



Media Release

Contact: Robbie-Ann McPherson
ECIDA/ILDC Marketing & Communications Director
716.856.6525 ext. 125 office 310.433.7443 cell

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PHOTO LINK:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/5lbqo72hhqktpi/SteelworkersWayRelease020323.jpg?dl=0>

Photo caption: From left to right, Lackawanna resident and former steelworker Charlie Poloncarz (father of Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz), Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, Lackawanna Mayor Annette Iafallo, ESD Regional Director Karen Utz, and ECIDA/ILDC President and CEO John Cappellino

Steelworkers Way: Poloncarz, Iafallo, ESD & ILDC unveil new street name honoring workers who labored at former Bethlehem Steel site

Lackawanna, NY—Leaders of the coalition developing the former Bethlehem Steel site into Renaissance Commerce Park [RCP] are paying homage to the thousands of laborers who, with blood, sweat, tears and pride, literally built the site’s historic legacy.

Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz, Lackawanna Mayor Annette Iafallo, ESD Regional Director Karen Utz and ILDC President and CEO John Cappellino have jointly announced “Steelworkers Way” as the official name of the newest public street on the former Bethlehem Steel site.

The name was chosen in honor of the generations of men and women who labored at Bethlehem Steel during its 80 years in production.

The completion of “Steelworkers Way” is the latest advance in the successful decade-long effort to develop Renaissance Commerce Park [RCP], now a growing, modern manufacturing campus on 150-acres of once-stagnant acreage.

RCP redevelopment efforts on the property have been overseen by the Industrial Land Development Corporation [ILDC], which serves as the Erie County Industrial Development Agency’s [ECIDA’s] land development arm.

Poloncarz, whose father Charles worked at the once-thriving Bethlehem Steel plant for thirty years, serves as Chair of the ILDC. The County Executive has made redeveloping the site a priority.

“We continue to make tremendous progress at Renaissance Commerce Park, and the unveiling of ‘Steelworkers Way’ is just one more milestone in the site’s transformation,” **said Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz.** “This new road is one of the many ways we are paying homage to the men and women

of labor who worked at the former Bethlehem Steel plant – including my father Charlie Poloncarz – and what they did to build Erie County’s economy. RCP is now the next generation of that economic engine, and as I’ve said before, there is still much more to come!”

Empire State Development [ESD] is a major funding partner in the large coalition redeveloping RCP. ESD provided more than \$12 million through its Buffalo Billion II program and Regional Council funds to support RCP, including the construction of “Steelworkers Way.”

“Governor Kathy Hochul appreciates ‘Steelworkers Way’ being recognized as the new name of a street located at the former Bethlehem Steel site. Years ago her father, along with thousands of other men and women, labored at the steel mill – becoming an important part of its history in Western New York,” said **Empire State Development President, CEO & Commissioner Hope Knight**. “New York State is proud to be playing an integral role in the transformation of the long-vacant Bethlehem brownfield site—most recently investing \$69 million towards future remediation in an effort to protect the environment, boost the economy and help rebuild the community. “

“Steelworkers Way” will be maintained by the Lackawanna Department of Public Works. Last month, the Lackawanna City Council approved Mayor Annette Iafallo’s request to name the street in homage to so many in their community with ties to the former steel plant.

The City of Lackawanna is a key partner in the development of Renaissance Commerce Park and strong supporters of what the site’s revival means to the community.

“The City of Lackawanna is proud of its historic industrial past and excited by the opportunities its legacy provides for building a new modern local economy, anchored by the emerging Renaissance Commerce Park,” said **Mayor Iafallo**. “By designating this first connector road within the commerce park as “Steelworkers Way,” we honor the thousands of steel workers, including many from my own family, whose efforts brought great pride to the Lackawanna community for nearly 80 years and were instrumental to many of the largest construction projects conducted in the United States during the 20th century.”

ECIDA/ILDC President and CEO John Cappellino said as the site builds out, the coalition of public and private stakeholders are attempting a balance between the old and the new.

“While our focus remains on what Renaissance Commerce Park is becoming and how its future will take shape, we recognize the importance of honoring the site’s legacy. The men and women who worked here created that legacy, so we wanted to recognize that—even as we are redeveloping the land into something completely new and different,” **Cappellino said**.

“Steelworkers Way” runs approximately one quarter mile north-south at Renaissance Commerce Park, between cleaning products manufacturer TMP Technologies, and Uniland Development’s first warehouse/distribution facility at 8 Dona Street. TMP was the first manufacturer to purchase parcels at RCP, cutting the ribbon on their new 290,000 square foot facility in May 2022.

Upon City Council approval next week, the first official address on the new roadway will be “2 Steelworkers Way,” the future home of Uniland Development’s second warehouse/distribution facility, adjacent to 8 Dona Street.

“Not enough can be said about the incredible work done by the City of Lackawanna, ESD, ECIDA/ILDC, and specifically the vision of Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz to transform the former Bethlehem Steel site into a modern, industrial hub,” **added Uniland CEO Michael J. Montante.** “With Renaissance Commerce Park, they have created a place where businesses want to locate and grow in our region. Uniland’s first 150,000-square-foot spec industrial building at 8 Dona looks fantastic, and we are excited to get started on the second spec building this year.”

As Renaissance Commerce Park continues to build out, the ILDC, the County and the City of Lackawanna and Empire State Development are exploring other elements such as wayfinding design and public amenities, including the development of a passive park that overlooks Lake Erie along a bluff on the western edge of the site.

For more information on RCP, please visit www.ecidany.com/rcp

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