



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

## First Phase of Redevelopment of Richardson Olmsted Complex in Buffalo Announced

MARK GRISANTI January 25, 2013

| ISSUE: **LANDMARKS**



Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the Richardson Center Corporation (RCC) today announced the first phase of redevelopment of the Richardson Olmsted Complex, a National Historic Landmark in Buffalo. The state support for the redevelopment of the 19th century complex will leverage private investment and create over 500 construction jobs and up to 90 permanent full-time jobs.

The iconic Towers Administration Building and two adjacent ward buildings – about one-third of the 480,000 square foot, 140 year old complex – will be recreated as a boutique hotel, event and conference space and Buffalo Architecture Center. Lieutenant Governor Robert Duffy announced an architect team, hotel operator and construction manager that will undertake the transformation of this iconic landmark today at a press conference.

“As one of the largest public-private economic development projects in the region, the redevelopment of the Richardson Olmsted Complex will create hundreds of construction and permanent jobs and provide significant annual economic benefits,” said Governor Cuomo. “This first phase will transform the former Buffalo State Hospital from a place of healing to one of hospitality and serve as a real asset in the State’s upstate tourism marketing efforts.”

“We are excited to transition from years of thorough planning to a more active stage of rehabilitation, reuse and construction,” said Richardson Center Corporation Chairman Stan Lipsey. “The Richardson Olmsted Complex will play a vital role in continuing the impressive growth of our regions cultural tourism business, while simultaneously offering the market a unique and compelling hospitality product.”

The architect team of Buffalo-based Flynn Battaglia Architects, along with Deborah Berke Partners and Goody Clancy, has been selected to design the boutique hotel, event and conference space and architecture center, and LP Ciminelli has been selected as the construction manager. INNVEST Lodging, also headquartered in Buffalo, has been selected as the preferred operator of the boutique hotel and event and conference space.

“I’d like to thank Governor Andrew Cuomo for his continued commitment to create jobs and spur investment in Buffalo by today announcing the first phase of the historic Richardson Olmsted Complex redevelopment,” said City of Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown, noting that in

2012 more than \$1.3 billion in economic development activity was underway or announced in Buffalo. “This is great news for Buffalo and builds on the positive momentum that has resulted in a surge of new economic development activity in our city.”

The \$56.4 million renovation is a three year project, comprised of an eight month design phase, eight month construction document production and bidding phase, and a 20 month construction phase. The project is funded with \$37.4 million in State funds and \$19 million in Historic and New Market Tax Credits. In addition, Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC) approved grants for preconstruction, stabilization and re-greening activities. In total, this project is assisted by \$64 million in State funding. This first phase is estimated to create 545 construction jobs and a \$24.4 million payroll. Once completed, the project will create approximately 75 to 90 permanent full time jobs with an annual payroll of \$2.7 million.

The hotel and event and conference center will also provide significant annual economic benefits. Annual room night sales of \$3.3 million equates to \$451,185 in sales/occupancy tax revenue. An estimated \$3,678,000 in direct sales from hotel and conference guests while in Buffalo will provide an additional \$321,825 in annual sales tax revenues.

A key component of the redevelopment plan is “re-greening” of the Complex landscape. Work on the South Lawn, along Forest Avenue, will be completed this summer for a welcoming public space that will showcase sustainable design, including narrative plantings and rain gardens for storm water drainage. More than 125 trees will be planted, creating open and canopied spaces for gathering and recreation. The design builds upon Olmsted’s original intent while conserving existing resources, preserving the fabric of the space, and creating connections and purpose. A new second entry with a roadway and landscape improvements will be created on the north side of the complex.

These re-greening actions are the culmination of a thorough preservation planning process which began in 2006. This process included an Urban Land Institute (ULI) advisory panel, Historic Structures Report, Cultural Landscape Report, Master Plan and an approved Generic Environmental Impact Statement. These reports are all available at [www.richardson-olmsted.com](http://www.richardson-olmsted.com). Public input gathered through a Community Advisory Group and nine public meetings helped to create a strong and widely accepted reuse plan. In addition, \$10 million in stabilization activities took place to prevent further deterioration and vandalism.

The South Lawn design was completed by Andropogon Associates of Philadelphia, PA, a firm internationally recognized for ecologically-based landscape architecture. The plan integrates changes recommended by the public and by the Richardson Olmsted Complex Community Advisory Group.

Senator Mark Grisanti said, "This is an exciting transformation that I am proud to be a part of. On a personal note, the very first piece of legislation I had signed into law by Governor Cuomo was Senate Bill S 1406, which transferred the Richardson complex to the Richardson Center Corporation. This project will create jobs in Western New York, both construction and permanent full time jobs, I applaud the efforts of all parties involved."

Assemblyman Sean Ryan said, "A fully restored and re-purposed Richardson Complex will bring numerous economic development benefits to Buffalo and Western New York. As we celebrate this next phase of progress at the Richardson Complex, I would like to thank Governor Cuomo and his administration for an ongoing commitment to both this project, and economic development in Buffalo and Western New York."

