



INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLE

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Designing WNY's future

ARCHITECTS, DEVELOPERS TOUT REGION'S ASSETS



JIM COURTNEY

Leaders in the area's development and architectural sectors met recently to discuss the importance of federal Historic Tax Credits, Buffalo's new Green Code and the influence of design standards on new projects. The industry roundtable was part of an ongoing series.

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With a deep collection of architectural landmarks, Western New York has amassed assets that can help on many fronts including economic development and growing the tourism base.

But it is up to the region to take advantage of those assets.

That was the consensus among the insiders who gathered at a Business First roundtable that focused

on architectural and development issues. The roundtable was sponsored by Hodgson Russ law firm.

"Architecture is a reflection of its time," said architect/developer Jake Schneider.

That certainly fits some of the best-known landmarks.

"There was a bar set by people like Frank Lloyd Wright," said Stewart Haney, CEO of Wendel. "We have to make sure that what we do lives up to that expectation."

High bars aside, modern-day architects work under a decided-

ly different set of expectations and mandates than their counterparts of the late 1800s and early 1900s. That is part and parcel with the changing times, said the architects and developers.

"It is a different dynamic than it was 150 years ago," said Robert Stark, a partner at CJS Architects and president of the state chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

"The buildings of 150 years ago were monuments to personal successes; the market today is more developer-driven," he said. "One

hundred and fifty years ago, there weren't developers."

This year, the city of Buffalo instituted the Green Code, the first revised building and development guidelines in more than 60 years. What the impact of the Green Code will be on the development landscape remains an open-ended question.

"I consider the Green Code the beginning of the conversation, not the end," said Phil Snyder, managing partner at Stieglitz Snyder Architecture.

► BUFFALO BY DESIGN

Source: Business First research

\$50M

Cost to restore the Darwin Martin House complex

45

No. of projects in downtown's economic development pipeline

\$955M

Estimated value of the 45 Buffalo economic development projects

50

Age at which buildings can become eligible for Historic Tax Credits

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► **Given Buffalo's architectural legacy, when you work on a new project, does it seem like the ghosts of Frank Lloyd Wright or Richardson or Sullivan are casting a shadow on what you design?**

STEWART HANEY

CEO, Wendel

I don't sense that. I mean, there's a bar that's been set by the work that they've done, but I don't think we must follow that direction they set. It's more about making sure that what we do lives up to the level of expectation that it's great work, as opposed to following in the footsteps of any of the particular great architects.

MATTHEW MEIER

Partner, HHL Architects

It's no different than following great artists or great musicians or great actors. Everybody has something to look up to and something to measure their success by. It's hard to compare because we don't quite have the same level of influence and support to do a lot of the things that created this building and the Martin House and Richardson Complex and Central Terminal and City Hall.

ROBERT STARK

Partner, Chaintreuil, Jensen & Stark Architects & Planners

A hundred and fifty years ago, when people built these big buildings, they were usually business leaders who were doing something else. Personally, I think they were really building monuments to their personal success, to show how successful they were. I think the market is completely different today. It is more developer driven; it's more of a service provider.

PAUL ISKALO

CEO, Iskalo Development Corp.

The developers are providing a service to the people now.

ROBERT STARK

Chaintreuil, Jensen & Stark Architects & Planners

A hundred and fifty years ago, there weren't developers.

MICHAEL MONTANTE

Vice president, Uniland Development Co.

I'm not sure about that. Maybe there was, maybe there wasn't – I'm not sure. But you're right – it's

► **CLOSER LOOK AT THE ROUNDTABLE**

The Architects and Developers Industry Roundtable continues a three-year series of discussions with Western New York business leaders.

Throughout the year, decision makers from diverse industries meet for a discussion moderated by Business First journalists.

Excerpts are published three weeks after the roundtable.

Upcoming topics include manufacturing, family businesses, workforce development and health care.

Roundtable discussions, sponsored by Hodgson Russ LLP, are held at the law firm's Pearl Street offices in Buffalo.

the economics that drive it. And unfortunately in Buffalo today we don't have that economic horsepower that allows all the architects to freely create and produce a design that is not altered in a way. So from an economic, from a developer's standpoint, I think that's exactly what it is.

PAUL CIMINELLI

CEO, Ciminelli Real Estate Corp.

