The Rust Belt's Urban Heritage Commons: Activism and Architectural Preservation in Buffalo, NY

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Abstract

Buffalo, NY has endured almost a century of economic depression and a subsequent reduction in urban population from almost 600,000 to less than 300,000 city dwellers. While this decay reflects the history of many "rust belt" industrial cities, Buffalo's unique and distinct built environment has attracted the attention of activists, scholars, architectural admirers, and state/market institutions. Frederick Law Olmsted, Henry Hobson Richardson, Louis Sullivan, and Frank Lloyd Wright all made distinct and career defining contributions to Buffalo. The preservation of their masterpieces has been an ongoing struggle for the last half century, and indisputably continues to redefine Buffalo's urban vitality. I argue that the preservation efforts have evolved from haphazard individual and institutional efforts to an organized and aggressive activism, which has leveraged historically and culturally significant structures to establish a heritage/cultural commons. The Larkin Building (1904, demolished 1950) by Wright, Guaranty Building (1896) by Sullivan, Darwin Martin Complex (1903-1906) by Wright, Buffalo State Hospital (1870-1896) by Richardson (in concert with Olmsted), and subsequent developments adjacent to each structure all illustrate an evolving preservation movement which- intentionally and unintentionally – establishes a commons perspective on the built environment. Preservation activism has appropriated architecture and landscape from enclosure and demolition by business or governmental interests. The consistent contestation of the built environment asserts a collective entitlement and

stewardship of the city's material fabric and encourages an urban commons approach to the dissolving city and postindustrial urban question.

Author's Biographical Sketch

Matthew J. Bach graduated from St. Bonaventure University, where he studied history. He presented a portion of this thesis at the *1st International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC) Thematic Conference on the Urban Commons* at Opificio Golinelli in Bologna, Italy on November 6, 2015. He currently teaches history near Boston, MA, where he lives, studies, and pursues activist and artistic endeavors.

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Chapter I

Theoretical Approaches to Architectural Preservation and the Commons

Assessments of architectural preservation, especially those concerning historically and culturally significant structures, neighborhoods, or landscapes, gravitate toward a set of frequently referenced assumptions. Conceptualized abstractly or literally, preservation indicates an active resistance to disintegration and degradation, and for the purposes of this paper this abstraction provides a fruitful place to begin. Yet, preservationist efforts are too often enclosed within characterizations of obstruction to the development structured according to a capitalist system in perpetual determination to reproduce consumer markets surviving on steady demand and exchange value. Historical architectural preservation is particularly vulnerable to this categorization because it appears often in reaction to demolishing the old to create space for the new regardless of spatial, environmental, or atmospheric impact. Edward Glaeser criticizes preservation on the grounds of economic obstruction when he states that "Too much preservation stops cities from providing newer, taller, better buildings for their inhabitants," and that the skyscraper must be maximally employed to allow for affordable housing for the urban working class.[1] Leading scholars in the field of preservation have countered this assumption with qualitative and quantitative research to reposition the debate around preservation to address the degree to which preservation is actually a stimulus to

[1] Edward Glaeser, *The Triumph of the City How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Greener, Healthier, and Happier.* (New York, NY: The Penguin Press, 2011), 136.

economic development. Randall Mason, chair of University of Pennsylvania's Historic Preservation program, acknowledges that while many preservation scenarios are situational, "…a number of reasonable conclusions can be drawn about the economic benefits of historic preservation… Historic preservation has important economic values and produces certain economic benefits for both private actors and the public at large. Preservation projects can be profitable; and preservation policies do make sound fiscal sense."[2] The current discussion and status of the term "preservation" place the endeavor soundly within the realm of economic debates around development and cost analysis, whether favorable to investor interests or public interests, or both. The concept of "Adaptive Reuse," conventionally understood to mean adapting aged structures for purposes they had not originally been intended, particularly (for the purposes of the argument I am advancing) in an urban area where office, industrial/mill, residential, and public service space is abundant due to the depletion of tenants and economic stimulus, is a fundamental presumption of Mason's study. While my argument tends to build upon Mason's conclusions, I diverge from the dichotomy that preservation is either obstructive or profitable under the current conditions of capitalism, and suggest that the political economy of architectural preservation must also find residence in the language of struggles for social justice, and social appropriation of capital and determinant power. Buffalo, NY provides a unique example of historical preservation and an alternative way of characterizing the endeavor, especially in the context of Buffalo's decline in the postindustrial era. According to the *Partnership for Public Good*, the 2010 Census

[2] Randall Mason. *Economics and Historic Preservation: A Guide and Review of the Literature* (A Discussion Paper Prepared for The Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program, 2005): 21, accessed November 8, 2015, http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/reports/2005/9/metropolitanpolicy-mason/20050926_preservation.pdf

reports that "…the City of Buffalo had a vacancy rate of 15.7%, the ninth highest rate in the nation for cities with populations over 250,000," and that "Over the period 2000 through 2011, the City demolished an average of 480 buildings per year, or a total of 5,766 buildings," costing the city as much as $12 million in one year alone.[3] So, the stagnation of economic development and continued population loss in a city such as Buffalo prompts some serious questions regarding the preservation of vacant structures. First, what is the purpose of architectural preservation when no adaptive reuse is clearly in sight? Second, in a city where unemployment and poverty are higher than national medians, is the preservation of celebrated architecture the best use of dwindling local resources when the architecture itself may symbolize the expressions of a capitalist system that has failed the urban inhabitants? And finally, how can we conceptualize preservation when we are not only addressing buildings, but also districts, neighborhoods, landscapes, and –in cases where alternatives to state and market solutions to urban planning are collectively determined- social space itself?

In addressing these questions it must also be recognized that historical preservation may also serve to monumentalize powerful representations of capital, or provide lasting symbols to capitalist regimes which- having been left behind by market actors in the pursuit of new methods of production or consumer markets- remain only as incumbent reproductions of authority. In this context "Architectural Conservation," commonly understood as the process of prolonging the material, historical, and design integrity of the built environment through planned intervention, although frequently characterized in depressed urban areas as well as economically potent ones as

[3] "Buffalo Brief: The City of Buffalo's Abandoned Housing Crisis," *The Partnership for the Public Good,* (January 11, 2013). Accessed February 2016. url: www.ppgbuffalo.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Housing-2013.pdf.

"obstructionism" for the real estate and business interests, may also conversely retain and even aggrandize relics of previous phases in the evolution of capitalism. Dolores Hayden notes this potential result of preservation efforts in her critique of the movement, stating that "Since the mid-nineteenth century in the United States, most preservation groups have directed their efforts toward saving historic structures as a unifying focus for national pride and patriotism in a nation of immigrants, or as an example of stylistic excellence in architecture," and that even in cases of public art it may be reduced to what "…Judith Baca terms 'the cannon in the park.'"[4] Hayden points out that different choices or approaches in architectural preservation endeavors may render more socially distributed results outside of the enhancement of capitalism, militarism, and patriotism. I find it necessary to introduce the term "Preservation Commons Activist" (or just "preservation activist") in the context of Hayden's argument: The preservation commons activists, while knowledgeable and invested in the historic quality of buildings, seek to establish and/or maintain a livable city for urban commoners[5], or the vast majority of city dwellers. I distinguish the actions of preservation commons activists from more traditional historic preservation by their political methods and their goal of leveraging historically significant aspects of the built environment to fulfill a "… desire for 'shared authority' (Michael Frisch's phrase)… that gives power to communities to define their own collective past."[6] Whereas institutions such as the National Trust, Landmark Societies, and State Preservation Leagues award structures certain recognition, the preservation commons activist confronts changes in the built environment with political

[4] Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place.* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1997), 53,67.
[5] I specifically use the term "commoner" as a heterogeneous descriptor from this point on throughout the paper. Commoners represent all or any person, demographic group, class, or transient persons who come in contact with the urban material fabric of Buffalo, NY.
[6] Hayden, 48.

campaigns, demolition injunctions, pamphleteering, public criticism, and alternative economic policy solutions. The preservation commons activist also works to engage local citizens in pedagogy, collective action, and coordinated political activity to strive for a more inclusive, and more livable, city.

I argue the didactic exercises related to historic architectural preservation empower alternative actors (commoners) to market and state, albeit that these actors may not be totally subversive or committed to total insurrection against the societal structure. Stanley Aronowitz and Henry Giroux see this as a struggle within the system that had been prescribed by Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci:

> His [Gramsci's] program was tantamount to what became known in the 1960s as the long march through institutions: to contest the moral and intellectual leadership of society by entering the public sphere of both institutional and political life where people debated their "truths" about education, morality, and law as well as struggled over their immediate and antagonistic interests. Put another way, Gramsci understood the necessity of making the political more pedagogical.[7]

So, preservation is a multi-faceted tool that may be wielded by the establishment as well as the subversive (or more positively characterized- socially progressive) actors in a situation of urban intensification. This urban intensification is like physical acceleration as it can shift in either direction, and so the dialectic around preservation efforts comes into severe relief in urban manifestations in crisis as much as under different circumstances. A post-industrial city nourished upon industrial capitalism, such as Buffalo, NY, exemplifies the difficulty in saying historical preservation happens to be one thing generally. A dissolving city for much of the second half of the 20th century, Buffalo certainly exhibits deep scars of disintegration and degradation, however the

[7] Stanley Aronowitz and Henry A. Giroux, *Education Under Siege: The Conservative, Liberal, and Radical Debate Over Schooling*. (London, UK: Routledge, 1987), 11.

preservation efforts that have taken place in the city do not simply resist aggressive reiterations of capitalist markets- because there hasn't been much of that, especially in regard to the built environment. If New York City is a megalopolis- a complex citadel with sprawling urbanism and suburbanism stretching out from its core- Buffalo is more like a crater surrounded by suburbanism stretching out from an atoll occupied by fragments of density, which are enclosed by open spaces of abandoned city [Fig. 1].

