



Case Study: The NFTA's proposed Outer Harbor development

→ A (A+ unofficially)
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ARC 465

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*Felix,
A very good
paper w/
an independent
and clear view
of what's right
and wrong w/ this
program! @*

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Abstract: This paper will analyze the proposed Outer Harbor development plan of the Buffalo Lakefront LLC, chosen by the NFTA among three other proposals. I will analyze not only the plan itself but the process by which it was implemented and the values that went into its selection. I will look at the plan and process from two perspectives: an urban planning one, and a design one. In undertaking this inquiry I wish to explore how projects such as this happen on the waterfront, and examine the motivations of the key players involved. The goal is not so much to critique the plan as it is to provide a diagnostic of Buffalo's current waterfront malaise and the possible ways out of it.

Preface:

I must admit in beginning this paper that everything I write is colored from my perspective- therefore keeping it in mind will be beneficial for anyone reading my work. My viewpoint stems from much of the previous work I have done- not only in Planning and Sociology courses but also from my involvement in campus workers rights groups and environmental organizations. The viewpoint can perhaps best be framed as a cooperative perspective. This posits the city not as a "growth machine", but more along the lines of the earliest cities, which existed as trade destinations and gathering places to allow those within to pool resources and resist the elements and invaders. It is a model of the city as symbiotic and interdependent, as utilitarian (although not in the capitalist, "invisible hand" sense.) Thus, the city can be seen as successful in proportion to the number of people its functions benefit. Of course, this statement is grossly simplified since there are many strata upon which benefits may be measured. An economic benefit is worlds away from an aesthetic benefit, and the former is much more readily quantifiable than the latter. That stated, I feel this concept of utilitarianism

gets at the heart of the cooperative mentality. Huge projects requiring massive public subsidy are of no public benefit unless they enrich the lives of more than a privileged few.

My interest in the NFTA's proposed Outer Harbor development caught my eye when it was discussed in a class this spring. It flew in the face of my cooperative values-much of the space was taken over by private residential development. After my urban design studies this semester, the development's flaws have become even more readily apparent in terms of issues such as urban scale. This, however, is only part of the issue. The NFTA pushed the project through with only minimal public input. This is the biggest project to happen on the waterfront in at least two decades-why was the public not more involved? We saw in the "Back from the brink" video¹ how the system of public participation in Chattanooga, Tennessee was a major part of the project's success. Public input is a far cry from public participation. Obviously you cannot please anyone, but the NFTA's (and the city's) decision-making process seemed to be conducted more like that of speculators than groups existing for the public benefit (what the NFTA was for last time I checked). Although a worthy endeavor, should increasing the cities' tax base be the main goal of waterfront development? Is enticing business into the area the main goal? Judging by the two major recent investment projects into the waterfront (the Outer Harbor and Buffalo Ship Canal developments, respectively) this would seem to be the case.

This also leads us to the question of who defines the goals of waterfront development. Since everyone involved is speaking much of the same language, there seems to be a general sense that we all agree on what those goals are. However, things usually are not how they seem at first glance. The actual goals of powerful members of an organization (especially a government one) are often worlds apart from the ones that they profess when they are in the public eye. It may be that Buffalo residents are so starved for any kind of improvement to the

¹ Back From the Brink. Dir. Robert Burnett. 1996. Videocassette. American Architectural Foundation, 1996.

city (as they certainly have a right to be) that they turn a blind eye to the motivations of involved parties.

Perhaps I have been rash in condemning the motivations of those involved in the Outer Harbor project. From what I heard in my interview with Peter Burke of the NFTA, there were many criticisms directed at the Lakefront Development plan that was chosen, but a dearth of practical suggestions for how to actually improve the project². One hazard of criticizing urban development is this “backseat driver” mentality-tearing a project to pieces without proposing anything better. I feel that the presence of this pitfall is actually one benefit to studying this project. Why was the public put in the position of being a backseat driver in the first place? Why weren't area residents consulted before the NFTA even requested proposals, to gain a sense of what the public wanted from a waterfront development? Since the NFTA is supported by taxpayers, it bears a responsibility to them to provide the greatest utility possible through its development under the terms I expressed above. It exists for the benefit of the city as an urban area, not the other way around.