I think you have to look at where your projects are. An example is what we're trying to do at Elmwood and Bidwell, to make sure it contextually fits into what's already been there and the long history of some of the architecture that's there. And also, if you look at what we did on the medical campus, we did a national RFP to bring in some architects to work with some of the local ones.

JAKE SCHNEIDER

President, Buffalo Design Collaborative

Architecture is a reflection of its time, and today we have technology that we didn't have 100 years ago. And buildings reflect that. They reflect the economics of the area, they reflect the materials we as architects can incorporate into our work and it's a reflection of mass production and all the things that have happened over the past 100 years. I do largely adaptive-reuse work, and when I do these projects, I feel responsibility to the architecture that I'm working with and to the designers who created these buildings and to the industrialists who built them. I feel a true responsibility – and I know we all do when we work in these old buildings – to preserve them properly and to let them help us tell the story of the passing of time. But when we design new buildings, then it's contextual, but you have the freedom to be creative and work with the palette that we have at our disposal today.

PHILIP SNYDER

Managing partner, Stieglitz Snyder Architecture

It is really about that balance with regard to legacy, because when you really look at the community, it is the community itself that is fostering that legacy of architecture in Buffalo. And we as architects are always in balance or trying to be in balance

with the community and at the same time reflect new and contemporary designs and programs and technologies and so forth. But at the end of the day, it feels to me like our communities are really safeguarding Buffalo's architectural legacy.

► **Are design standards and the level of expectation tougher in this area than other parts of the country?**

PAUL CIMINELLI

Ciminelli Real Estate Corp.

If anything, design standards sometimes are not as much of an issue when they actually should be. And the big distraction out there against all of us is being under attack for density, no matter where your projects are, in the suburbs or in the city. Because if you can have more density, you can put more money into the design because you can generate more revenue off an existing site. So the challenge that we have is some people – they all say we have too much sprawl in Western New York, we have to densify it, invest in your urban core, bring more density. And we try and do that and people say, "Nah, we don't want density." I've said this before. The irony of it is that if you look at what happened on Elmwood, a lot of people didn't like Frizlen (Group's) design of a project that basically is 100 percent compliance, pretty much, with the Green Code. So there's a project that they're all focusing on design on one hand, but on the other hand it's compliant. So in my opinion, what you should have is good design standards so developers know what the rules of the game are and be able to have some density that makes sense so you can incorporate those good design standards into your project with proper density so the thing pencils out.

► **At the Zoning Board meeting on March 15, there was opposition to every rezoning because they said it goes against the Green Code.**



ALL PHOTOS: JIM COURTNEY

Paul Ciminelli



Kenneth Franasiak



Stewart Haney



Paul Iskalo

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MATTHEW MEIER

HHL Architects

Section 13 of the Green Code, which is variances.

NICK SINATRA

Sinatra & Company Real Estate

We had a very minor variance given the topography of the building. There was a setback that we needed and folks got up and complained and said, "Oh, this is the first project out of the gates and why do you need variances? We're creating bad precedent." I said, "Look, we went back and forth 10 times with our architecture to make sure we minimize our variances, knowing that we were going to be the first one. This is the one minor one that we have and the whole project was built in the spirit of the Green Code." It's just because of the way that Jefferson Avenue slopes, we needed a variance. So I think it was a bit disingenuous because people just got up and opposed the project because they wanted to oppose a variance, not really understanding the fabric of the project.

JAKE SCHNEIDER

Buffalo Design Collaborative

What was really interesting to me is all the people who spoke against the project, none of them were from the neighborhood.

NICK SINATRA

Sinatra & Company Real Estate

I got up and spoke that this project is unprecedented in terms of the community involvement. We are rebooting Jefferson Avenue, and so it's literally two and a half years in the making. We talked to pastors and community leaders; they were involved in the design of the project. And we were applauded from the mayor to the (Common) Council president to everybody in terms of that community involvement. There has not been any opposition from the neighborhood on this project except for folks from Elmwood Avenue who felt like it was their obligation to come over and oppose us. But what they don't understand is it purposely was that dense because we needed it to be a detonator. You can't do a small project on Jefferson and hope that what that is going to do is encourage more development. The whole idea was to do a very large project that would signal to the marketplace that Jefferson Avenue is open for business

again and hopefully it would be a catalyst for other developers to look in that neighborhood to do more development.