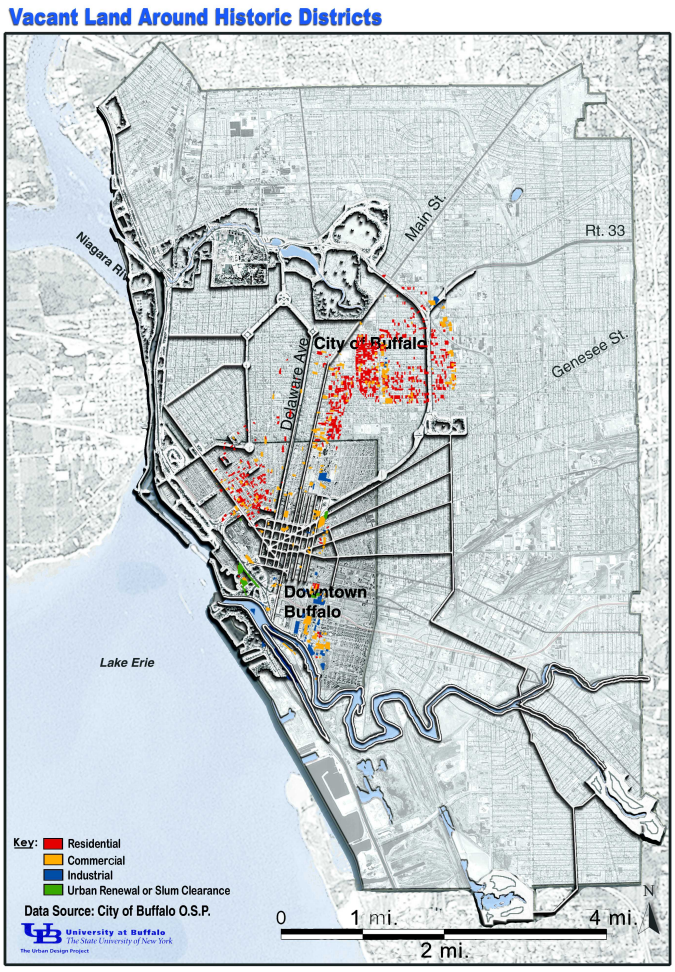

Figure 1. Map of Buffalo: The map includes vacant property adjacent to historic districts. The image represents an argument that the city must go beyond celebrated historic structures and preserve "building mass" as part of a comprehensive development agenda. From: *Buffalo's Comprehensive Plan*, (Office of Strategic Planning and the State University of New York at Buffalo, 2002), Accessed February 2016. Url: https://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us/files/1_2_1/mayor/cob_comprehensive_plan/section_2459148328.html.

Yet, historical preservation in this disintegrated city also has not relied purely upon nostalgia for a heartier period of exchange and prosperity. That is not to say historicity and pedagogical endeavors have had no part in architectural preservation in Buffalo, however the more appropriate explanation suggests preservation relies on historical design as argumentation for better alternatives to further disintegration, as well as a didactic tool for social re-education of the urban disenfranchised commoner. Steven Semes pushes preservation in this direction while discussing the need for a "Conservation Ethic," suggesting that while preservation may be seen to have varnished something petrified or dead already, *conservation* maintains a living thing that may be in danger of expiring. He says "My argument proposes that this *common* [my italics] ethic be based on the concept of conservation, both in the narrower sense of preserving neighborhoods, and landscapes, and in the broader sense of conserving *values, meanings, skills, and building cultures*[my italics]."[8] The utilization of terms such as "common," "values," and "cultures" may seem, again, to support an old regime or conservative superstructure. So, if the urban negotiation is one which seeks to radically overthrow the physical and spatial artifacts of a system responsible for the disintegration of the city, preservation or conservation both appear to head in the wrong direction according to Semes' argument. However, I take Semes' terms a different way; the preservation of the built environment must be linked to a broader set of social causes that engage in productive maintenance and reproduction of this built environment, but also fundamentally change or produces a set of common values or cultures in doing so. Semes continues that "Taking natural

[8] Steven Semes, *The Future of the Past: A Conservation Ethic for Architecture, Urbanism, and Historic Preservation* (New York: WW Norton Co, 2009), 34.

resources conservation as its model, the new ethic will support and cultivate self-sustaining communities and the building traditions that enable their physical realization and maintenance, promoting an ecology of the built environment."[9] If "ecology" here, at its face value, means a science of relations between symbiotic or competitive elements, than those relations become mostly political and economical when applied to urban situations. Therefore, preservation must be understood as activist *contestation* as well as activist *production* of the terms and conditions of these relations in a city that has become a crater or an atoll of urbanization. The matters of *contestation* are the terms of relations established by state and market to enclose common resources, and the matters of *production* are the creation of new common resources from the formerly stated contestations.

First, Buffalo's historic architectural preservation activists contest the disintegration and enclosure of building mass and urban density while state and market either stand by as silent witness or actually serve as progenitors of generational disintegrations. Second, Buffalo's preservation activists produce, in some cases, a physical commons where degradation and disintegration occurred. Additionally, preservation seems to also produce something more significant: a commons consciousness or a conceptualization of the built environment as a historical/heritage/cultural commons that appropriates authority, leadership, and design responsibility from state and market actors. An analysis of the contestation presents several items requiring explication: density in a shrinking city; enclosure and enclosure methods parallel to reduction in density; activist preservation and confrontation; and finally the objects of contestation (for example, this building or that neighborhood) as

[9] Ibid.

leverage in a larger production of an urban cultural commons. Analysis of the production of a physical and conceptual commons also provokes many questions: for instance, Peter Marcuse's engagement with Henri Lefebvre's questions regarding the "right to the city," such as "What does the right to the city mean?... Whose right are we talking about? What right is it we mean?" and most importantly in terms of this paper, "Which city is it to which we want the right?" are just a few inquiries into what type of urban commons should be considered.[10] Considering Lefebvre, Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas indicate that "the right to the city" becomes malleable and "Rights… not just the abstract rights of man and the citizen but concrete rights pertaining to social groups, such as old people and women, conditions of work, culture, housing…" become severely stratified as "simultaneity" is subordinated by "dispersal" in the city.[11] If Lefebvre's "simultaneity" ("urban form…events, perceptions and elements of the whole in reality" according to Kofman and Lebas) cannot be bifurcated from urban density, this connection, as a first concern regarding preservation and contestation, should be explored in greater detail.

Some of the first critical reactions toward state and market interventions in Buffalo's urban decline in the mid-twentieth century come from vague - or at least nascent- preservationist ideology. Even as early as 1961, an architect named Robert T. Coles, who studied under Charles Abrams at MIT, "… passionately preached that ' [we] must recognize that as urban renewal advances in Buffalo, that the city is urban; that every great city is characterized by denseness, compactness, cohesiveness; that there can never be suburbia in the city…" to contest the demolition of older structures in downtown

[10] Peter Marcuse, "Whose right(s) to what city?" in *Cities for People, Not for Profit: Critical Urban Theory and the Right to the City,* ed. Neil Brenner et al., (New York: Routledge, 2012), 29.
[11]Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas. Introduction to *Writings on Cities* by Henri Lefebvre. Trans. Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 19.

Buffalo in favor of automobile traffic and parking ramps encouraged by ample federal funding.[12] Coles was speaking the language that would eventually coalesce into a more rigorous ideological program of preservation in Buffalo- a language that contested and confronted state and market hostility to the pedestrian preferred urban density and heterogeneity. Álvaro Sevilla-Buitrago generally diagnosis what Coles and latter self-identified preservationists were agitated about during Buffalo's decline and subsequent urban renewal phase:

> Enclosure appears when these processes [territorial homogenization] of dispossession are achieved by spatial means, when space is mobilized to separate the commoners from the territorial basis of their view of autonomy; it erodes the sociomaterial links that allow a particular community to *produce itself as a work of its own* [my italics]. In that sense, it is a mode of "spatial alienation", akin to Hannah Arent's (1998:254-255) all-encompassing notion of "world alienation", the process whereby certain social groups and individuals are deprived of "their place in the world".[13]

Two things that resonate in a disintegrating city are the "spatial alienation" caused by "homogenization" through urban renewal solutions, and the notion that the city is a creation "produced" by the community. First, In Buffalo, historic preservation contests this "spatial alienation" by struggling to maintain building mass and density even when there may not be any envisioned reuse because according to Coles and latter preservationists, the use value of the structure may also just reside in its standing in place. In his assessment of Baltimore (a city in crisis not dissimilar to Buffalo), David Harvey points out that "In 1970 there were 7,000 abandoned houses in Baltimore City. By 1998 that number had grown to an estimated 40,000… The 'official' hope is that this will drive

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[12]qtd. in Mark Goldman, *City on the Edge, Buffalo, NY* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2007), 189.
[13]Álvaro Sevilla-Buitrago, "Capitalist Formations of Enclosure: Space and the Extinction of the Commons," *Antipode* v. 00 no. 0 (Antipode Foundation Ltd., 2015): 5, accessed November, 2015. doi: 10.1111/anti.12143.

the poor and the underclass from the city. The idea of reclaiming older neighborhoods- particularly those with quality housing stock- for impoverished populations has been abandoned even though it could make much economic and environmental sense."[14] So, the type of enclosure that is most deadly to an urban cultural commons in a shrinking city is the empty space that alienates, separates, and isolates potentially heterogeneous assemblages of the community at large. Active contributions to the homogenization of the city proliferate the obvious second most deadly phenomenon as Coles observed when beholding the sterile and restructured hierarchy of urban renewal schemes of the 1970s. The further cost and burden upon the already stretched urban commoner adds insult to mortal injury in what is known as, according to Harvey, "… 'feeding the downtown monster.' Every new wave of public investment is needed to pay the last wave off. This private-public partnership means the public takes the risks and the private takes the profit."[15] The results perpetuate an expensive, unlivable urban situation enclosed by empty spaces and empty speculative structures subsidized by the alienated, disenfranchised, and shrinking urban population.