Another benefit that the Outer Harbor site provides to an investigation is its unique placement on the waterfront. A waterfront project is not the same as a housing development in an area that will probably be the only one directly affected by the project's outcome, or even a new building in the heart of downtown. There is a general (albeit vague) consensus among anyone even tangentially involved in urban issues that the waterfront taken as a whole belongs not to the entities which currently have the most power in its development but to the city as a whole. A successful waterfront project will be continually on the radar of every city resident, much more than a new park in any given neighborhood. A failed waterfront development (in this I am speaking to the communitarian terms I defined earlier) will only exasperate the void

² Burke, Peter. NFTA Real Properties Manager. Personal Interview. 12 December 2005.

currently felt by many concerning the lack of waterfront progress. Thus, the process demands more scrutiny than that of development anywhere else.

Introduction:

This paper will look at the proposed Outer Harbor development from two intertwining perspectives, and as the reader will see, they are not mutually exclusive. One perspective will look at the development through the lens of urban planning. One issue that will be analyzed here will be process by which the project was implemented. Who are the influential players? Why is this development taking shape now, after 24 previous plans have failed over the last 40 years³? What do the major players (i.e., the city, the NFTA, and Lakefront Development) have to gain from their involvement in the Outer Harbor? Another crucial issue concerns the implications this project has for the rest of the waterfront. The NFTA pushed this plan through with minimal public input. Will this be the norm for other waterfront projects? How can the public become more engaged, and what is at risk if they do not?

We must also look at the project in terms of its proposed design. How does this project work (or fail to work) from the perspective of thinkers like Garvin that we have studied in the class? Many of the criticisms that have been leveled at the project have a sound basis in thinking on design. As the paper will detail later, much of the North portion of the site is taken up by private residential development, with the shoreline grudgingly allocated for the use of the public. It is in essence a subdivision, no different from other suburban projects that Uniland has had a hand in. What are the specific critiques of the plan, and how could the plan be tweaked to better serve the city?

The second issue that a design perspective illuminates has greater implications for the city as a whole. Simply put, how does the Outer Harbor project fit into an overall design plan for the Buffalo waterfront? The Outer Harbor is nothing if not an isolated case. It will set the tone

³ Fairbanks, Phil. "Changing the Tide." *Buffalo News* 2 Jan. 2005: M8.

for much of the development that is expected over the next few years. What efforts have the NFTA and Lakefront Development made to link this project with the other projects currently in the works on the shoreline? Have their efforts to link the Outer Harbor to the rest of the city been sufficient to allow the chosen plan to be implemented at all? This may seem to be mere facetiousness, but as we will see, it is far from it.

Once again, the point must be stressed that the existence of the Outer Harbor as an isolated project is deceptive. Development there will have repercussions all over the waterfront and city. If the members of the Buffalo community do not seize control of their city's destiny now a better chance may not come for some time, if ever. The choice exists for the city to choose a path that will lead to a more communitarian vision for Buffalo. On the other hand, the path may be chosen (perhaps through inaction) to further stratify Buffalo along the rich-poor duality and make the waterfront a playground for the elite. The Outer Harbor land is already worth millions, and may be worth more if the waterfront takes off. However, no project of this size can happen without the complicity of the city, stated or not. Despite the power of the NFTA and the financial resources of the developers, the decision over which direction waterfront development will go rests with the city as a whole.

Along with the stretch of land containing LaSalle Park and the Inner Harbor, the Outer Harbor is the most prominent open stretch of land on the Buffalo waterfront. Its importance is underscored by the fact that much of the land which could potential be used for public access and waterfront development is occupied by the I-190, Buffalo's example of the frenzy of highway development which engulfed the nation in the 40s and 50s. Victor Gruen's conception of peripheral highways⁴ was grafted onto Buffalo, a city with one of the longest stretches of waterfront in the country. Well, at least it used to have a waterfront. Now much of the land that

⁴ Garvin, Alexander. *The American City*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1996.

could be used by the public is reserved for vehicular travel, much of it from the surrounding area into the bridges that lead to Canada. The Outer and Inner Harbor are in a sense the last chance for the city to do something positive with the waterfront without moving or demolishing the 190.