MATTHEW MEIER

HHL Architects

There's a problem with the perception amongst maybe those individuals who don't work with the zoning ordinance on a daily basis as to what design standards are and what the Green Code Unified Development Ordinance really is intended to do. And it's not intended to be some prescriptive that this is the only thing you can do. All of us in the room here have a different perception of what we think good design really is or what we think a great piece of architecture is. None of the good pieces of architectural history – the Martin House, the Richardson Complex, Central Terminal, even this building – was dictated. It occurred sort of dynamically with the community and with opportunities and with additional conditions.

ROBERT STARK

Chaintreuil, Jensen & Stark Architects & Planners

I think the people who put it (the Green Code) together really knew what they were doing. I find it interesting that a couple of weeks before it came out, it was immediately compromised, particularly with the high restrictions on Elmwood which, frankly, are causing all the problems that we're talking about now.

MATTHEW MEIER

HHL Architects

It's five years in the making and ...

ROBERT STARK

Chaintreuil, Jensen & Stark Architects & Planners

Five years in the making by experts from across the country where everybody heralded it, and two weeks before it goes through, that happens. And now we're looking at these controversies for variances. Frankly, I think they should have adopted it as it was presented by the experts and we wouldn't be having these issues right now.

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Ciminelli Real Estate

And it's a huge step backward for the city of Buffalo. No matter where you travel, I have developer friends who are doing dense, walkable developments within the urban core. And in Buffalo, which we all talk about our renaissance, but you look at something like that that's three stories on a main thoroughfare like Elmwood Avenue. I mean, especially with millennials who like to live in those types of communities, don't want to own cars – you cannot service with the way we're currently laid out. It's very difficult to have a robust public transportation system with the sprawl that we have. You need to densify the city. And then the other part of it – what really disturbs me – is then all of a sudden you have the arbitrators of who decides what the fabric of the community is. In our last public meeting, I felt like getting up there and saying, "Time out. Let's wind the clock back 30 years. I'm going to take these single-family homes that have been the fabric of the community for 50, 60 years. I'm going to bastardize them with some storefronts. I'm going to convert them to apartments and I'm going to tear a couple down and put Bullfeathers up. What do you think?" Everyone in that room would have been opposed to it. Now, 30 years later, that is the fabric of the community. Well, who decides that?

PAUL ISKALO

Iskalo Development

A lot of people say, "Think about the type of communities we're going to leave for our children." And the irony is that if you ask our children the type of community they want, they want density; they want that walkability. And yet there's a lot of people opposing that, which is exactly what the young people today want. We have to remember that we're part of history, too. Just like those buildings that we love that were built 100 years ago were influenced by the time in which they were developed, the buildings that we're building today are influenced by the time that we're being developed, by the time that we're living in and the factors that we have to react to.

JAKE SCHNEIDER

Buffalo Design Collaborative

I agree about the density and the talking heads and the experts who come in and say we need to densify our community. But I think they're largely pointing to parts of our community that need density. Not that we can't add density to Elmwood, but there are parts of our community that really need some density.

KENNETH FRANASIAK

CEO, Calamar

Who is defining this market? All markets are defined by capital, right? You go back, like you said, 50 years ago – capital investment or companies similar to the companies that are in this room really didn't have an interest in making substantial investment in the community. And that's what you had – you ended up with these small mom-and-pop investments.

PAUL CIMINELLI

Ciminelli Real Estate.

This community should be lucky that we do have mostly local developers. There's no way they would have taken the time and effort to collaborate with the community the way you would have done.

► They wouldn't have even looked at Jefferson Avenue to begin with.

PAUL CIMINELLI

Ciminelli Real Estate

Probably, because they would have saw what it would take to get to the start line on the project. I think that this community is very fortunate to have developers that are Western New York based and with a lot of roots here. I have said that before. It's really amazing because you sit in a room and they treat you like you just came from Florida or Texas to do a project. Here's the irony of it: They don't care how many good projects you have done, how many historic restorations you have done, how many this, how many that. You are always going to be crucified with your hotel.

PAUL ISKALO

Iskalo Development

And I could walk to that site from where I grew up. I could walk to the Lord Amherst from where I grew up.

► Now the Green Code is here. Is it working out the way you expected?

MATTHEW MEIER

HHL Architects

The variances are part of the process, and that's the problem. The perception that the community had when the Green Code was pitched and when the community was involved is that this was going to be the rule and no one could do anything different from that. And that was never the truth; that was

never the case. It's an outline.

