

FENIAN INVASION OF 1866
MARKER COMMITTEE



November 18, 2009

New York Power Authority
Edward Alkiewicz
123 Main Street
White Plains, NY 10601

Dear Mr. Alkiewicz:

On behalf of the Fenian Marker Committee and South Buffalo Alive, I am submitting the enclosed grant application to the Greenway Ecological Fund Standing Committee.

Please feel free to contact me at (716) 725-3210 with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Rachael E. Homewood
Fenian Marker Committee

cc: Paul F. Finnegan,
Senior Vice President, Public and Governmental Affairs

Niagara River Greenway Ecological Fund Application Checklist

Project Name: Fenian Invasion of 1866 Marker

Prepared By: Rachael Homewood / Fenian Committee

Date: 11/18/09

Item	
✓	Project Information
✓	Organization name and mailing address
✓	Federal ID number and/or Charities Registration number
✓	Point of contact
✓	Evidence of Consultation (including consulting parties' comments and project proponent's responses to those comments)
	Niagara River Greenway Commission <i>pending</i>
✓	Municipality, County, and/or Indian Nation
	State Agency <i>n/a</i>
	Federal Agency <i>n/a</i>
✓	Operation and Maintenance Plan
✓	Description of Project Consistency with Niagara River Greenway Plan
✓	Description of Consistency with State and Federal Laws & Regulations
✓	Description of Efforts/Opportunities for Matching Fund
✓	Description of Current and Proposed Project Area Land Ownership
✓	Detailed Project Budget



FENIAN INVASION OF 1866 MARKER

Niagara River Greenway Ecological Fund
Application
November 2009

I. PROJECT INFORMATION

This application is presented by the Fenian Marker Committee in partnership with South Buffalo Alive. The Committee can be reached at 99 Carmolite Drive, Buffalo, NY 14224.

South Buffalo Alive is federally registered as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, not-for-profit organization. The tax ID number for South Buffalo Alive is 232963.

The district office of Erie County Legislator Timothy M. Kennedy is the point of contact for this grant application. Rachael E. Homewood, the Chief of Staff for Legislator Kennedy, can be reached at (716) 725-3210.

II. EVIDENCE OF CONSULTATION

Niagara River Greenway Commission:
Pending

County:

The land where the proposed monument will be placed is at Tow Path Park, at the foot of Hertel Avenue, in the Riverside neighborhood of Buffalo, NY. This land is owned and maintained by the County of Erie. The Fenian Marker Committee and South Buffalo Alive are working in conjunction with Legislator Tim Kennedy, and as such approval from the County of Erie has been secured.

State/Federal:
Not applicable

III. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE PLAN

The purpose of this project is to commemorate the Fenian Invasion into Canada of 1866. The entire scope of the project entails designing and creating a stone marker that will be placed in Tow Path Park, the original site from which the invasion was launched.

The marker itself will be a slab of granite measuring 6'6" x 2'6", which will be anchored and secured by a concrete footer. The face of the monument will contain copy in English and Gaelic outlining the Fenian Invasion of 1866 and its significance. The monument will also include a carving of an Irish harp, given its significance as a symbol in the Irish nationalist movement. Installation costs will be handled by volunteer contributions.

Unlike other organizations requesting funds, this is a project that will need very little maintenance once the marker is carved and installed at Tow Path Park and it will be absorbed by the Fenian Committee.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH NIAGARA RIVER GREENWAY PLAN

The purpose of the Greenway Ecological Fund is to "support the creation, improvement, and maintenance of conservation areas and ecological projects in the Niagara River Basin to *promote tourism, enhance the environment, advance the economic revitalization of riverfront communities, and support the creation of a Greenway.*"

The basis of the Fenian Marker project is not in and of itself ecological in nature; what we are proposing is the creation of a beautiful stone marker to commemorate a vital and important part of Buffalo's history that has been overlooked in the past. However, the placement of this stone marker in Tow Path Park, located along the Niagara River in Riverside, will enhance the communal value of the park itself and will promote tourism not only within Buffalo but also from Ontario, Canada, therefore imbuing the economy of this riverfront community with vitality and growth.