I am applying the theoretical framework of commons scholarship to Buffalo's architectural preservation because in many ways the failures of state and market have left the city's population (commoners) in a situation where- in the case of alienation and disenfranchisement- they have been seemingly left to their own devices. The idea of the commons has a long history in academic writing concerned with limited resources, environment, and law. The commons perspective has recently been applied to various urban studies including spatial relations within the city, and the implications of this

[14]David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (Berkley: University of California Press,2000), 135.
[15] Ibid., 141.

commons conceptualization fall within a paradigm of ownership and stewardship of the urban milieu. In Buffalo's case, the production of an urban cultural commons staves off, or even halts, the evaporation of the city by segmentation resulting from neglect and/or premeditatedly designed homogenization in Buffalo. The historic architectural preservation activists, groups, and/or movement collectively contest the aforementioned assault upon the city, but they also work in the production of a commons consciousness. A more suitable characterization of this consciousness may be what Martin Kornberger and Christian Borch refer to as "atmospheric dimensions" which are the first of all things that are "shared and contested" within the city:

> Urban atmosphere is a commons that is not subject to overuse… Of course, certain atmospheres can be destroyed, e.g. through urban planning (or lack thereof), but there is nothing inherent to the urban atmospheres that make them vulnerable to overuse. Rather, consumption of the city is a subtle form of producing the urban commons. Moreover, and *contra* Hardin, urban atmospheres tend to benefit from population density. Indeed, density is constitutive of many urban atmospheres.[16]

Kornberger and Borch parallel Lefebvre in delineating the atmospheric commons as a thing with unlimited *use value* rather than finite *exchange value*. To carry this line of thinking into the realm of a city in decline requires recognition of the elements of the built environment which are in decline, what informs the contestation of their decline and/or preservation, especially if no reuse articulates the preservation in terms of exchange value; in other words, ultimately preserving ruins. Miles Orvell outlines several key assumptions regarding urban ruins, two of which I find essential in understanding their relevance in a city like Buffalo: "1. That ruins represent a necessary image of our past history and must be respected as such…" and "… 2. That ruins represent a rebuke of

[16] Martin Kornberger and Christian Borch, eds., *Urban Commons: Rethinking the City* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 11.

capitalist notions of endless progress and that the exploration of ruins constitutes an essential resistance to an official aesthetic order."[17] Orvell's two assumptions respectively represent the assessment of a structure in terms of its tangible contribution to historical urban space, and its contribution to a consciousness around common ownership, authority, and determination of urban space. Finally, the two assumptions together provide preservation commons activists with a precise rationale for preventing the erasure of the collective social memory, as well as the collective acknowledgement of the detrimental phases of capitalism. The atmospheric characterization of the urban commons in Kornberger and Borch, and the powerful atmospheric elements of ruins in Orvell open a significant and unique dimension in architectural preservation, especially in post-industrial cities representative of urban degradation. This is not to say that the notion of the commons in regard to architectural preservation is strictly ethereal, and so further consideration of the application of commons theory is necessary.

Almost all of the recent scholarship in the area of commons theory begins with a critical assessment of Garrett Hardin[18] and Elinor Ostrom, and yet because both scholars worked primarily with the governance of limited natural resources, scholars frequently question their applicability to the genre of the *urban commons*. Tine De Moor has classified Hardin's work as a "conceptual overreach" while classifying Ostrom's work as

[17]Miles Orvel, "Ruins," in *Architecture/Technology/Culture: Rethinking the American City: An International Dialogue*, ed. Miles Orvel and Klaus Benesch (Philadelphia, Pa: UPENN Press, 2013) 73.
[18] Hardin's essay "The Tragedy of the Commons" was initially published in a 1968 issue of *Science,* and has hovered over any application of the framework of the commons. The essential point is that resources are limited and "rival" groups or persons will need a form of governance to prevent individual overuse freedom to ruin the resource. This premise is, of course, overturned when a resource- such as the built environment in a decaying city- depends on use for existence.

much more positive but "limited."[19] In an analysis of what they term the "Common Historic Urban Core," Wout van der Toom Vrijthoff and Vincent Nadin follow Hardin and Ostrom in categorizing the pre-industrial core of a city as a "finite man made resource," and declaring that "the historic urban core does not have the capability to recover after the loss of its historic cultural content."[20] However, despite their conceptualization of historic aspects of the material environment as limited like natural resources, the authors do touch on the notion of an ethereal element when they say "collective social understandings of the past are held in the physical heritage and, conversely, the intangible cultural heritage is a lens through which the built historic environment is viewed."[21] Indeed, conceptualizing architectural preservation through the lens of the urban commons provides analysis of an interdisciplinary nature, which focuses directly on political and economic issues of agency, access, enfranchisement, collective action, and governance outside of conventional paradigms, but also seeks to redefine the "common pool resource" as an urban manifestation of use value rather than a limited commodity. Sheila Foster and Christian Iaione instruct that the body of scholarship is expanding further from Hardin's and Ostrom's original perspectives:

> The "commons," of course, has a long historical and intellectual lineage ranging from the enclosure movement in England, to Garret Hardin's famous *Tragedy of the Commons* parable, to Elinor Ostrom's Nobel prize-winning work on governing common pool resources. More recently, scholars across an array of specialties have conceptualized and articulated new kinds of commons, beyond those recognized in the traditional fields of property and environmental law. These "new" commons include

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[19] Tine De Moor, "How to be a Critical Scholar of the Commons?" Keynote Address at the1st IASC Thematic Conference on the Urban Commons (lecture, Opificio Golinelli, Bologna, Italy, November 6, 2015).
[20] Wout van der Toom Vrijthoff and Vincent Nadin. "The Common Historic Urban Core: A Reflection on Collective Memory, Window to the Past." Paper presented at the 1st IASC Thematic Conference on the Urban Commons (Opificio Golinelli, Bologna, Italy, November 6, 2015) 1.
[21] Ibid., 10.

> knowledge commons, cultural commons, infrastructure commons, and neighborhood commons, among others.[22]

David Bollier, a commons perspective theorist, indicates that the commons approach to preservation is relatively uncharted, but also recognizes it as a crucial deviation from established thinking on the built environment as it's "… a bit different from the standard liberal argument of preserving public property from privatization -- an argument that usually ends up focusing on the role of the government intervening to make things right. The commons lens relocates the moral authority, civic energy and political sovereignty to 'the people,' who may or may not need government intervention to achieve the goal of preserving the city."[23] This power relationship becomes evident in Buffalo through much of the preservation history as the commoners in the city, whether utilizing government legal infrastructure or acting without market and state interlocution, contest and produce the fluctuating terms of the city's built environment. A leading preservationist and longtime leader in groups such as *The Buffalo & Erie County Preservation Coalition* and *The Campaign for Greater Buffalo: Architecture, History, and Culture,* Timothy Tielman argues that "…'preservation' implies action, socio-political action. It is distinct from, say, seeking personal fulfillment through appreciation of architecture and urbanism, fixing up old houses, or mourning the loss of this or that structure or place."[24] Tielman's own assessment of his work in the city of Buffalo provides a reflection on how a preservation activist consciously defines the production of historical preservation differently from conventional categorizations, or even Randall Mason's profit dependent, "developist"

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[22] Sheila R. Foster and Christian Iaione, "The City as a Commons," Work-in-Progress provided to Matthew J. Bach (PDF. "Re: Architectural preservation and the commons." Message to Matthew J. Bach: June, 2015. E-mail), 5.
[23] David Bollier, "Re: Architectural Preservation and the commons." Email message to Matthew J. Bach (May 15, 2015).
[24] Timothy Tielman, "Re: Preservation in Buffalo." Email message to Matthew J. Bach (October 7, 2015).

analysis. Tielman argues for recognition that he, his colleagues, and the many commoners who occasionally ebb and flow in and out of the preservation discourse are doing the work of producing the urban commons, and therefore reproducing the city and its many measured, and unquantifiable, values. This work takes on great urgency in Buffalo as Marcus Kip et al warn: "A commons with a shrinking number of participants, however, is also likely to face challenges to reproduce itself," and that "… In each instance, commons must keep the influences of state and market at bay while at the same time 'leading the dance' with them. Depending on the externalities of accumulation, both capital and state have consciously latched onto urban life as a source of revitalization."[25] The challenges for, and meanings of, architectural preservation and the urban commons are succinctly summed up in Kip's passage as the crisis, social work and production, shrewd activist mentalities, and looming threat of re-appropriation of all these efforts are insinuated.

Therefore, the outcomes of architectural preservation in Buffalo amount to both theoretical/conscious changing results and tangible results, redirecting determination in urban spatial design and what collective groups may accomplish against market forces and state ossification, while at the same time potentially (one might say unfortunately) utilizing state enabling devices to provide new objects for market commoditization. M. Christine Boyer often addresses this architectural preservation dialectic and concludes (with quotes from John Ruskin) that the danger is preserving the built environment outside of the context of "the city of collective memory" the way museums take artifacts out of necessary context:

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[25] Marcus Kip et al., "Seizing the Everyday: Welcome to the Urban Commons!" in *Urban Commons: Moving Beyond State and Market,* ed. Peter Neizke (Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag GmbH, 2015), 18.

> "The German word 'museal' ["museumlike" as Adorno defined it]… has unpleasant overtones. It describes objects to which the observer no longer has a vital relationship and which is in the process of dying. They owe their preservation more to historical respect than to the needs of the present. Museum and mausoleum are connected by more than phonetic association." Yet no matter how false their modes of presentation might be, we cannot do without museums, for without their acts of preservation a culture would lose all relationship with past tradition. Across their willful selections, separations, and exhibitions, museums can be sanctioned by spectators who leave their naivete at the door and contemplate in deadly seriousness both art and reality that stand "under constant threat of catastrophe."[26]

Boyer also provides a nice metaphor when quoting Poëte earlier in the same piece, suggesting that the urbanist (and I would argue the preservation activist) is a "doctor of cities," and must therefore

> … collect all the visual symbols of this urban being [the city]- all the evidence of pathologies and normalities, gathering and storing all the memory tokens from bygone times, so that in our present time we can arrive at equilibrium between the urban being and its material environment. It is the play of functions that explains the arrangement of life in the city- functions such as market or a theatre that confer a soul or personality on their surrounding districts.[27]

In the case of Buffalo, what we see in architectural preservation is the attempt to hold onto these "markets" and "theatres" even when "soul" and "personality" might be the only functions left for the structure to bestow upon the urban commoner. As Orvell explains, "Ruins, in the Romantic view, must be preserved and even- if they did not exist- created, to provide us with a visual temporal dimension, a symbol of the past that also embodies a break with the past, as well as a vision of the inevitable future."[28] Buffalo's unique architectural history, decline, and uncertain future constantly remind us of these

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[26] M. Christine Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory: Its historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998), 200-201.
[27] Ibid., 17.
[28] Orvell, 75.

various architectural preservation dialectics, which rest on different points and quadrants on the preservation axis diagram [Fig. 2]. I will revisit this diagram in chapter VI.

In the following chapters I will illustrate the dynamic nature of these architectural preservation dialectics and the production of an urban heritage/cultural commons with the histories of several case studies. The Larkin Building (1904, demolished 1950) by Frank Lloyd Wright; The Guaranty Building (1896, formerly the Prudential building) by Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan; The Darwin Martin Complex (1903-1906) by Frank Lloyd Wright; and The Buffalo State Hospital (1870-1896) by H.H. Richardson (in concert with Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux), each provides a unique narrative on architectural preservation and the production of an urban cultural commons in Buffalo.

