represent the heart of the region's rural communities. Development in the Town of Somerset adjacent to the Village should strive to complement the Village, match development patterns and strengthen the Village's role as the civic center of the Town.

- East of the Village: Development in this vicinity should complement Village development, matching and extending existing land use patterns. In the southern portion of the eastern boundary, this would entail extension of the Village grid of residential neighborhoods. In the Fels Road area, the Town should capitalize on the success the Village has had with commercial development and continue to fill this area in with businesses.
- West of the Village (Barker Chemical site): Feasible options depend upon the results of Phase II ESA. The Town would like to see some level of light industrial/ commercial development out towards the road, while keeping the more sensitive lands in the center of the site open to avoid environmental issues. The rear of the property has potential for development but has access issues.
- South of the Village: Currently, this area is mostly residential development. Additional options include neighborhood level commercial and mixed uses (small commercial with residential uses).
- North of The Village: This area has the greatest potential for extending the Village character north toward the Somerset hamlet along Quaker Road. Town Hall and the school facilities are located in this vicinity. Future plans should ensure that these facilities are tied into the Village. See focus area 3 for discussion of Haight Road.

To accomplish the above items, the Town could take the following approach:

- East of the Village
 - a. Evaluate infrastructure needs and environmental restrictions for the development of this area.
 - b. Evaluate zoning alternatives, including a new zoning to meet the needs of this area.
 - c. Meet with the Village to discuss how to best mesh with the development occurring in the Village in this area.
 - d. When applicable and if needed, invest in the infrastructure needs of this area.
- West of the Village
 - a. Once the current study is completed and accepted by the Town and County (see copy of the draft report sections in the Appendix), evaluate the proposed future development options and the needs for that development.
 - b. If additional clean up is necessary (or other activities), work with the County to find monies to accomplish this clean up or work.
 - c. Working with the County, evaluate options for marketing the site for re-development (incentives may be necessary).
- South of the Village
 - a. Evaluate the use of a neighborhood / hamlet type zoning district for the area.
 - b. Evaluate the infrastructure needs in this area and determine the appropriate areas for prioritized development (senior housing could be an option).
- North of the Village
 - a. Evaluate the use of a Hamlet Zoning District for this area (establish extent of area – see the Vision Map for suggestions).
 - b. Look at existing infrastructure for areas for targeted development. Longer term development may necessitate infrastructure improvements.
 - c. Create an Overlay of this “hamlet” area (see vision map) that protects this area from uses and actions that are not consistent with this residential area.

3. Development around the Somerset power plant site

The power plant site is the largest industrial site/user in the Town and is extremely important to the region. The WNY Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan targets “Energy” as a key WNY Industry Sector, and states, “The Electric Power sector is the fastest growing share of the energy economy in New York, the United States, and most of the world. This growth requires considerable investment and planning by power generating companies and State agencies.” The properties formerly owned by AES on the north side of Lake Road are zoned PUD to allow the power plant and associated commercial and industrial uses. It must be noted that under Article 8 of the New York State Public Service Law, the Town does not have jurisdiction over power generation activities on this site. Other, non-power generating related uses can be affected by local laws and ordinances. Some properties along the railroad, south of Lake Road, are zoned industrial. A Mayer Brothers facility is located to the west of the power plant. Much of the surrounding area is agriculture.

- “Verizon site”: This site consists of property on the north side of the lake, adjacent to the power plant and previously proposed for a Verizon Data Center. The Town should explore getting this site designated as “Shovel-Ready” for light industrial and business uses. This would help support economic development in the Town, in an area where there is already similar development types.
- Northwest Sector of Town: The area west of “Verizon” site to Mayer Brothers’ facility represents an opportunity for additional economic development, but given the

agricultural nature of the area, proposed uses include a mix of businesses, focusing on agriculture-related opportunities, similar in nature to Mayer Brothers, and possibly some residential uses along the lakeshore.

- South of Lake Road/ West of Hosmer: this area is another area where agricultural related business and light industrial agricultural related uses could be supported. East of Hosmer Road, north of Haight Road should also be reserved for agricultural related business.
- Power Plant Property: contains the power plant and its related uses and accessory uses. Efforts should continue to keep this important regional, State and national Energy provider and strategic Industry Sector in operation.

