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### Onondaga Lake cleanup to include cultural center at Ste. Marie site

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Liverpool — The clean-up and improvement of Onondaga Lake continues to be a top priority this year. Many projects are underway as a result of the findings contained in the FOCUS Greater Syracuse study. The loop-the-lake trail continues to expand along the western shoreline, and improvements are being made to the existing trail and Onondaga Lake Park. Spring is in full swing, and with the great weather we have been having, it is wonderful to see the park full of bikers, walkers and children playing on the playground. One of the major findings in the FOCUS report was a desire to connect with the lake from an historical standpoint. Several people surveyed emphasized that they would like to see a cultural center, as well as historical markers and informational kiosks, along the lake.

It is with great pleasure that I announce the expansion and renaming of the facility currently known as Ste. Marie Among the Iroquois. With input from the Haudenosaunee Nation, the Onondaga Historical Association, public officials and county residents, the new cultural center will be named Skä•noñh — Great Law of Peace Center. Skä•noñh (pronounced 'skano') is an Onondaga greeting which means "peace" and "wellness." It is the perfect name to characterize the cultural center and appropriately represents the themes and plans for the center. Planning is still in progress and will continue through 2013. However, a general concept has already started to take shape.

Some of the initial plans for the cultural center include a museum interpreting Haudenosaunee heritage based on the oral history that has been passed down for generations. It will contain art and artifacts, crafts and audio-visual components to tell the important story of the confederacy from the Haudenosaunee perspective. An educational center has also been proposed. This will encourage the study of the indigenous people and how their values have shaped our society. The Ste. Marie mission will continue to exist as a museum with exhibits, artifacts and audio-visual components to interpret the life and purpose of the early settlers. Together, these two museums represent the integration between Indigenous people and European settlers in Central New York.

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