As we see from the image below (Figure 1)⁵, the Outer Harbor site is valuable not only because of its current vacancy but for its proximity to downtown. If developed with the public interest in mind, and with an investment in access, it could provide an incentive for those who work and visit in downtown to stay, enjoying a waterfront area only minutes from the downtown central business district. A holistic approach to planning would see the Outer Harbor as the culmination of a new waterfront neighborhood, one that formed a logical transition between the commercial functions of downtown and the recreational functions of the waterfront. Buffalo has for ^o long been mired in the “growth machine” philosophy which sees the city as a profit-generator without any regard for the quality of life of the residents. The times are changing, however. Due to the explosion of telecommunications technology, businesses are much more mobile. Thus the appeal of an area for those who will have to live and conduct business there is quickly gaining ground against the importance of natural resources and proximity to networks of transportation. For what its worth, Buffalo has the whole networks of transportation thing covered: the Niagara Falls area ranks second in volume of trade into Canada. A staggering \$26 billion dollars worth of trade crosses the border here every year⁶.

does it include
the recent
Seneca
Nation's
Casino
venue
in
the
Cobble
Stone
district

⁵ Image from Google Earth.

⁶ English. 6 June 2005. Niagara Falls Bridge Commission. 15 December 2005.
<<http://www.niagarafallsbridges.com/nfbc/>>



FIGURE 1: Proximity of Outer Harbor to Downtown

The Outer Harbor site (Figure 2)⁷ is bounded by the Seaway Pier on the northwest end, Fuhrmann Boulevard on the northeast, and the Small Boat Harbor on the southwest. Currently the Pier festival ground is the only structure on the site. It presents 120 acres of opportunity for a city that badly needs it. One previous obstacle to development was the contamination of the site, which was used for a dumping ground by various area companies. However, with the new brownfield cleanup dollars provided by the state⁸ this should no longer be as much of a hamper on development as it was in the past.

⁷ map taken from www.mapquest.com.

⁸ New York State. Department of Environmental Conservation. *Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program*. 16 Dec 2005. 15 Dec 2005. <<http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/der/bfield/boa.html>>