4. Other areas appropriate for economic development/ business expansion

As a first priority, development is encouraged to occur in the areas around the Village and in the vicinity of existing commercial/ industrial businesses in the Town. However, other economic development options exist in the Town.

- Haight Road in the vicinity of Town Hall: This area has potential for business development, focusing on small businesses such as JTPrecision. It should not be encouraged as a retail corridor, as retail development should be concentrated in the Village center.
- Agritourism: As opportunities present themselves, the Town should encourage agritourism enterprises. The greatest potential is in the northeast sector of the Town, near the cidery on Lower Lake road, as the cidery exists as an anchor and the area is in the vicinity to the State Park, where there is a concentration of potential visitors (see below for more information on agriculture). There also needs to be connections from the State Park and waterfront to the Seaway Trail.
- "Hamlets": Small scale, nodal development in the character of a small hamlet can be encouraged in key areas such as the Somerset hamlet. Any non-residential uses should be small-scale, locally supportive, such as small convenience outlets.

5. Agricultural economic development

Agriculture continues to be an important part of the Town, its economy, and its character. The Town should be exploring how it can encourage the continuation of farming in the community, and work with the agricultural community to help them prosper. Initial concepts include the following:

- Allowing more creative uses on farms, while discouraging uses that might change or convert the agricultural assessment of any parcel.
- Support of farming-related businesses.
- Explore what the needs are for farmers in Somerset and support the farmers by helping them achieve their goals.
- Agri-tourism can be part of the Town's agricultural economy. The Town can help look for new markets and marketplaces.

To accomplish these actions related to agriculture, the following approach could be taken:

- a. Establish a Town Agricultural Committee. They can work with agencies such as the Niagara County Soil and Water District, the Cooperative Extension of Niagara County, the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, and other agricultural groups and organizations

TOWN CLERK'S CERTIFICATION

STATE OF NEW YORK

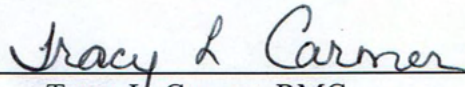
:SS:

COUNTY OF NIAGARA

I, Tracy L. Carmer, Town Clerk of the Town of Somerset, DO HEREBY CERTIFY:

THAT the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Somerset on August 14, 2024.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Town of Somerset, New York this 15th day of August, 2024.



Tracy L. Carmer, RMC
Town Clerk
Town of Somerset



RESOLUTION 104-2024

SOMERSET UNION MUSEUM SUPPORT

On a motion of Councilman Hotaling, seconded by Councilwoman Damon, the following resolution was

ADOPTED: Ayes 5 Dewart, Jansen, Hotaling, Damon, Leuer
 Nays 0

WHEREAS, the Town of Somerset is a rural community located in Niagara County; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Somerset fully supports the goals and objectives of the Somerset Union Museum and desires to see the former Somerset Union Methodist Episcopal Church fully restored and maintained as a vital community facility, which has been a part of the Town since June of 1878; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Somerset believes that the Somerset Union Museum will assist in spurring a tourist economy, which is in conformance with the Town's Comprehensive Plan, which in part, recommended expansion of tourism and particularly seeks to capitalize on visitors of the Seaway Trail as well as build upon the wine trail synergies in order to enhance the connections between Golden Hill State Park, the Village of Barker, and the Wine and Seaway Trail.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Somerset fully supports the application of the Somerset Union Museum's application for a Niagara River Greenway Grant that would enable the Museum to make improvements to the sanctuary located within the Museum in the Town of Somerset.



Niagara History Center
215 Niagara Street
Lockport, NY 14094
Ph: 716-434-7433
Fax: 716-434-3309
www.niagarahistory.org



Melissa Dunlap
Executive Director
melissa@niagarahistory.org

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Margaret Lupo

James Mucha

Susie Parker

Jerry Roberts

Henry Schmidt

Marietta Schrader

John Shepard

Karen Sherwood

Mr. Gregory D. Stevens, Executive Director
Niagara River Greenway Commission
3180 De Veaux Woods Drive, East
Niagara Falls, New York 14305

October 26, 2002

Dear Mr. Stevens and Commissioners:

I am writing you in support of the Niagara River Greenway Commission funding application for the Somerset Union Museum's renovation and conversion of the former Somerset Methodist Church into a modern museum. The Niagara County Historical Society is working collaboratively with this new museum.