The purpose of this project is to highlight the rich history of Tow Path Park, which will have the important secondary effect of bringing awareness of the Niagara River, the Riverwalk, and the Erie Canal and the tow path that moved past this point, to the residents of this area and all potential visitors.

A brief history of the Fenian Invasion of 1866 may help to illustrate the extreme significance of this park and why such recognition will bring a cultural and economic boom to the area.

On June 1, 1866, between 500-800 Irish nationalists, known as Fenians, embarked from the docks of the Pratt Iron Works to invade Canada, seize it, and barter it for Irish freedom from British Rule. The Fenian Brotherhood had been founded in 1858 in the United States and found its roots in the United Irishmen and other Irish nationalist groups. The Fenian forces, mainly Civil War veterans, arrived in Buffalo at the Exchange Street train station. They gathered in the Old First Ward and launched their attack from the above-mentioned site, now known as Tow Path Park.

The Fenians defeated the Crown forces at the Battle of Ridgeway, outnumbered and outgunned, but they suffered a setback when President Andrew Johnson blocked the reinforcements and sent Generals Grant and Meade to quell the invasion. Despite this, the Fenian Invasion had a profound and lasting impact on the two British colonies; the momentum for independence grew in Canada and was achieved only a year later, and the Fenian Invasion became a symbol for Irish freedom across the ocean, which was achieved in 1922.

Under Legislator Kennedy's leadership, a committee was formed roughly one year ago to determine how to best commemorate this historical event and site. Through the use

of historical maps we were able to determine the exact launching point of this invasion, Tow Path Park.

The creation of this stone marker will not be an isolated event. The Fenian Marker Committee has worked with the Buffalo and Niagara Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) to develop a heritage trail that recognizes Erie County's Irish history and culture. In addition to the Fenian Marker, this trail will include the Irish Famine Monument (located at the Erie Basin Marina), the Commercial Slip, the Grain Elevator District, South Buffalo and the Old First Ward, and the gravesite of Lieutenant Edward Lonergan, a Buffalo Fenian hero who is buried at Holy Cross Cemetery.

The Fenian Marker is essential to this heritage trail, and once it is constructed it will draw tourists not only from Buffalo and Western NY but also from Canada and Ireland. Canada itself celebrates the Fenian "Raid" annually, given its supremely vital importance to the incorporation of Canada as a nation. Our Committee has been in touch with the Ontario Convention Center and Visitors Bureau to organize a joint cross-border celebration in June 2010 to commemorate the Fenian Invasion.

In addition to highlighting the Irish history of this area, the Fenian Marker as part of a broader tourism agenda will clearly also reflect the goals of the Greenway Ecological Fund in that it will promote tourism, enhance the environment of Tow Path Park, advance the economic revitalization of riverfront communities along the heritage trail, and support the creation of a Greenway.

V. DESCRIPTION OF CONSISTENCY WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS & REGULATIONS

Not applicable.

VI. DESCRIPTION OF EFFORTS/OPPORTUNITIES FOR MATCHING FUND

Currently, the Fenian Marker Committee and South Buffalo Alive are looking into various funding sources for grants.

VI. DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT AND PROPOSED PROJECT AREA LAND OWNERSHIP

The County of Erie owns and maintains the land upon which the monument will be placed. The Fenian Committee itself will be responsible to maintenance of the monument.

VII. DETAILED PROJECT BUDGET

The budget for this project totals \$21,108.00.

The stone memorial itself will cost \$19,908.00. We have been given an estimate by Stone Art Memorial, a business with whom many of us have worked in the past. This price includes a full warranty. The stone will be shipped from Ireland and carved here in Buffalo. This price includes the carving that will be done to the stone, both in Gaelic and English.

The concrete footer for the monument will cost an additional \$1,200.00.