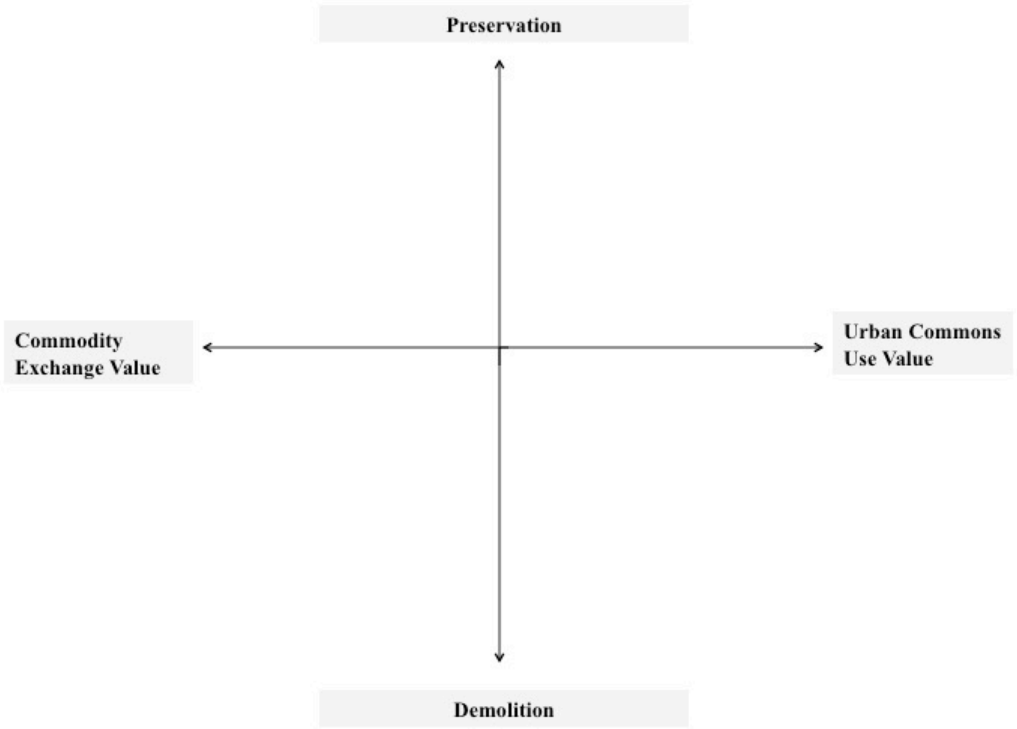

Figure 2. The Preservation Axis Diagram: The subsequent chapters will provide multiple analyses, which will fall in different and sometimes multiple quadrants in the diagram.

The first chapter on the Larkin Building's demolition represents what Anthony C. Wood might refer to as Buffalo's "…'Pennsylvania Station,' the great loss their community had to endure to shock it into taking action to preserve their past."[29] However, the Larkin Building preservation failure and demolition illustrates something besides a tragic catalyst for a preservation movement. The significance of the building's design and its historic relevance to Wright's career both supply leverage to the preservation activist in pursuit of structures of lesser known, yet still viable, architectural pedigree. For example, the other Larkin industrial buildings, as well as Buffalo's Trico Plant building, grain elevators, among other abandoned industrial structures, are receiving attention from the city's residents despite a lack of fully articulated reuse plans. The city's historic architecture, whether it represents a canonical architect or merely an industrial footnote, has become a heritage commons available to more than just scholars and enthusiasts. Large summer festivals, attracting thousands, have recently emerged at the site of many of Buffalo's abandoned grain elevators. Some organizers and attendees clearly see this as a preservation effort, while others may just view the vast structures as Buffalo's monumental ruins, providing an essential urban commons space for collective summer rituals.

So, the Larkin case study represents a failure of both private/market institutions (Larkin Company) and public institutions in stewardship of the city's collective cultural resources, but also symbolizes a "Penn Station moment" around which the city's collective consciousness was tuned and focused to expand what urban commoners may be entitled to in terms of a cultural/heritage commons resource. In this case, as well as the

[29] Anthony C. Wood, *Preserving New York: Winning the Right to Protect a City's Landmarks* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 7.

others mentioned below, the resource can be conceptualized in multiple ways. As Sheila Foster and Christian Iaione point out, "These collective resources include not only the land of the city, its open spaces and infrastructure, but also its culture and array of goods and services that it provides its inhabitants."[30] Like this example, the other three case studies also reveal unique preservation stories with distinct relevance to the commons perspective. The chapter on the Darwin Martin Complex outlines dialectical debates within the preservation movement, indisputable failures on the part of the city and the State University of New York to preserve the structure, and the affirmation of a cultural commons inextricable from architectural heritage in the city of Buffalo. The chapter on the Guaranty Building provides an example of the first great success in Buffalo preservation history, the establishment of language and a commons-like philosophy in the activist publication *Buffalo and Western New York: Architecture and Human Values* by preservation activist John Randall, and the establishment of Buffalo's earliest historic/preservation district, a significant conceptualization of preservation from structure to broad space which leads to the evolution of the Canalside district as a tangible commons. Finally, the chapter addressing the work of Richardson and Olmsted at the New York State Hospital, and the subsequent rehabilitation effort exemplifies almost all of the different preservation tensions and dialectics in one location: a massive structure designed for public service, but abandoned by the state, a preservation struggle that successfully appropriated $70 million for restoration with no adaptive reuse articulated at the outset, and open space designed by America's preeminent landscape

[30] Sheila R. Foster and Christian Iaione, 3.

architect preserved from enclosure to ensure additional acreage for Buffalo's largest commons space- the Olmsted parks system.

Chapter II

The Larkin Administrative Building: Recognition, Demolition, and Commemorative Commons

Stephanie Meeks, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, recently wrote "When choosing a city to host the National Preservation Conference, the National Trust for Historic Preservation looks for a place with an important story to tell, a community that offers a unique perspective on preservation…," explaining why Buffalo, NY was chosen to host the 2011 conference.[31] This beleaguered city may embody both characteristics, yet the history that led to this moment of national recognition begins with significant failure in historical architectural preservation. The significance of the failure, in turn, amplifies the essential role well-regarded architecture may play in nurturing social movements and the production of the urban commons. Therefore, I will first address, in the case of the Larkin Administrative Building (built 1904-1906 [Fig. 3]), the rationale for admiration of a particular piece of the built environment, and then the subsequent engagement with this admiration to produce a heritage/cultural commons in Buffalo.

Buffalo was fortuitous in providing several sites for Frank Lloyd Wright's earliest commissions, with which the architect found generous patronage and an almost unfettered allowance to define his remarkable early career. According to Henry-Russell

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[31] Stephanie Meeks, "Conference Attendees Find a Great Example in Buffalo," Op.ed *The Buffalo News,* A12, October 21, 2011.

Hitchcock, The Larkin Administration Building, present in just about any survey on American Architecture, was "…almost the first attempt to find a truly architectural expression for industrial building. It was extravagantly admired and frequently imitated throughout Europe, where it played its part in the development of modern industrial architecture to which all contemporary building owes so much."[32]

Figure 3. The Larkin Administrative Building. Image from: *The Hydraulics Press*, Url: http://www.hydraulicspress.org/the_hydraulics/2009/05/newsweek-puts-spotlight-on-larkin-administration-building.html.

Unanimous canonical assessment of the Larkin Building distinguished the structure in works as diverse as those by Nikolaus Pevsner, Siegfried Giedion, and Vincent Scully. Scully asserts the building's successful integration of Wright's differentiated goals regarding structure and space, and even calls attention to Wright's referencing local industrial programs in Buffalo:

[32] *Buffalo Architecture: A Guide*. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1981), 35.

> Furness, grain elevators, American factories by the hundred, Sullivan, are all recalled, no less than the medieval cathedrals-naved, bayed, and harmonically massed- whose pictures Wright's mother had hung in his room and which Viollet-le-Duc had so persuasively made part of the nineteenth century through his technologically deterministic description of them. In that mechanistic sense, most of all, the Larkin Building was surely a monument of the machine age, a rationalistic engine to delight Henry Adams and to terrify him.[33]

So, the significance of Wright's first major corporate commission not only offers an early achievement of an auteur architect, but also a dramatic symbol of Buffalo's rise as an American industrial powerhouse.

With the Larkin Building well established and revered as both a nod to the rich history of western architecture as well as an unambiguous declaration of the machine age, William H. Jordy contextualizes the architect's latter career revival as having roots in the 1904-6 commission. He suggests the Guggenheim museum "As a large balconied space lit from above and walled against its surrounding environment… had its thematic inception four decades earlier in the balconied interior of the Larkin Building."[34] Wright also reflected on the building's impact on architecture and his own evolution in his *The Natural House,* 1954 (placing it in company with his Unity Temple at Oak Park) when he stated "When building… the Larkin Building in Buffalo, I was making the first great protest I knew anything about against the building coming up on you from the outside as an enclosure. I reversed that old idiom and idea in fact."[35] While much could be said here regarding Wright's intentions in a capitalist system and his unique use of terms, such as "enclosure," the fact remains that the Larkin Company was a *Gilded Age* merchant

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[33] Vincent Scully, *American Architecture and Urbanism.* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1988), 128.
[34] William H. Jordy, *American Buildings and their Architects: The Impact of European Modernism in the Mid-Twentieth Century.* (New York: Anchor Books, 1976), 297.
[35] Ibid., 279.

venture, and therefore appropriately situates Wright's building as Buffalo's most prestigious monument to the capital accumulations of that era. Even if Wright sought more uplifting and inspirational environments for the office worker (and these informed his later work for the museum going, urbane public), the Larkin Building cannot be extracted from the context of big business, despite its sensitivity to humane design above utilitarianism. Consequently, when the Larkin Company became obsolete, the Larkin Administrative Building could not overcome what AK Thompson diagnosis as "the accumulated estrangement" that parallels the work of producing the urban milieu under capitalist conditions.[36] Thompson explains that

> As a terrain of intensified consumption… the city facilitates the reabsorbtion of the very surplus it helped to generate through its own intensification of the production process… along with being the concrete form taken by surplus value immediately prior to its realization through exchange on the market, social surplus is also the practical objectification of dead or expended labor… As a result, capitalism pits living labor in the present against the historically accumulated dead labor entombed in constant capital… This accreation can be traced concretely by considering how, as Benjamin noted, the railway track heralds the subsequent development of the steel girder- which in turn yields the skyscraper, the aesthetic emblem of alienation accumulated to the point of becoming sublime.[37]

Even though the burden of this alienation was weighty by the mid-century in Buffalo, there was still a lingering pang that the Larkin Building had something more to offer than a tombstone for "dead labor" buried by transient capital which had moved on to new frontiers.