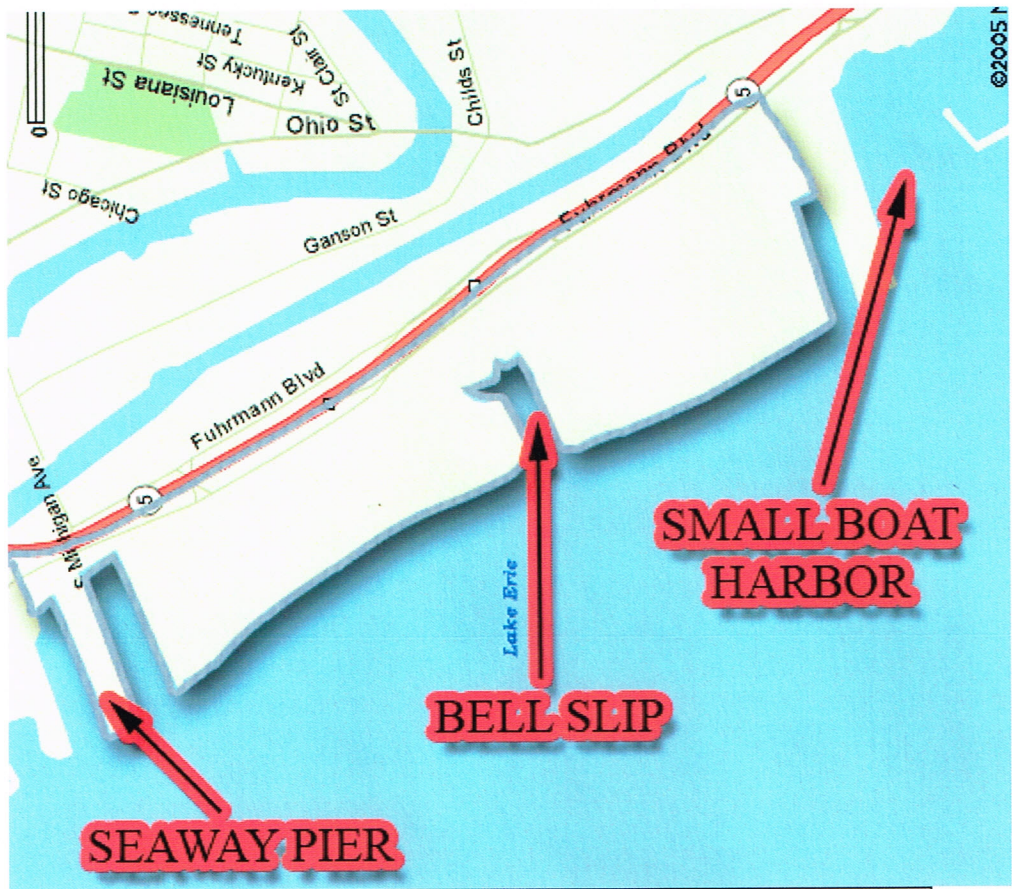


FIGURE 2: Boundaries of the Outer Harbor site

Anyone who has followed the path (or lack of path) of waterfront development over the years knows the trail of failed projects. One of the most prominent was Horizons, a state created planning group charged with devising a plan for the entire Erie County shoreline. Perhaps such a monumental task was doomed to fail. However, their plan for the Outer Harbor included (among residential development) a large park extending along the shoreline⁹. Lack of public space was the most prominent complaint of the Outer Harbor proposals during the NFTA’s selection process¹⁰. In terms of providing what many in the community feel is essential for the waterfront, it seems the NFTA is moving backward, not forward. Local politicians such as the newly elected

⁹ Fairbanks, Phil. “Changing the Tide.” *Buffalo News* 2 Jan. 2005: M8.
¹⁰ Burke, Peter. NFTA Real Properties Manager. Personal Interview. 12 December 2005.

Mayor Masiello made short work of the Horizons initiative, but perhaps we can learn a lesson from the ideas that arose.

All this discussion of past failures begs the question: Why now, after almost 50 years of inaction on the Outer Harbor, are there finally in the works moves to develop it? In Buffalo development, more so than most cities, there is no such thing as altruism. No developer would risk a project in one of the weakest economies in the nation unless they thought they could reap great benefits. The NFTA has a strange position. They have ownership and authority over a space that has the potential to be a catalyst for a reversal of Buffalo's fortunes, yet they are not an elected body. The Chairman is appointed by the Governor. They are committed to public service at least on the surface, yet their decision-makers do not have the same accountability issues an elected politician has. It seems intuitive that something about this project offers them a benefit non-existent before.

The solution to why this project has moved forward can perhaps be found in the agreement on land claims that the NFTA and the City reached, as reported in a NFTA press release from November 3, 2004¹¹. Although the NFTA had sought proposals for Outer Harbor development before this, it really cleared the way for the project to be implemented hassle-free. Reading the release gives the impression of an overblown case of sibling rivalry. Why are the City and the NFTA still bickering over land claims after such a long period of disinvestment? The agreement is commendable to a degree, but one wonders why it was not reached 20 or 30 years ago.

¹¹ *English*. 3 Nov. 2004. NFTA and City of Buffalo Reach Agreement on Waterfront Land Claims. 15 Dec. 2005.
<<http://www.nfta.com/news/displayArchivedArticle.phtml?id=1099508856>>

As stated above, the NFTA began seeking proposals in January 2004¹². From the beginning, the most prominent requirement of any proposed plan is public space. This speaks to the public desires expressed in the public meetings Burke mentioned- that the Outer Harbor should become a place the entire city can enjoy. From the NFTA's language in discussing their request for proposals, it follows that public space and access should be foremost in their thinking when evaluating the plans they received. Of course, we all know corporations (of which the NFTA is one, albeit one created for "public benefit") are not exactly known for publicizing what is really on the mind of those holding the reins.