PHILIP SNYDER

Stieglitz Snyder Architecture

It's really the starting point here. We're just beginning with the Green Code and the public needs to understand that. It's just the beginning of the conversation. Now the conversation gets real.

STEWART HANEY

Wendel

There is a need for education and training and understanding how we are going to work with the Green Code.

ROBERT STARK

Chaintreuil, Jensen & Stark Architects & Planners

If you ask for a variance, you're breaking the rules.

PAUL CIMINELLI

Ciminelli Real Estate

Unfortunately, right now it's being used as a weapon against us. And people use that as a weapon to try and block development instead of looking at it as a tool to facilitate development in a proper way. What I find that is so ironic about it, again, is what I said earlier: The whole thing started over a building that was compliant with the Green Code; somebody just didn't like the design of it. At the end of the day, Frizlen/Benchmark's project is three stories and they all hate it, but they never talk about the height of it, they talk about the design of it. So because now they say, "OK, I don't like that project, so what weapon can I use against the next project?" And it is the Green Code or their interpretation of it.

► Isn't it incumbent on someone to gather the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Preservation Board, the Planning Board and say, "Hey, let's be careful of this"?

STEWART HANEY

Wendel

Leadership is absolutely required here. It's like any tool you put out there that can be used in a positive way or in a negative way. And it's up to the leadership to make sure it's being used positively. You're always going to have dissenting opinion; that's fine. But you don't have to kind of capitulate to the minority loud dissenting opinion.



ALL PHOTOS: JIM COURTNEY

Matthew Meier



Michael Montante



Anthony Mussachio

KENNETH FRANASIAK

Calamar

This experiment was done in Niagara-on-the-Lake about a decade ago. And they went completely to new bylaws, new standards, design excellence. And it frustrated the marketplace. You see the new mall they put there; there's a billion-dollar investment there. Everything was redefined again after they spent thousands of man-hours and hundreds of thousands of dollars and frustrated the development community. And then a large master plan development comes in like that and all that was for naught.

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Uniland Development

And the Green Code is used in the right way, its intended purpose, that its intended way be interpreted and used to promote good development, good architecture, good design.

KENNETH FRANASIAK

Calamar

This is a fragile market. It's a micro market, which is very fragile. All it's going to take is some change in the real estate cycle, some movement in interest rates and can you push rents? How do you redefine that capital stack as you move forward with additional hard costs that are applied or delays, right? What's your timing in the market? So those things will be unprecedented, and I don't think anybody is really thinking about them.

► **On the federal level, there's talk of losing the Historic Tax Credits.**

JAKE SCHNEIDER

Buffalo Design Collaborative

It's a great tool we have and Buffalo is uniquely positioned to take advantage of it because they have such a rich inventory of historic buildings. So, yeah, losing that would be a big loss, without a doubt.

NICK SINATRA

Sinatra & Company Real Estate

If you look at what happened with the Brownfields program, it's similar. They bifurcated it and now there's two programs – one for Downstate, one for Upstate. And it's really an even better program for us Upstate, the Brownfields program, than it was before because of the abuses Downstate. They were buying a gas station and putting a \$100 million building on it and getting \$20 million in tax credit. That wasn't the intention. Hopefully, and frankly, a lot of the development that's happened here in the last 10 years wouldn't have happened without that credit. And in some respects, the inventory is almost gone. So if it does go away, it's not going to be the end of the world for us.

JAKE SCHNEIDER

Buffalo Design Collaborative

Downtown is not where we need development, though.

ROBERT STARK

Chaintreuil, Jensen & Stark Architects & Planners

The one thing that tax credits do is they allow for all different kinds and places and scales of projects. They're not just for big developers; they're for small buildings and little communities and a lot of the fabric stuff that would never get done if they weren't there. So I think it's incredibly important that they stay.

ANTHONY MUSSACHIO

Mussachio Architects P.C.

Does that need to go forever or was the program initially originated as a catalyst to getting development going?

PAUL ISKALO

Iskalo Development

The buildings continue to get old.

JAKE SCHNEIDER

Buffalo Design Collaborative

It will cost more to develop an existing building and that's why it's vital to continue it.

PAUL ISKALO

Iskalo Development

Pretty soon the buildings that were built in the '70s are going to be 50 years old. And that architecture is now just like art deco was a phase where people loved it for a while and then everybody hated it and now it's hot. You're going to see the same thing happen with some of those buildings from the '60s and '70s, which went through a time when architecturally they were very unpopular, but they're going to come. There will be a moment where they will be back in the limelight again.

