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FERC approval. “We do believe that having
settlements with all the stakeholders only
enhances FERC renewing our license for
another 50 years,” NYPA spokesman Brian
Vattimo said Tuesday.

Though the Niagara Project relicensing
issue had its sticky moments, Kosnik said
FERC’s application is likely to proceed in
a fairly cut-and-dry fashion, provided that
no surprises surface.

She said her research shows that one in
tyrelicensing becomes
contentious, as this one threatened to.

It’s not out of the question that FERC
officials would have seriously considered
—and possibly agreed with—the argument
that NYPA should help fund waterfront
development to address adverse impacts
from the Niagara Project, Kosnik said.

"FERC really is trying to battle this reputa-
tion they have of being in the pocket of
the hydropower industry," she said. Near-
ly 20 years after the Electric Consumers
Protection Act mandated that the federal
energy agency give more consideration to
environmental concerns in its licensing
processes and decisions, she said, FERC is
still trying to strike the right balance
between promoting power generation and
addressing ecological and community
concerns.

When Congress set about creating FERC
in the 1930s, Kosnik said, the debate cen-
tered on the tension between profit from
energy generation, on the one hand, and
public good on the other.

“The outcome was,” she said, “that we
worry about this once every 50 years when
the license comes up.”

We’re checking the pulse of Western New York’s
health care industry. And we want your help.

BOOKS: ‘Community presence helps’

FROM PAGE 1

book industry, Welch and independents
like him have had to adapt to a market
dominated by big-box national chains that
offer 200,000 titles, volume pricing, music
departments and fancy coffee bars.

A little over a third of new books were
sold by independent bookstores until 1991,
but their piece of the market since has slid
to about 17 percent, while the chains com-
mand roughly 73 percent.

About 1,200 book retailers went out of
business in the mid-1990s, according to the
American Booksellers Association. Roch-
ester-based Village Green Bookstores Inc.,
which once operated four Buffalo-area stores,
followed in January 1999, when its flagship
closed. The owner blamed disappointing
holiday revenues that saw sales shift to the
national chains and Internet retailers.

It doesn’t have to be that way if the small
independent booksellers think creatively
and position themselves as unique in the
marketplace, says University at Buffalo market-
ing professor Arun Jain. After all, mom-
and-pop pizzerias aren’t on every corner in
Western New York because they copy Pizza
Hut, he says.

Small independents should do things
that can’t be easily replicated by big-box stores,
says University at Buffalo
academics. “The outcome was,” she said, “that we
worry about this once every 50 years when
the license comes up.”