

MEMORANDUM

October 22, 2014

To: Board of Directors, Schenectady Metroplex Development Authority

From: David Giacalone & Mohamen Hafez

Subject: Undisclosed Tunnels at the ALCO Site Should Be Investigated Before Final Approval is Given to the Mohawk Harbor Environmental Review

Yesterday, we learned that the Applicant has failed to inform Metroplex, as part of its draft Environmental Impact State, and its Supplement, that tunnels were discovered under Building 332 at the ALCO site. The construction of Building 332 was completed in 1905, when it was one of the longest structures in the world, and went on to play a major role in the history of the Company. The discovery happened no later than August 5, 2014, when the contractor notified the DEC Remediation Office they found trace diesel contamination when they broke through to the tunnel (or "pipe chase"). The collage of screenshot photos below shows six photos of the tunnel taken by the DEC engineer, John Strang, who reports that all contamination was removed.

Although this Board had not yet completed its review of the Draft SGEIS, the Applicant never informed Metroplex (nor USACE) of the discovery. When a reporter from the Schenectady Gazette attempted to learn about the tunnels, the Applicant refused to give an interview on the record and would not allow photos to be taken; it also appears that the Applicant specifically asked that the Gazette not report on the discovery of the tunnels.

Upon seeing the photos below, historian Don Rittner wrote to us that: "[A] professional archeologist should have been hired to document the site before destruction. This was such an important part of Schenectady history that we may never know what those tunnels were for. Could they have been secret passageways in case of war, later used for other purposes, hence the small pipes that obviously were not part of the original purpose?" Dr. Rittner concluded that the discovery should have been disclosed as part of the EIS process.

We believe this Board should delay any final approval of the environmental review report until the matter has been investigated and appropriate action is taken, including the preservation of any tunnels that have not yet been demolished and filled.