However, all of the critical appreciation heaped on the Larkin Building (whether from modernists, post-modernists, or humanists) could not save it from what Jack Quinan

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[36] AK Thompson, "The Battle for Necropolis: Reclaiming the Past as Commons in the City of the Dead," in *Urban Commons: Moving Beyond State and Market,* ed. Mary Dellenbaugh, et al., (Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag GmbH, 2015), 217.
[37] Ibid., 217.

declares an "astonishing demolition," nor could it compete with Wright's own attitude towards the demolition. As Quinan writes, "When word of the demolition reached Frank Lloyd Wright he reportedly said that the building had served its purpose and deserved a decent burial. He had long been aware of the unfortunate alterations to which the building had been subjected."[38] The demolition of the architect's first large non-residential achievement, from our vantage point, may imply a criminal negligence on the part of the Larkin Company and the city of Buffalo, or a general apathy towards architectural history. On the other hand, Buffalo's rapid decline in the second half of the twentieth century, like many other rust belt cities, may rightly excuse the inattentiveness on the account of population flight and economic stagnation. Yet Quinan suggests that although "The circumstances that led to the destruction… were mainly economic… they represent a part of its critical history; demolition is after all a drastic critical comment."[39] This conclusion is certainly difficult to refute, however, there is little evidence that Wright's work had fallen so out of fashion that a demolition of one of his seminal works was widely acceptable. As a matter of fact, the conventional wisdom places the fifteen years prior to the Larkin Building's expiration in what is considered to be a third phase and resurgence of Wright's career.[40] I suggest that although critical appreciation, and even nostalgic "chronology of desire," was not enough to overcome capitalism's next phase in Buffalo because the urban commoner was not yet fully aware that the fabric of the city belonged not only to capital, but also to the commons.

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[38] Jack Quinan, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Larkin Building: Myth and Fact.* (New York and Cambridge: The Architectural History Foundation and The MIT Press, 1987), 128.
[39] Ibid., 119.
[40] Robert McCarter, *Fallingwater: Frank Lloyd Wright.* (New York: Phaidon Press Inc., 1994), 2.

Quinan documents the long list of problems that plagued the building from the collapse of the Larkin mail-order company, the error prone business stewardship of John D. Larkin, Jr., the geographic location outside of the downtown, office space district, to the $104,616 tax foreclosure in 1945.[41] The troubled trajectory of the building obstructed a seamless adaptive reuse but did not, however, imply that there was an absence of serious public outcry and ideas for such a reconfiguration. A nationwide advertising campaign for investment spurred by the City Comptroller, an effort by councilman Joseph F. Dudzick to reuse it as a gymnasium, published statements by a former director of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, and several articles from *The New York Times* and *New York Herald Tribune* praising the building only prefaced a seemingly inevitable piece in the *Buffalo Evening News* on April 15, 1949 entitled "A Shame of Our City."[42] The article indicates a widely held opinion that some reuse must proceed and that the genius of the building and its architect was accepted without objection. Yet, a costly demolition[43] occurred in February of 1950, the remnants of the masterpiece were unceremoniously dumped across town, and the company proposing a truck terminal that was to occupy the cleared site abandoned the plans for a larger space elsewhere. While contemporary Buffalo scholars are stupefied by the act, we must consider the feelings of helpless apoplexy of the concerned citizens who argued so articulately to preserve the Larkin Administrative Building.

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[41] Quinan, 123-125.
[42] Ibid., 126.
[43]Quinan illustrates the frustrating reality that the demolition firm had to spend most of its $55,000 fee on manual labor costs because the buildings sturdy construction demanded dismantling by hand. Adding insult to injury, he adds that although the city would only allow demolition if there was an economic use for the site, the company that promised to build retreated after the demolition took place, leaving the gaping lot that still yawns there today.

Since we cannot chalk up the demolition to a lack of concern about a worthy structure, I argue that what *was* lacking were the legal tools for preservation- and more importantly- the political activists willing to employ these tools to the fullest measure. Indeed, while the New Deal provided the first support mechanisms (the 1934 Historic American Buildings Survey established alongside the National Parks Service) to what amounted to a governmental stewardship of natural and heritage commons in America, and while the founding of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1949 "institutionalized preservation in the United States,"[44] urban commoners would have to wait several decades for more useful implements of historic preservation. Steven Semes identifies the evolution of a "more coordinated national movement" in preservation as the "National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 made [preservation] the instrument of federal government policy with broad impacts on the rehabilitation of both historical monuments and older neighborhoods," and "A decade later the 1976 Tax Reform Act gave economic impetus to preservation by creating incentives for private sponsors to undertake rehabilitation of National Register sites…"[45] Sheila Foster argues that this type of legislative action "enables" collective action in managing the urban commons: "That is, the [activist] group takes form only as a result of government support and entanglement. Which is to say: government support is a precondition to the existence of the collectivity."[46] Although the legislation that may have saved the Larkin building continued to evolve long after its demolition, the willingness to employ it required

[44] This quotation, from Steven Semes, *The Future of the Past: A Conservation Ethic for Architecture, Urbanism, and Historic Preservation* (New York: WW Norton Co, 2009),132,- is important and somewhat ironic because the institutional nature of preservation does not really become relevant in Buffalo until about thirty years of preservation struggles played out and demanded recognition by the local elite who in turn lobbied the National Trust to descend upon the city with its 2011 conference.
[45] Ibid, 132.
[46] Sheila Foster, "Collective Action and the Urban Commons," *The Notre Dame Law Review* 87 (2011): 57-133. (Web. Accessed 4 March 2015), 93.

tenacity and technical knowledge the gentleman preservationist was not necessarily equipped with in mid-twentieth century Buffalo. Sue McCartney, a founding member and longtime president and director of Buffalo's *Preservation Coalition of Erie County* (PCEC), emphatically argues that having an astute grasp on development laws, how to incorporate non-profits, local ordinances, and other tools necessary to navigate the problems of public policy, all outcomes of her MBA training in which "dominance and winning are beaten into you," actually helps a preservationist as much as a small business entrepreneur.[47] So, the infrastructure afforded to the preservationist by government is a significant element, but the willingness to confront, activate, organize, pamphleteer, and occupy are just as important in developing the preservation commons consciousness in potential preservation activists. McCartney's appropriation and reassignment of the market's fetish for dominance creates an ironic metaphor for the architectural preservation activity which re-appropriates symbols of bygone capital into a common pool resource. Not until thirty years after the demolition of the Larkin building, and decades after the initiation of preservation legislation, did McCartney come along with the proper understanding and training to put these tools to work against a natural tendency to allow the destruction (by segmentation, homogenization, and alienation) of Buffalo's urban fabric. And yet, the empty space where the Larkin Building stood, and the long marinating recognition of the city's failure to protect its urban heritage commons, has initiated a renewal of activity in the blocks around the demolition site.

Although the demolition of the Larkin Building makes architectural scholars wince, it also coincided with the beginning of accelerated dilapidation of Buffalo's traditional working class neighborhood on the East Side. Larkin's footprint was larger

[47] Matthew J. Bach, interview with Sue McCartney, January 4, 2012.

than 600,000 square feet by 1912, but the area had already developed an industrial identity in the 19th century because of its canal and railway access. Known as "The Hydraulics" because of its canal powered mills, the neighborhood -by 1901- was home to 87 retail businesses on Seneca St. between Larkin and Smith streets according to a timeline pamphlet produced by the *Campaign for Greater Buffalo* (CFGB), an activist group that evolved out of McCartney's PCEC. The same pamphlet outlines mismanaged urban renewal schemes such as a 1964 Buffalo urban renewal "Master Plan" classifying the historic neighborhood as a "slum clearance area."[48] However, by 2009 a coalition of developers and preservationists, working in concert with the CFGB, purchased the 10-story Larkin Terminal Warehouse on Exchange Street for restoration and mixed use. The structure, which resides across the street from the former location of the Larkin Administrative Building, now boasts full occupancy, street festivals in the newly designed "Larkin Square" (also referred to as "Larkinville"), and multiple small-scale dining and entertainment activities. While the conversion of the Exchange Street structure into office space tells a common reuse narrative in preservation, the collaboration between the preservationists and developers to design a space for public entertainment and assembly in the adjacent space extends the project into the neighborhood. Historicity and heritage have been utilized to promote the site and attract urban commoners in addition to the daily office workforce. In the spirit of reopening a dead part of the city as a tangible heritage commons, the Larkin Development Group (LDG) describes itself as an active contributor to the creation of something more than just profitable redevelopment: "Since 2002, the LDG has been transforming the Larkin District (now referred to as Larkinville) back to its roots, as a vibrant, *mixed use* neighborhood, home

[48] "History of the Hydraulics," (CFGB) Hydraulics pamphlet, 2.

to offices, residences, restaurants, parks and other *public gathering spaces* [my italics]."[49] Choosing to characterize themselves with these terms commonly associated with the historic preservation lexicon, the LDG seems to be projecting a sensitivity towards retaining the city's "collective memory" and "social surplus" (to reference Boyer and Thompson respectively), and clearly opening an invitation to collective activity at their site [Fig. 4].

Figure 4. Larkin District Plan: The above pamphlet was distributed at the 2011 National Trust Conference in Buffalo. Note that the titles "Placemaking" and "Visitors Welcome" proclaim a mission beyond real estate speculation. The historical branding and neighborhood integration, as well as the emphasis on assembly space, project an atmospheric heritage commons.

Indeed, Catherine Tumber recently wrote on aspects of Buffalo's redevelopment and preservation efforts with a focus on New Urbanism, but also revealed that from the

[49] Larkin Development Group. "About the Larkin Development Group: Larkinville Rising." Accessed February 5, 2016. Url: http://larkindg.com/#about-larkin-dg.

outset, Larkinville's developers embraced a progressive approach to the city. Tumber states that

> Robert Shibley… the dean of SUNY Buffalo's School of Architecture and Planning… established the school's Urban Design Project in 1990 and spent the next sixteen years working to usher through a Comprehensive Plan for Buffalo's "development priorities"… three of the plans features stand out: its full-throated anticipation of climate change, its commitment to sprawl-curbing "smart growth"… and its intention to keep… a "mixed" economy.[50]

The features Tumber outlines all coincide with the previously mentioned goals for producing an urban heritage commons, such as recognizing the built environment's role in social justice movements, retaining urban diversity and densification, and confronting capital and state's tendencies toward homogenization. Referred to as the "Green Code," the development plan was championed at the Larkinville site according to Tumber: "Far and away the most influential business ally of the Shibley plan was Russer Foods heir Howard Zemsky… in a dramatic vote of confidence in Shibley's planning approach, invested in the 2002 purchase and renovation of the abandoned Larkin Soap Factory… It still has a long way to go, but the neighborhood is now home to a thriving [Exchange Street] commercial center…"[51] The significance of Larkinville's success in producing a tangible commons space in a dilapidated area of the city adds gravitas to the Buffalo Green Code as well as the historic preservation activism that provided a perpetual reminder of Wright's structure and the important social history embodied by the adjacent buildings.