Reviewing the proposal of Lakefront Development, the group that was chosen, reveals the same kind of lip service to communitarian ideals expressed by the NFTA. However, the proposal is drenched in a kind of doublethink that borders on absurdity. To quote: "Destination: Combine world-class design with Buffalo's unique character to create a destination that instills pride among local residents and envy among visitors."¹³ One must imagine that Lakefront Development is anticipating a dramatic upsurge in the envy industry. However, envy may not be far from the eventual truth when the site plan is considered (Figure 3)¹⁴. While the proposal claims that the Outer Harbor development is seen as a "large waterfront park", barely 20 acres out of the 120-acre site is public. Even that is not centralized, but exists as a narrow strip along the shoreline. Once there, city residents can look back to a view of the condo towers inhabited by those fortunate enough to have the economic resources to afford the high cost of waterfront living.

¹² *English*. 27 Jan. 2005. Development Proposals Sought for Buffalo's Outer Harbor National Search for Developers Underway. 15 Dec. 2005. <<http://www.nfta.com/news/displayArchivedArticle.phtml?id=1075214351>>

¹³ *Buffalo Lakefront Development Team Proposal*. n.p. Buffalo Lakefront LLC, 2005. Available at <http://www.nfta.com/pdfs/BLDT_proposal.pdf>

¹⁴ from the *Buffalo Lakefront Development Team Siteplan Layout*. n.p. Buffalo Lakefront LLC, 2005. Available at <http://www.nfta.com/pdfs/BLDT_siteplan.pdf>