MATTHEW MEIER

HHL Architects

There's an irony, Paul, that there's an international movement about evaluating and establishing preservation and restoration standards for precast and Drivit and metal panels and things like that, because of the fact that the criteria is if it's 50 years or older, it's historically eligible.

ROBERT STARK

Chaintreuil, Jensen & Stark Architects & Planners

Remember that a historic building is oftentimes about more than just the building; it's about who built the building, what happened in the building, what was significant about it in its period of time.

And so every building is obviously going to automatically become historic.

JAKE SCHNEIDER

Buffalo Design Collaborative

I sit on a state Historic Review Board and there are a lot of projects that have nominations made that don't get approved. And it's getting harder to get them approved because the reality is that the department is understaffed and there's so many projects coming before them that they can't process them all. So they ratcheted up their criteria, made it more stringent, and they're denying a lot of applications.

PAUL ISKALO

Iskalo Development.

Not every building needs to be historically significant. Some buildings are just old and you need to make room for progress. You need to make room for the next building that's going to be built and someday that new development may be historic. And that's important – that's capturing our moment in time.

STEWART HANEY

Wendel

That tax credit, though, is a great tool for when you have a building that it would cost you more to keep than to replace but keeping it makes sense. And to be more judicious about how you use it, fine, but its going away, I think, would be a nightmare.

KENNETH FRANASIAK

Calamar

But to go to Anthony's point, is Western New York as a whole an artificial market that's been subsidized through tax credits and incentives? If you strip that away, what's the market?

ANTHONY MUSSACHIO

Mussachio Architects P.C.

I'd like to think all the developers, all the developers here, were around before tax credits. I'm confident they will be around after tax credits.

PAUL CIMINELLI

Ciminelli Real Estate

You need something that's going to keep it going. Are we ever going to be 100 percent incentive-free? Probably not.

MICHAEL MONTANTE

Uniland Development

And I would like to believe that one day, Buffalo would be at a level where



ALL PHOTOS: JIM COURTNEY

Jake Schneider



Nick Sinatra



Philip Snyder



Robert Stark

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the revenue that we can generate from an asset, from a building, is enough where we don't need a tax credit. But I don't see that happening for a number of years. So without that, then that's a catalyst to make the numbers work; otherwise it's upside down. You said about 90, 95 percent of the conversions that we've seen are some sort of brownfield or historic tax.

MATTHEW MEIER

HHL Architects

I imagine most of us are from this community or grew up in this community. And the thing that we're kind of caught up in now is the emotion and the excitement of some of the investment that's going on, some of the activity, the approved spaces and places to enjoy as a citizen of Western New York. But the reality is our population is stagnant. There is minor growth, but certainly not the kind of growth that Denvers and Torontos and New Yorks and these other places that have the kind of need for restrictions on where you can build. And you have to be careful about when you start pulling the incentives or restricting what you can and can't do.

PAUL CIMINELLI

Ciminelli Real Estate

A lot of us are betting on one demographic segment that is growing, and that's the millennials. The comment I keep getting back from younger people is there's a lot of old people who don't want Buffalo to be a real city. They get very frustrated, and some people even say, "This is why I left."

ROBERT STARK

Chaintreuil, Jensen & Stark Architects & Planners

It's also interesting because I think geography is kind of one of our problems. You know, we're so used to being spread out here in Buffalo because everything is so flat. When you talk about Pittsburgh or Portland or something, it's pretty difficult to build outside the core in places like that because just geographically it's so hilly and expensive and everything else.

PAUL CIMINELLI

Ciminelli Real Estate

There's not a political will to do it. A perfect example is our Westwood project. Every time we do it, we try to go in for approval, they want us to take more out, take more out. I said, "For what?" It's an infill. How many times do we hear these talking heads come in and say you have too much sprawl? They're saying we have to take care of neighborhoods,

the older neighborhoods like Snyder. So everyone is like bobbleheads; yup, that's a great idea. So you try to do something in Snyder and all of a sudden everyone says you can't do that here. And then where is the political will of the people who took our taxpayer dollars to bring all these experts in to write this playbook? But they don't have the political will, then, to go and execute it.

ANTHONY MUSSACHIO

Mussachio Architects P.C.

Leadership again. Jack Sharpe was in Amherst decades ago, Jimmy Griffin – they led in a different manner than the people lead today and allowed a lot of that stuff to happen.