First, the Buffalo Green Code addresses the long history of mid-century urban renewal missteps and zoning codes which have amounted to neighborhood destruction,

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[50] Catherine Tumber, "Buffalo Exchange: Retrofitting a Rust Belt capital," *The Baffler,* no. 27 (2015): 128, Url: http://thebaffler.com/salvos/buffalo-exchange.
[51] Ibid.

disenfranchisement of the urban commoner, and enclosure of vital and dense segments of the city by encroaching emptiness. The overview of the Green Code's approach states

> Like many cities across the nation, Buffalo began designating urban renewal areas in the late 1950s. Originally targeted for the removal of slums and blight, these plans quickly became associated with the demolition of low-income neighborhoods. Subsequent urban renewal plans (URPs) served as a means of addressing Buffalo's increasingly dated zoning code. The majority of the 30 active plans, the oldest of which dates back to 1968, outline performance standards and other zoning requirements for the neighborhoods they encompass.[52]

The clarity with which the city's plan characterizes urban renewal as an attack on the most vulnerable of the city's inhabitants essential amounts to a apologetic statement of regret. It's also an admission that the sculptural, homogeneous skyscrapers or apartment blocks that replaced these "low-income neighborhoods" were lacking the collective meaning and history imbedded in Wright's Larkin Administrative Building, the adjacent industrial structures, and the surrounding neighborhood that housed the company labor. The Green Code continues that

> The city is proposing to terminate all but one of its remaining URPs – the Homestead Urban Renewal Plan. The Homestead Plan has three components: rehabilitation of abandoned housing, side-lot acquisition by adjacent homeowners, and new construction on vacant lots. The homestead program is targeted to select neighborhoods with markets that could benefit from this type of incentive.
> The other urban renewal plans will be terminated, and the standards contained in the Unified Development Ordinance will be applied in their place. This will help Buffalo turn the page on the urban renewal era, and make the zoning code easier to use and in line with today's vision.[53]

The Green Code's intention to terminate urban renewal plans and zoning codes not "in line with today's vision" echoes the philosophy and vision of yesterday's historic preservation activists. For instance, Jane Jacobs consistently argued "…zoning for

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[52] "Urban Renewal Plans," *Buffalo Green Code,* last modified January, 2016, url: http://www.buffalogreencode.com/green-code-components/urban-renewal-plans-2/.
[53] Ibid.

diversity and staunchness of public uses, are defensive actions against self-destruction of diversity. They are windbreaks, so to speak, which can stand against the gusts of economic pressures, but can hardly be expected to stand fast against sustained gales."[54] So, the Green Code moves in the right direction, but- as Jacobs warns- defending against decline or homogenization may frequently require action beyond codified infrastructure. The one active urban renewal plan the Green Code retains, the Buffalo Urban Homestead Program, seems to be the type of enabling device Foster identified above as conducive of urban commoning.

The Homestead Program promotes the ownership and improvement of properties long vacant, and owned by the City of Buffalo and the United States (HUD- Department of Housing and Urban Development) due to abandonment, tax abatement, or other foreclosure or eviction circumstances. The program sets conditions for the relatively quick transfer of vacant properties to families, individuals, or adjacent property owners for one dollar plus closing fees as long as the new owner(s) conduct necessary repairs and occupy the structure for at least 36 months.[55] The rationale to retain this program concludes that Buffalo faces a problem of enclosure by segmentation, whereas the enclosing element is vacancy and reduced densification and the segmentation is metastasizing block by block. The document states that

> Property owned by the city has generally been obtained as a result of tax delinquency auctions. One of the major difficulties is the period of time that lapses between delinquencies by private owners and the foreclosures by the City. During that time, vacant houses are subject to a high rate of vandalism, and may become beyond repair. Carefully developed

[54] Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. (New York: Random House, Inc., 1961, 1993), 333.
[55] Buffalo Urban Homestead Program of 2005, Item No. 245, C.C.P. 9/17/1974 (2005), 4-10. url: http://www.buffalogreencode.com/URP/2005_homestead.pdf.

> homesteading plans can arrange for the acquisition of properties before massive deterioration takes place.[56]

Zemsky's general endorsement of this streamlined bureaucratic device, and his investment in historic industrial property adjacent to the surrounding neighborhood on Buffalo's troubled East side, encourages smaller, but consequential, investment in a part of the city with abundant vacancy. Ronald Oakerson and Jeremy Clifton analyzed a similar scenario on a neighborhood block on Buffalo's far West Side, and -although they did not focus on leveraging historical structures in retaining urban density- applied Commons theory and scholarship to the neighborhood improvement activity. In a section of the City with "11,000 residents in 5,000 homes… one of the most ethnically diverse neighborhoods in the state [New York]… you had $200,000 houses on Richmond Avenue [while] one block over you could buy a house for $2,000."[57] Oakerson and Clifton concluded that even with the existence of programs like the Homestead plan or the decisions of housing court, the neighborhood only began to improve due to the efforts of Block Clubs and the West Side Community Collaborative (WSCC) to reframe their neighborhood as a commons-like resource. They reiterated that the collective action of these groups was facilitated by "three points of intervention: (1) fostering responsibility for the neighborhood; (2) leveraging investment; and (3) obtaining rule enforcement."[58] Their analysis emphasizes the shared benefits of one homeowner applying a new layer of paint or other minor improvements to an individual home, but also returns repeatedly to this notion of collective agency and enforcement akin to what commons scholars refer to

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[56] Ibid., 4.
[57] Ronald J. Oakerson and Jeremy D. W. Clifton, "The Neighborhood as Commons: Reframing the Problem of Neighborhood Decline."(Paper presented at the 1st Thematic Conference on the Urban Commons, Bologna, Italy, Novemebr 6-7, 2015.), 12.
[58] Ibid., 24.

as "beating the bounds."[59] With every summer festival event held at Larkinville and further normalization of routine activity engaged in by the daily workforce and lunch crowd at the site, the growing collective ownership of the historic neighborhood could possibly continue to change political and investment behaviors on the East Side of the city.

Second, the work of the activist preservation movement in establishing Larkinville as an oasis within perpetual desertification of Buffalo's East Side also requires recognition. Much of the praise for Larkinville's success is directed at Zemsky the developer while the decades long ground work by preservation activism falls outside of the official story on improvements to Buffalo's urban vitality. Maria Scrivani refers to Zemsky as the "accidental preservationist" correctly suggesting that his investment in Larkin at Exchange was "a huge initial gamble [that] has finally paid off. Initially, commercial tenants were not exactly lining up at the door, a fact of development that didin't daunt Zemsky… A project like this needs a catalyst, someone who really believes, and he and his partners did not lose faith."[60] While it certainly took Zemsky's vision and capital to adaptively retrofit the enormous warehouse, he co-conducted a tour of the final development at the National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference in 2011 with preservation activist Tim Tielman. Moreover, Tielman was credited as a "Consultant" in the National Trust conference publication describing the tour and lecture as offering a look at "the transition of factories and warehouses into new uses. The industrial

[59] "Beating the Bounds" is frequently cited in commons literature as a method of enforcing rules around a common pool resource. The tradition dates back to English medieval commons where the commoners would ritualistically walk the boundaries of the common plot and destroy any makeshift enclosures set up by "free-riders."
[60] Maria Schrivani, *Brighter Buffalo: Renewing a City.* (Buffalo: Western New York Wares, 2009), 103.

neighborhood that includes Frank Lloyd Wright's Larkin Administration Building[61] and encompassing the giant 19th-century complex of the Larkin Soap Company is being redeveloped to house small businesses, residential space, and first-class office space."[62] The historic leverage of the neighborhood's built environment informed both the resulting design of the public space for assembly and the attractive characteristics of the site for developer investment. Moreover, most sources measure the ultimate success of the adaptive reuse in terms of what impact it has on the surrounding neighborhood, not just on whether investors see a return. For instance, the *Downtown Buffalo, NY 2016 Development Guide* [Fig. 5] released by the mayor's office lists the Larkin district as one of four major development areas in the city. Referring to it as "The Larkin Center of Commerce" the pamphlet says "This former industrial site is quickly transforming into a destination filled with modern amenities while respecting its historic roots."[63] The emphasis on "historic roots" is important because the city's executive office recognizes in this publication that the heritage commons has become an invaluable asset in the city and a draw for investment and habitation in dilapidated areas of Buffalo.

Tielman has also often publically written and spoken about the current location of the demolished Larkin Administrative Building material across town, and has discussed excavating it for re-assembly in the future. This may seem a quixotic endeavor that fetishizes a single structure, however other scholars have offered an analysis on the

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[61] It's interesting that the program makes the mistake of implying that Wright's building is still extant in the Larkin District, but I think it also reinforces the argument that the knowledge of the history of the structure- kept alive by the preservation activists- holds much of the responsibility for the conference converging on Buffalo.

[62] *Alternating Currents: National Preservation Conference, Buffalo, NY, October 19-22*, 2011. Final Program (National Trust for Historic Preservation), 30.

[63] *Downtown Buffalo, NY 2016 Development Guide*. (Buffalo Urban Development Corporation, 2015), 5. Url:http://www.buffalourbandevelopment.com/documents/Downtown /2016_Downtown_Buffalo_Development_Guide.pdf.