The Niagara River Greenway funding will help the Somerset Union Museum in their efforts to modernize a structure that dates back to 1878 that has been abandoned for the last fifty-plus years. The church building will become a new cultural tourist attraction of the area.

It is important to note that the Town of Somerset is in rural Niagara County that has recently experienced huge changes in its tax base due to the closing of the largest industry and taxpayer, the Kintigh Generating Station. The establishment of a museum on the Niagara Wine Trail offers a way to "market" the area, generate income, create a favorable image and attract investment.

The Somerset Union Museum is a positive step for community engagement and preservation of the local culture in rural Niagara County. It will provide programming that highlights the unique agricultural and maritime history of the area. Bringing the museum up to professional safety and climate controlled standards is an integral part of this project. We fully support this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Melissa L. Dunlap'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Melissa L. Dunlap
Executive Director



Jeffrey M. Dewart

Supervisor

Town of Somerset
8700 Haight Road P.O. Box 368
Barker, NY 14012-0368

Phone: (716)795-3575 FAX: (716)795-9041
CELL: (716) 417-9110
jeffdewart@gmail.com

July 17th, 2024

Mr. Greg Stevens, Executive Director
Niagara River Greenway Commission
PO Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Dear Sir:

I am writing you in support of Niagara River Greenway Commission funding for the Somerset Union Museum for their renovation and conversion of the Somerset Methodist Church into a modern museum.

The Niagara River Greenway funding will help the Somerset Union Museum in their efforts to modernize a structure that dates back to 1878 and has been abandoned for the last fifty-plus years. The Church building will become a new cultural tourist attraction for the area.

The Town of Somerset is in rural Niagara County with a large percentage of active farmlands for orchards, vineyards and crops. The museum is located on the Great Lakes Seaway Trail. It offers a way to market the region, generate income and create a favorable image of the area to attract investment.

I am confident that after you take a complete review of this project you will approve the Somerset Union Museum for their submitted Niagara River Greenway funding, as this is a positive step towards community preservation and improvement in a rural area of New York State.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey M. Dewart, Supervisor
Town of Somerset

Shawn Foti
175 Hawley St
Lockport, NY 14094

Attn: Niagara River Greenway Commission

Re: Letter of Support for Somerset Union Museum Rehabilitation

Mr. Greg Stevens, Executive Director

Niagara River Greenway Commission

PO box 1132,

Niagara Falls NY 14303

Dear Sir:

I am writing you in support of Niagara River Greenway Commission funding for the Somerset Union Museum for their renovation and conversion of the Somerset Methodist Church into a modern museum.

The Niagara River Greenway funding will help the Somerset Union Museum in their efforts to modernize a structure that dates back to 1878 and has been abandoned for the last fifty-plus years. The church building will become a new cultural tourist attraction for the area.

The Town of Somerset is in rural Niagara County with a large percentage of active farmland for orchards, vineyards and crops. The museum is located on the Great Lakes Seaway Trail. It offers a way to market the region, generate income and create a favorable image of the area to attract investment.

I am confident that after you take a complete review of this project you will approve the Somerset Union Museum for their submitted Niagara River Greenway funding, as this is a positive step towards community preservation and improvement in a rural area of New York State.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Shawn A. Foti

Niagara County Legislator 14th District

Shawn Foti

Mr. Greg Stevens, Executive Director
Niagara River Greenway Commission
PO box 1132,
Niagara Falls NY 14303

Dear Mr. Stevens,

My name is Seanna Bradley, and I am the Mayor for the Village of Barker. I am writing to voice my support for the Somerset Union Museum in their bid to secure grant funds from the Niagara River Greenway Commission.

The Somerset Union Museum has been undergoing renovations since 2010, in an effort to serve Somerset and the greater Niagara area as a cultural tourist attraction. The museum is ideally located in rural Niagara County, along the Niagara Wine Trail, which could attract tourists and local residents alike, while generating income for the area; which is beneficial to a small community like ours.

I would implore you to kindly review the project proposal presented by the Somerset Union Museum and consider the museum for Niagara River Greenway funding. Projects such as this are vital to preserving the history of Niagara County while also driving tourism for the area.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Seanna Corwin-Bradley
Mayor
Village of Barker
Phone: (585) 590-2871
E-Mail: villageofbarkermayor@gmail.com