PAUL CIMINELLI

Ciminelli Real Estate

If you look at Westwood, our biggest opposition are people who bought in the subdivision right next door. So I felt like saying to these people, "If you guys would have had your opposition 20 years ago, you wouldn't have been able to buy your house because there wouldn't be a subdivision. So you can have your little piece of your subdivision, but no one else can have their subdivision." Isn't that a little hypocritical?

ANTHONY MUSSACHIO

Mussachio Architects P.C.

That's something we've all been faced with. Our office, same thing. If you wanted to keep it, buy it.

MATTHEW MEIER

HHL Architects

In 2000 we did a project for living in downtown and we had a transportation expert from Parsons out of Chicago. They toured the city and had some developers out of Denver and San Francisco. And they were all drooling with the opportunities that they saw 15 years ago. And the transportation guy, one of his comments was as we were driving around, we were stopped at Goodell and Main. We crisscrossed Main Street and we hardly ever stopped; we were just driving. It's the middle of the day and he said, "Why aren't we stopping? This is a downtown area. Where's the traffic? Why are all the lights synchronized on Elm and Oak? Why are all the one-ways going this way and that way and causing us to get out?" And that's the point about density.

ROBERT STARK

Chaintreuil, Jensen & Stark Architects & Planners

That's one of the problems with it.

Our cities are planned by traffic engineers. And their goal is to get you into the city, get you through the city, get you out of the city.

JAKE SCHNEIDER

Buffalo Design Collaborative

If you want to skirt the city, there's a way to do it. You take the Thruway. If you're going from north to south or vice versa, there's a way to avoid the city entirely. But if you're going to use that expressway, it should be a delivery system to get you to downtown and then a parkway to get to the expressway again. Same thing with the Scajaquada. And hopefully that's going to happen.

KENNETH FRANASIAK

Calamar

You have an investment trend here in downtown Buffalo, but you're dealing with assets that have an economic life, that they've achieved their economic life and you're reinvesting in them. Well, you're going to hit that trend again with all your suburban developments within the next decade and a half. So that trend is going to have to switch back, but a lot of that is industrial and commercial and a lot of the fabric of the economic clusters that exist outside of the city of Buffalo.

► **The waterfront grain mills – why are they not being developed?**

MATTHEW MEIER

HHL Architects

What are they going to be developed for, holding grain?

ANTHONY MUSSACHIO

Mussachio Architects P.C.

That's the problem. They see them as a grain elevator and absolutely no other use and there isn't a chance, a snowball's chance as they say, of doing anything. There's all kinds of opportunity. My father 30 years ago looked at apartment conversions. And I have magazines at the office where I save articles where they've converted them into breweries and everything else.

MATTHEW MEIER

HHL Architects

How much money is a worthwhile investment in converting a grain elevator into something? How much can be sustained?

STEWART HANEY

Wendel

It's not the most adaptable structure.

MATTHEW MEIER

HHL Architects

So you're right. There are great ideas, there are hotels and all, great things all across the world that are adaptively reusing industrial structures as such things.

PAUL CIMINELLI

Ciminelli Real Estate

The other problem, too, is if you modify it enough, will it be even eligible for Historic Tax Credits?

ROBERT STARK

Chaintreuil, Jensen & Stark Architects & Planners

I personally think they're still an asset to the city because people come to see them. I think they're our Roman Forum. I think they just stay there and people come to see them.

PAUL ISKALO

Iskalo Development

One way to look at them, it's kind of your industrial green space. So it really depends on how you want to look at your parkland. So are grain elevators a component of your green space and your parkland because they represent a certain landscape or certain skyline? Especially from the Buffalo River, when you kind of come into that elevator alley, that's the downtown of the Buffalo River, if you will. That's the skyline. That's the concrete forest, the concrete trees that are created there. So if you look at it from that perspective, I think you have to see if there's something to become a public park.

ROBERT STARK

Chaintreuil, Jensen & Stark Architects & Planners

And Rick Smith has really been trying to make that happen, with mixed results. But God bless him for his commitment to it, because I think he has had some positive results. And I think it's going to continue to kind of grow. Again, as we get the rest of the density up, even along the river and places like that, those places will just become more viable.

ANTHONY MUSSACHIO

Mussachio Architects, P.C.

Nobody wants to own them if they're just going to be something for the public to look at.