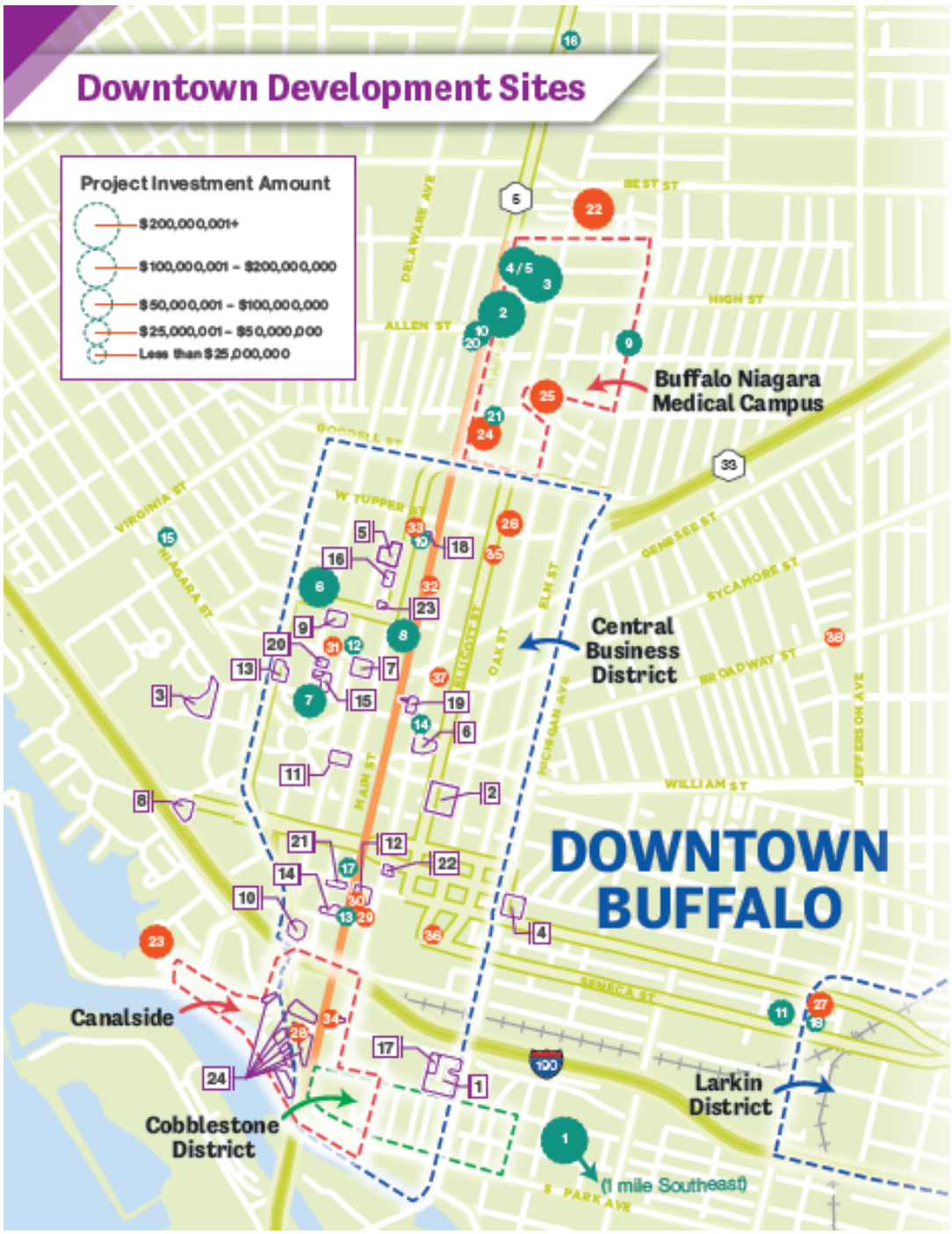

Figure 5. Map of Downtown Development Districts: Taken from the *Downtown Buffalo, NY 2016 Development Guide*, the map shows the city's recognition that historical preservation pays off. The *Central Business District*, *Canalside*, the *Cobblestone District*, and the *Larkin District* all emerged as loci, around which historic preservation activity intensified over the last four decades.

pedagogical elements of such a process. David Patrick Marcoux analyzed the different scenario's (including a digital projection) in which the Larkin Administrative Building could be reconstructed and made available to the urban commoner for didactic purposes, concluding that

> Once the proposal was set out for the final jury, there was a good deal of interest in the decision to physically construct the resultant object at an architectural scale on site. It was suggested that this work might remain in the digital world as a virtual environment or some other kind of artificial interface. However, due to the emphasis on participant interaction and emergent qualities as a byproduct of use, it would seem that the aims of such a proposal would be best served by creating this new object at full scale. As it has been argued previously, one cannot adequately engage a choreographed immutable scenario.[64]

So, participant interaction with the structure fits ideally within the conceptualization of historic architecture as an urban commons where the use value of a particular structure (or collection of structures) may express itself as a recognition of surplus social value, neighborhood enfranchisement, or even instructional opportunities in urban design. The failure to save Wright's work, along with evolution of the governmental legal tools available to preservationists and heritage sympathetic developers, and finally the tenacity of preservation activists enabled and invoked collective action in re-establishing a commons resource in a dilapidated area of the city.

I referred to the Larkin Building demolition as Buffalo's "Penn Station moment" in the previous chapter to qualify it as an early catalyst in changing the consciousness and imagination of Buffalo's urban commoners with regard to the material manifestation of their city. The helplessness and alienation that results from capitalism's evolution and

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[64] David Patrick Marcoux. "Within Layers: A Study of Historical Processes and Participant Interaction in Architectural Restoration and Reconstruction." (Order No. 1444018, State University of New York at Buffalo, 2007), 55. Proquest url: http://search.proquest.com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/docview/304779060?accountid=11311.

exit from the rust belt leaves the urban commoner isolated and enclosed by expansive vacuums which essentially sever the chronology of generational labor and production in the city. Thompson reflects upon this evolution when he reminds us that "According to John Berger, capitalism's strength can be measured by the degree to which it managed to break the interdependent bond between the living and the dead."[65] The preservation activist's labor, in its most radical conceptualization, identifies this lost social surplus, and reframes it within collective ownership and determination. Albena Yaneva, while discussing the failure to expand the historic Whitney Museum in New York, provides a thorough assessment of what a structure like the Larkin Administrative Building may provide to a social movement:

> What the story of the failed Whitney expansion teaches us is that no building can be defined solely by what it is (structurally, programmatically, or symbolically). It must also be defined by what it does: what kinds of disputes it provokes and how it resists or experiences transformation in different periods of time. To understand a building then, it is not enough to examine the specific figurative languages of its architects or the social contexts of its design plans. One should consider the many transformations and public interactions of a building while it is being designed: how it resists, affords, compels, challenges, mobilizes, gathers, and acts in contending with different communities of actors. Such an understanding of buildings can bring a greater and more acute awareness of the ways in which architecture and design take part in the making of the urban social fabric.[66]

Wright's Larkin Administrative Building provides many of the lessons Yaneva addresses, and what is remarkable is how the structure provokes much of this *awareness* and determination by different *communities of actors* by not existing. Wright's other Buffalo masterpiece, however, provides distinctly different lessons regarding the protection of the

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[65] Thompson, 218.
[66] Albena Yaneva, "Designing the City," in in *Architecture/Technology/Culture: Rethinking the American City: An International Dialogue*, ed. Miles Orvel and Klaus Benesch (Philadelphia, Pa: UPENN Press, 2013), 126.

heritage commons; specifically addressed in the next chapter, the Darwin Martin Complex suffered preservation efforts that provided, according to some, a treatment worse than the affliction.

Chapter III

The Darwin Martin Complex, The Davidson House, The Heath House, and Organizational Politics in Preserving the Heritage Commons

In this chapter, I intend on providing some background on several of Wright's existing Buffalo structures and how they have been, or continue to be, the subject of preservation contestation. These contestations involve debates over proper preservation decisions, institutional failure, and just how absolute a structure should reside in the cultural/heritage commons. I will begin with a short history on the Darwin Martin House, one of Wright's most important residential designs by many accounts, and conclude with an argument that these structures are leverage or historical cache in a broader preservation movement in Buffalo. The Darwin Martin Complex (1903-06) attracts preservationists, historians, and tourists to Buffalo's Parkside neighborhood today, but its history includes neglect, partial demolition, institutional failure, controversial individual activism and stewardship, and an inextricable link to H. H. Richardson's State Hospital across town. Even if the restoration of the Martin Complex inspires unanimous delight from visitors, the preservation efforts- which proceeded in fits and missteps- provoke questions on the appropriate and adequate actions in preserving a heritage/cultural commons.

The significance of the structure to the city and Wright's career cannot be overstated. Darwin D. Martin, an executive at the Larkin Soap Company, essentially brought Wright to Buffalo, and he represents the tendency to view Buffalo as a

progressive urban center at the turn of the century. In *Frank Lloyd Wright's Martin House: Architecture as Portraiture*, Quinan points out that although the house may seem subdued to visitors familiar with Wright, it actually symbolizes Martin's forward thinking character:

> Despite its quiet profile and easy integration with natural features of its site, the Martin House contrasts dramatically in scale and appearance with the rest of the houses in the neighborhood. Parkside is a picturesque suburban district designed in the 1870s by Frederick Law Olmsted, with gently curving tree-lined streets populated by evenly spaced middle-to-upper-middle-class Victorian and colonial revival homes. Amid these multigabled testaments to romantic nostalgia, Wright laid out his grids, piers, and layered roofs with the force of a new set of laws…today, a century later, it still appears at odds with the houses around it. One wonders, who designed these buildings, who commissioned them, and what were they thinking?[67]

Quinan argues the house not only serves as an exceptional example from Wright's early "first" career, but that it also celebrates the character traits of Martin. The relationship between Martin and Wright evidences the unique position of the Martin House Complex in Wright's pantheon. Quinan explains in *Forum Journal* that the University of Buffalo acquired the Wright-Martin Papers in 1982, allowing access to correspondence between the two men outlining design process, construction, and the architect's relationship with Buffalo clients, and therefore "[enhancing] Wright's Buffalo experience [with] a body of historical documentation that has no parallel elsewhere in his Prairie period."[68] So, the Martin Complex demands recognition not only as an indexical representation of Wright, but also of Darwin D. Martin's role as an ambassador for the city. Yet, acceptance of this

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[67] Jack Quinan, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Martin House: Architecture as Portraiture.* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004), 12.
[68] Jack Quinan, "Frank Lloyd Wright's Enduring Legacy in Buffalo," *Forum Journal.* V. 25, no. 4, Summer, 2011 (National Trust for Historic Preservation), 29.

historical analysis came unfortunately late for another Wright opus fated to endure significant degradation.