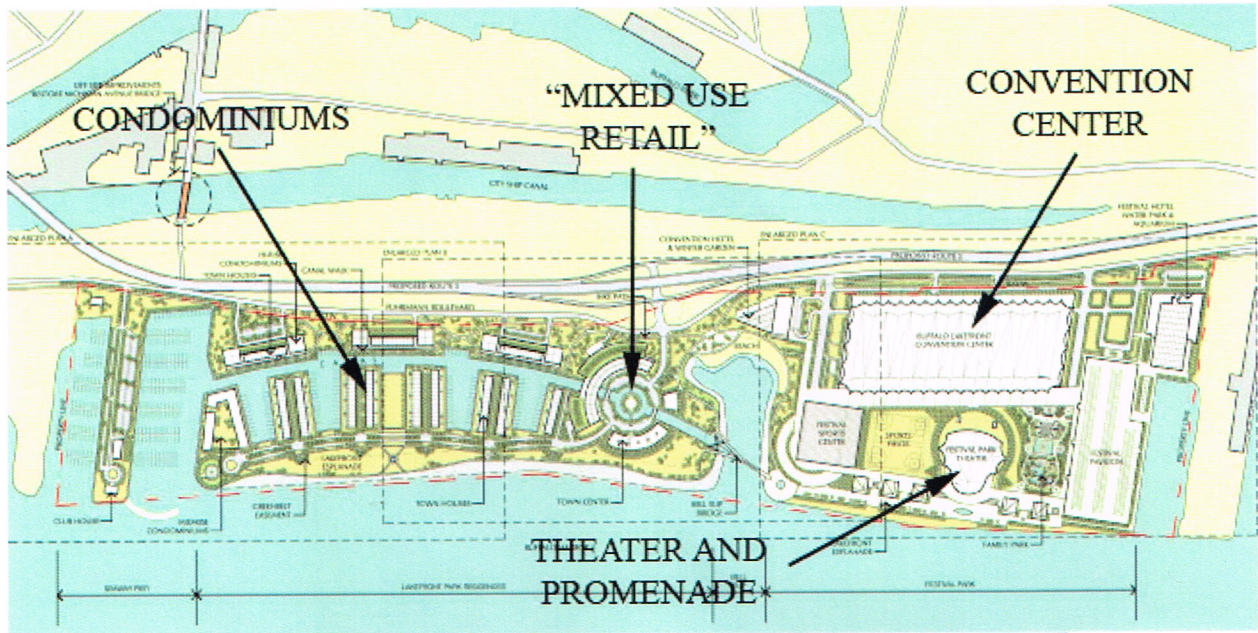


FIGURE 3: The Outer Harbor development site plan

Another glaring flaw in the chosen Outer Harbor plan is the issue of visibility. As can be seen from the model the Lakefront team created, (Figure 4)¹⁵ the proposed condo towers rise 8 stories high, ludicrously out of scale with anything else on the shoreline. One can only imagine what travelers on the 190 would think when they pass onto Route 5 and see the towers emerging to restrict a complete view of our majestic lake. We must remember that architectural projects often have a great deal of symbolic importance, whether we want to admit it or not. Building towers such as this would only underscore the powerlessness many in the city feel to combat the way development is structured in the city. The power brokers in the NFTA and Uniland may become rich off this exploitation of Buffalo's most precious resources, but it may be that they are the only ones who can afford to live in it. In defense of this aspect of Lakefront's plan, Burke mentioned that constructing taller condo towers would open more public

¹⁵ from the *Buffalo Lakefront Development Team Model Photos*. n.p. Buffalo Lakefront LLC, 2005. Available at <http://www.nfta.com/pdfs/BLDT_model.pdf>

space in the site plan¹⁶. As stated before, however, a closer examination reveals that much of the area slated as public is so only under the loosest of definitions. Canals cut through the development, but it seems as if they will be used mostly by people living in the condos to reach their homes quickly after a day spent on the lake. This hardly fits within anyone's idea of public space.



FIGURE 4: The Buffalo Lakefront model

As we delve deeper into the proposed plan, the motivations behind the NFTA's push for development become clearer and clearer. Once again we return to the role of the NFTA not as an entity existing to serve the city residents, but as a land speculator. The Memorandum of Intent signed by the NFTA and Buffalo Lakefront LLC on November 22, 2005¹⁷ includes provisions for the North side of the Outer Harbor (from the Seaway Pier to the Bell Slip) to be

¹⁶ Burke, Peter. NFTA Real Properties Manager. Personal Interview. 12 December 2005.

¹⁷ New York State. Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority. *Memorandum of Intent: Outer Harbor Development*. Signed by the NFTA and Buffalo Lakefront LLC on 21 Nov. 2005.

sold to Buffalo Lakefront LLC at a price of at least 3.2 million, and potentially more depending on market value. The South side (from the Bell Slip to the Small Boat Harbor) would be sold at a price of at least 1.2 million (again potentially much more given the market value of the development). So the NFTA has been hanging on to this site for 50 years, letting it go untouched, only to sell it off to the highest bidder. Peter Burke assured me that the public space along the shoreline would continue to be owned by the NFTA, although Buffalo Lakefront would be responsible for its upkeep¹⁸. However, this is nowhere in the Memorandum of Intent. Even if the NFTA continues to own this strip of land, at what point does it stop being public space and start being little more than a backyard for the condos?

Then there is the case of why this project was selected over the other proposals. Well, if we consult the NFTA's press release of January 24, 2005 announcing the chosen development team, the criteria is pretty clear¹⁹. The first sentence explaining why Buffalo Lakefront was selected says they were chosen "based on the capacity and experience of the development team, including its ability to provide the private financing which will be required to make this project a success". Sounds pretty clear-cut. So the major reason that their plan won out is because they were willing to put the largest sum of money on the table (and it is large- to the tune of \$350 million). Although we all are familiar with the near-impossibility of attracting investment into the city, one would think that the NFTA could think beyond mere implementation to consider which proposal would most benefit the city as a whole in the long term. Design considerations (or as they put it, "project approach") seem to run a distant third, after "the financial component of its plan". Peter Burke confirmed as much when he said that the Lakefront plan won in large part because it required the least amount of public subsidy.