INNVEST Lodging Founder Dennis P. Murphy said, "We plan to incorporate our accumulated experiences to bring the Richardson Olmsted Complex a vibrant life for the Buffalo/Niagara

Region. We are determined the hotel generates visitors and guests beyond Buffalo to experience our Region. This is larger than a hotel development, we see this as a community jewel, for the Nation to experience and it happens to be in Buffalo, New York.”

Flynn Battaglia Architects Design Principal Peter Flynn said, “The redesign and adaptive reuse of H.H. Richardson’s Richardson Olmsted Complex is both a significant privilege and a considerable challenge, how to make a silk purse out of a silk purse. The design team looks forward to rehabilitating another of our regions’ National Historic Landmarks.”

Deborah Berke Partners Founding Partner Deborah Berke said, “I fell in love with the extraordinary Richardson Olmsted Complex the first time I saw it, in all its majestic glory, and it is an honor to be part of the team that will bring new life to the complex. As an architect I am very interested in making old buildings relevant in today’s world, and I believe that our thoughtful and sensitive approach to this project will revitalize Richardson’s 19th century masterpiece with a 21st century spirit.”

LP Ciminelli Chairman and CEO Louis Ciminelli said, “The Richardson Olmsted Complex is one of the most important architectural treasures and cultural tourism attractions in Buffalo. We, at LP Ciminelli, are honored to be on the team to restore it to its former glory.”

Goody Clancy Principal Jean Carroon said, “Revitalizing the Richardson Olmsted Center is a gift to Buffalo and the world. Goody Clancy is proud to be part of the stewardship of such an important architectural treasure.”

Flynn Battaglia Architects is a Buffalo based architectural firm, led by Ronald Battaglia and Peter Flynn, focused on design, historic preservation, and planning for higher education, housing and community projects. They have extensive experience with heritage architecture including preservation planning, renovation of buildings and reconstruction of archaic

materials and assemblies. The firm has led preservation efforts on many of Buffalo's National Historic Landmarks including the restoration of the Guaranty Building; redevelopment of the Roycroft Campus; and restoration of the exterior at St. Paul's Cathedral. National Historic register projects include the adaptive reuse and renovation of the Old Post Office for Erie Community College; reconstruction of the main dome at the Botanical Gardens; and conversion of Asbury Delaware Church to "Babeville."

Deborah Berke Partners is an architecture and interior design firm that creates buildings and spaces poised between background and foreground, between the rich texture of history and the boldness of the modern-day. Since 1982, the firm has been working with individuals, cultural groups, and innovative developers to design distinctive hotels, public buildings, facilities for the arts and academia, and custom residences. Based in New York City, Deborah Berke Partners has completed projects around the world and throughout the U.S. Current projects include hotels in Arkansas and Ohio, follow-ups to the award-winning Louisville 21c Museum Hotel; a community arts center in Manhattan; arts buildings and a new residence hall at several liberal arts colleges; and a number of private residences.

Goody Clancy is a firm of architects, architectural conservators, urban designers and planners based in Boston and practicing nationally. Goody Clancy's work on historic buildings and modern landmarks includes the assessment, restoration, and rehabilitation of structures that span centuries. Goody Clancy completed the Richardson Olmsted Complex Historic Structures Report in 2008. This comprehensive history and documentation of conditions and character defining features was a valuable foundation and tool for the reuse planning. Treasured buildings restored and modernized under Goody Clancy's direction include H. H. Richardson's Trinity Church in the City of Boston and the Massachusetts State House.

INNVEST Lodging Services understands, and has notoriety with, historical landmarks and the Buffalo/Niagara Region hotel landscape. In 2001, INNVEST Lodging returned to life and brought national acclaim to a long-dormant historic landmark in Buffalo, New York known as The Mansion on Delaware Avenue. Over the last 23 years, INNVEST Lodging, through its associates, has developed a portfolio of successful hotel operations from California to Texas and Washington to Michigan. In addition to national success, the Company has demonstrated expertise in Luxury hotel, Conference Center and global-branded hotel franchise operations. Headquartered in Buffalo, New York, the Hotel Company is devoted to restoring unproductive and tattered historical structures into meaningful community assets.

LP Ciminelli began as a general contracting firm and has grown to become a top echelon national construction group. Since 1961, LP Ciminelli has been achieving award-winning results for institutional and commercial clients, including the \$1.45 Buffalo Public Schools Reconstruction Project and the Darwin Martin House. Today, LP Ciminelli is comprised of three major parts: construction management, general contracting and program management. Whether implementing comprehensive energy improvement programs, constructing complex research facilities or managing a design-build-finance program to build state-of-the-art facilities – LP Ciminelli is committed to achieving the highest quality strategic outcomes.