



LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSITION
MEMORANDUM

Relates to the proposed amendments made to Chapter 175- fee schedule

Item #1 on the January 20th Common Council agenda; a submission to the Council by Mayor Masiello, proposing the approval of amendments to the Chapter 175 of the City of Buffalo Charter fee schedule, is incomplete. Although the new fee structure is an improvement to the way fees were calculated in the past and is designed to both cover the cost of work by the City and be “user friendly” to encourage investment in the form of increased commercial development and redevelopment it lacks the necessary testing needed to obtain accurate results. Tests run on 2/10/04 by Partnership and DPIS staff members in the DPIS office did not produce the same results as tests run by DPIS staff on 2/4/04.

We acknowledge that while there have been some improvements at the Department of Permits and Inspection Services (DPIS), many steps remain incomplete. The following list reflects just a few of these items:

- The use multipliers are not in Hansen for all use types;
- Plumbing fees are not in Hansen system;
- Demolition fees are not entered into the Hansen system;
- Elevator fees are not entered into the Hansen system;
- Site fees are not entered into the Hansen system;
- A more detailed explanation of how Hansen is calculating fees is needed, test runs have resulted in inconsistent results;
- The fee calculator is not active in the Permit Office, it can only be accessed on-line;
- Direct and indirect cost items needed to determine true department costs have not yet been provided by DPIS.

While we hope to eventually be able to lend our support to this new fee schedule, any action by the Council at this point with so many permitting issues outstanding, would be premature and would set back the goal of permitting reform. Therefore, the Buffalo Niagara Partnership urges you to oppose the approval of amendments made to the Chapter 175-Fee Schedule.