¹⁸ Burke, Peter. NFTA Real Properties Manager. Personal Interview. 12 December 2005.

¹⁹ *English*. 24 Jan. 2005. NFTA Commissioners Announce Top Ranked Team for Outer Harbor Development. 15 Dec. 2005. <<http://www.nfta.com/news/displayArticle.phtml?id=1106594610>>

In light of this discussion, one interesting thing mentioned by Burke was the impossibility of the Norstar plan. They proposed a seawall to shelter boats docking at the Outer Harbor, and Burke commented in a response to my question on why the Lakefront plan was chosen that the Army Corps of Engineers would never allow such a seawall to be built in the Outer Harbor²⁰. This seems like a not-quite insurmountable obstacle to implementation, something which could be worked out if the plan was chosen. However, the Lakefront plan includes space for a waterfront convention center. In my conversation with Peter Burke, he mentioned that the city and county were vehemently against a waterfront convention center and would not allow one to be built. So why was that not a problem when the seawall in the Norstar plan was? The convention center is the major focal point of the South side of Lakefront's proposed development. One would assume that problems with such an integral part of their design would require at the very least a new site plan before their proposal could be chosen. Why was Lakefront's proposal chosen when the NFTA knew that a large part of their plan would have to be reworked? One can only speculate as to the answer, but it is probably colored green.

In an ironic twist of fate, the same disinvestment in the waterfront which has allowed the NFTA to push such a project through may ultimately cause the Lakefront plan to fall by the wayside along the other failed waterfront projects. Although the Lakefront plan made the most modest demands in terms of public support, their demands were clear. Waterfront development cannot succeed without access, and all Lakefront is asking for is funding for the completion of the long-delayed Southtowns Connector project²¹. In practical terms, this means the constructions of two new intersections and improvements to Furhmann Boulevard to make it a

²⁰ Burke, Peter. NFTA Real Properties Manager. Personal Interview. 12 December 2005.

²¹ New York State. Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority. *Memorandum of Intent: Outer Harbor Development*. Signed by the NFTA and Buffalo Lakefront LLC on 21 Nov. 2005.

four lanes. To this effect, Brian Higgins secured 22.3 million in Federal funding²². The state only had to provide 10 million to fulfill the necessary project budget of 33.3 million. To this end, the NFTA, Higgins, and Lakefront itself have lobbied the Pataki administration to provide this funding. Despite their pleas, no funding for Outer Harbor access was included in the Transportation Bond Act passed by the state this November²³. Out of 64 million slated for Erie County, Buffalo as a whole only gets 5.1 million. Hamburg alone receives or shares in 16.4 million. Written into the Memorandum of Agreement is a stipulation that Lakefront can terminate the development agreement if the funding is not in place by March 31, 2007²⁴. It seems reasonable to posit that they will not begin construction even if allowed to do so unless this commitment is in place.

One major issue which arises from this project is the projections for future projects on the Buffalo waterfront. Is the city really so starved for development that they will continue to approve plans to sell valuable waterfront land just for the sake of private residential development? This has certainly been the case in the absence of an agency with real power to steer development toward the benefit of all. From the bickering that went on between the NFTA and the city, it is clear that the NFTA was not the best body to oversee a development of this magnitude. The newly created Erie Canal Harbor Development Corp which will oversee the 300 million dollar Niagara Power settlement²⁵ has the power, but it remains to be seen whether they have the best interests of the city at heart.

What is really needed immediately is accountability. Citizens and local officials alike must pressure the ECHDC for transparency and a higher degree of citizen input into their plans.

²² Higgins, Brian. "Governor's Disregard." *US Fed News*. 28 Oct. 2005.

²³ New York State. Department of Transportation. *Build and Rebuild Transportation Bond Act of 2005*. Nov. 2005

²⁴ New York State. Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority. *Memorandum of Intent: Outer Harbor Development*. Signed by the NFTA and Buffalo Lakefront LLC on 21 Nov. 2005.

²⁵ Linstedt, Sharon. "Vision Reaps A Windfall". *Buffalo News*. 7 Dec 2005: A1.

It is not enough to simply hold public meetings- public input must drive the process, not the other way around. Currently, as affirmed by Burke, the zoning of the Outer Harbor site will stem from the developer's site plan and where they wish to place the different uses²⁶. This is an example of a private company controlling city zoning and is the antithesis of sound planning practices. ✓

The Buffalo Waterfront Revitalization Plan contains a suggestion for city legislation that would require any proposed waterfront development to affirm the values set forth in that document²⁷. This must be implemented as soon as possible. The firm design guidelines set out in that document: public space and access, free lines of sight to the water, and others are the benchmarks which should trump the profit motive when it comes to projects which could determine the fate of the city for years to come.

In the long-term, the ECHDC must create a practical plan for waterfront development that takes an overarching, holistic view of future projects. Any future piecemeal development such as the proposed Outer Harbor plan is lunacy. One integral part of any future plan must be the Niagara Greenway. This summer a Niagara River Greenway Commission was created to oversee the creation of a 36-mile linear park reaching from Youngstown to Buffalo²⁸. \$7 million a year from the Niagara Power settlement, as well as federal funding, has given the greenway commission the tools it needs to succeed. A comprehensive greenway, not an isolated housing development, should be looked at as the real catalyst for waterfront revitalization. With the greenway in place, development can occur naturally from the water's edge. If Uniland is so bent on getting into the waterfront housing market, they can easily get clearance to renovate some of the brownfields in the old Bethlehem Steel grounds (roughly 1200 acres, as opposed to the Outer ✓

²⁶ Burke, Peter. NFTA Real Properties Manager. Personal Interview. 12 December 2005.

²⁷ City of Buffalo. Department of Strategic Planning. *Buffalo Waterfront Revitalization Plan*. 6 May 2005.

²⁸ Fischer, Nancy. "A Mandate with Money to Remake the Waterfront." *Buffalo News*. 27 Oct 2005: A1.

conclusion

Harbor's 120). There is no reason other than sheer greed (or perhaps desperation) why the NFTA would sell off one of the most important sites in Buffalo to a private developer. ✓

One important note that must be kept in mind during this discussion is that the Buffalo Lakefront proposal is by no means a finished plan. We have already seen that the city's unwillingness to allow a convention center to be put on the waterfront will force a rethinking of that part of the plan. There is no reason why other portions of the plan are likewise adaptable. For instance, the area on the north portion lining the channels could be made public. Mixed-use developments could be placed farther inland, in a manner that would give the sense that all are welcome and not just those who reside there. If there is one thing we need from waterfront development, it is inclusiveness. People from out of town, once attracted to Buffalo, will only stay if they feel welcome. A development taken up in large part by private condo housing is a far cry from this type of inclusiveness. The NFTA can perhaps be cut some slack given that they are not a parks department, and were only working with the proposals they were given. In terms of the creation of a public park, we must also keep in mind that Erie County cannot even afford to maintain the parks that currently exist. ✓

Perhaps the greatest lesson that can be taken from this critique of the Outer Harbor development is the need for the residents of the city to work together to fulfill the promise Buffalo showed at the beginning of the 20th century. The veil of apathy has set in so deeply that it is hard for people to conceive of a turnaround, but one is already in the works. It must be continually kept in mind that everyone involved in Buffalo's waterfront development (excluding perhaps the Opus Group contingent to the Buffalo lakefront LLC, residing in Chicago) lives and works around the city. A waterfront plan which maintains the principles of inclusion and egalitarianism will benefit city residents much more in the long run than one which sees the

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waterfront, and the city as a whole, as simply a profit-generating machine. We must be continually reminded that while political organizations and bureaucracies often have conflicts, those organizations are made up of people, up to the most powerful decision-makers. And people have much more potential for working together and reconciling differences for the good of all than bureaucracies do.

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