After the Martin house was abandoned by the remaining family members in 1937, attempts at preservation more often appeared opportunistic, misguided, or dilatory, causing further degradation to the future National Historic Landmark.[69] Darwin D. Martin suffered financial loss during the depression and, according to Marjorie L. Quinlan,

> …attempted to donate his house to the city. Following their refusal, he offered it to the University of Buffalo, which also turned him down. Ironically, the State University of New York at Buffalo would eagerly seek to acquire this house 30 years later as a residence for their new president, Martin M. Meyerson, a great admirer of Frank Lloyd Wright.[70]

Quinlan indicates that she could find no record of marketing the house to potential buyers during the 1930s, and after accumulating a "formidable" amount of property tax that would discourage interest, the house was "stripped of all its doors, all of its lighting fixtures and wiring, and many of the oak ceiling moldings," by a cash- strapped Darwin R. Martin, who reused them in the Stuyvesan Hotel and other investment properties he managed.[71] The complex deteriorated further until architect Sabastian Tauriello purchased it in 1955 with plans to move his Buffalo office into the first floor, and to take up residence with his wife Ruth and their family. To help pay taxes and fund expensive repairs Tauriello sold the rear portion of the complex to a developer who demolished the pergola, conservatory, and carriage house in 1960 and built an apartment complex. At this point, opinions diverge on Tauriello the preservationist; was demolition necessary to

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[69] Specifically, the Martin House has National Landmark status, not including the Barton House, Gardener's Cottage, or the rebuilt Conservatory, Carriage House, and Pergola.
[70] Marjorie L. Quinlan, *Rescue of a Landmark: Frank Lloyd Wright's Darwin D. Martin House.* (Buffalo: Western New York Wares, 1990), 25.
[71] Ibid.

save the key portion of the complex or should he have made greater efforts for complete rehabilitation?

Quinlan defends the Tauriellos, excusing Sabastian and Ruth from such transgressions as the demolition, giving away 22 art glass windows, and dramatically changing the interior treatments to "establish their own taste in their new home."[72] In Recent years, the Martin House Restoration Corporation (MHRC) has reversed the modifications of the complex and rebuilt and restored most of Wright's original design [Fig. 6].

Figure 6. Martin Complex with Reconstructed Pergola (main house at right). Photo by author.

In retrospect, however, Wright experts question the validity of the reconstructed portions of the complex, just as preservationists criticize Tauriello's "therapeutic" demolition and

[72] Ibid., 54-59.

personal modifications. At the heart of both critiques are philosophical questions regarding historical authenticity: how much should be painstakingly recreated and restored to original conditions after the fact, and how much preservation should be demanded of the property owner? Writing for *Metropolis,* Karrie Jacobs reveals her immediate assessment of the restored Martin Complex with her title "Wright-ish," and proceeds to inquire "Does recreated experience trump the value of authenticity? Does the presence of facsimile buildings undermine the integrity of the original ones? I understand why the corporation felt compelled to replace the irreplaceable, but there's something weirdly soulless about the freshly minted historic structures."[73] The authenticity debate offers multiple avenues from which to proceed: Is adaptive reuse an attack on authenticity?; Is restoration to a particular time inauthentic?; Does recreation or rebuilding merely mean re-enactment of the amusement park variety? For now, I will put this aside and suggest that this type of authenticity discourse may hinge on the proactive and preventive actions, or lack thereof, of tenacious preservationists acting in the absence of coordinated collective action. Yet, I also propose that whatever is determined worthy of preservation through collective action, regardless of authenticity, purity, or material integrity, enters the cultural/heritage commons for better or for worse. The result, as discussed below, offers multiple dialectics regarding the fetishization of the material built-environment, architectural spolia, and the individual architect himself.

Despite his Pyrrhic effort, Tauriello sold the Martin House to the State University of New York at Buffalo (UB) in 1966. Although Tauriello frequently plays the lightning rod regarding the stewardship of the Martin House in Buffalo, the municipal and institutional failure appears more glaring. The city, in trending economic decline from the

[73] Kerrie Jacobs, "Wright-ish."*Metropolis.* no. 29, (13 Sept. 2010), 2.

1930s on, arguably had other priorities than preservation, and as Sheila Foster and Christian Iaione point out: "In its transitory state, vacant land and structures are quite vulnerable to exploitation and rivalry. Indeed, often there emerges a conflict in regards to its present vs. future use."[74] UB, however, looked the other way when offered the house by the Martins and then allowed it to deteriorate further after acquiring it from Tauriello to serve as the university president's house. Former UB president Robert L. Ketter, who lived at the house during his tenure, made headlines in 1988 when he attempted to sell four original dining room chairs, designed by Wright for the house, to a Chicago gallery for approximately $400,000. Under President Sue McCartney's direction, the *Preservation Coalition of Erie County* (PCEC) sent a letter to the State Attorney General requesting an investigation into ownership of the chairs, and whether University funds were used to purchase them since they disappeared from the house around 1904.[75] As a result of the preservation activism, the chairs eventually returned to the house, accentuating the educational function of its current iteration as a museum. The University itself also failed in stewardship of the house as Quinan reports that

> Efforts to restore the Darwin D. Martin House were frustrated by its status as a property of the State University of New York at Buffalo, which regarded the restoration of historic buildings- then [1970s-80s] estimated to be $5 million (for the principal Martin Residence)- as beyond its mission.[76]

UB's tenure as caretaker is probably best characterized as a preservation limbo, but it also supports the tragic story of Wright's Buffalo work in need of a more robust activism than what individual, municipality, or institution were willing to provide. The eventual

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[74] Sheila R. Foster and Christian Iaione, "The City as a Commons," Work-in-Progress provided to Matthew J. Bach (PDF. "Re: Architectural preservation and the commons." Message to Matthew J. Bach: June, 2015. E-mail),14.
[75] Phil Fairbanks, "Controversy Surrounds Sale of Wright Chairs from Martin House," *The Buffalo News,* 1-B, November 6, 1988.
[76] Quinan, "Wright's Enduring Legacy," 29.

creation of the MHRC in 1991, the donations of local philanthropic organizations such as the *Margaret L. Wendt Foundation*, the restoration work by *Hamilton Houston Lownie, Architects*, and the acquisition of the other buildings in the complex are well documented in many accounts of the eventual $50 million restoration project. Two additional elements worth highlighting, however, are the role McCartney, Tielman, and the PCEC played in securing significant public funds for the Martin project and the ongoing struggle to preserve other Wright homes in Buffalo. The former is discussed below in the section on Richardson's State Hospital, but the latter illustrates a schism in Buffalo preservation efforts that I interpret as reframing the preservation debate through the evolution of parallel organizations.[77] A recent debate concerning the William R. Heath House (1904-1905) and the Walter V. Davidson House (1908), both Frank Lloyd Wright prairie houses commissioned for Larkin employees and both privately owned today, demonstrates the divergent positions in Buffalo preservation despite the lessons of the Martin House.

The *Buffalo Preservation Board* was established by the city's *Preservation Code* in the late 1970s. The board is a commission of volunteers (required to live in one of the city's historic districts) who document and designate historic districts and structures

[77] I use the term "parallel organization" as a way to describe the appropriation of an activist- sometimes militant movement- by establishment interests through developing a more bureaucratic and controlled group which nominally pursues the same outcomes. I suggest that this phenomenon is a reverse development of what Sheila Foster identifies as "Ossification," which is discussed further in the debate surrounding competing preservation groups. Ultimately, however, the parallel group frustrates and plays interference regarding the goals of the activist commons movement. I am actually extrapolating this concept from assessments of United States strategic involvement in Latin America. Institutional forces such as the CIA or the American Institute for Free Labor Development established parallel unions to authentic leftist, popular unions to subvert labor efforts in Latin American nations. (see Frank Smyth's "AFL-CIO is Spanish for Union Busting," *Washington Monthly*, Sep. 1, 1987) This interpretation- which addresses serious matters of foreign policy- can be applied to many urban commons political movements.

within the city.[78] The board recommended landmark status for the two homes in early 2009, yet the *Buffalo Common Council* tabled the action in July the same year due to intense resistance from the owners. Tielman, a member of the *Preservation Board*, not only debated the owners' position at the July 14th meeting, but also found opposition from Catherine Schweitzer, chairman of *Preservation Buffalo Niagara* (PBN). After testimony against landmark status from both owners, Schweitzer spoke against the decision of the Preservation Board indicating that the motion was "forced landmarking" and that a coordinated process between property owners and the city would be more desirable.[79] Tielman countered, speaking as a *Preservation Board* member and the Executive Director of the CFGB, that if the Board failed to landmark it would be acting "arbitrarily, capriciously, and dilatory" to its charge and function. He argued the merits of the structures and reiterated precedent around the "property rights argument that has been tested time and again in the courts…and they have found right up to the Supreme Court that the public has a duty and obligation to protect what is, in fact, cultural patrimony."[80] Tielman also outlined "unsympathetic changes" (roof shingling, brick mortar raking, and color) made by the owners to emphasize an "urgency" to landmark these structures, and that thousands of structures have been landmarked over the objections of the property owners.[81] The Council tabled the decision, which was received and filed as "dead" by the city clerk's office later that year. This scenario illustrates several dialectics and contestable positions around the historic preservation discourse in Buffalo: first, the development of rival, parallel organizations; second, a definitive moment in the

[78] *Important Information for Property Owners of Historic Buildings and Sites in Buffalo,* from the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning. Accessed January 21, 2015. www.city-buffalo.com.
[79] Minutes of *The Buffalo Common Council*, July 14, 2009, Digital recording from Buffalo City Hall Council Office, room 1302, 30:00.
[80] Ibid., 45:30.
[81] Ibid., 48:00.

mediation between market/state/commons distinct articulations of the built environment; and finally, a further expression of the authenticity debate mentioned above.

First, the layperson may assess Frank Lloyd Wright structures' landmark status as a priori, but here two individual leaders of separate preservation groups disagree- even in the wakes of historically significant missteps regarding Wright's work in Buffalo. The concept of "forced landmarking" introduced by Schweitzer also seems incompatible with the city's preservation history, which, according to Tielman, produced thousands of landmarks, many without the consent of the property owners. Schweitzer sides with the owners- arguably people who have economic and political agency- and proposes that the process needs expansion, in terms of both the hierarchical reevaluation of the stakeholders and the bureaucratic procedure. Although not speaking for PBN, she delineates her approach, while holding a leadership position of that organization, by publically expressing more sympathy to the economic and political rights of individual property owners than to what the historical structures contribute to a heritage/cultural commons. Tielman, on the other hand, plays the role of an activist and state agent, invoking all the legal devices from national, state, and local ordinance to historical scholarship to reframe the structures as a commons resource necessarily governed by a collectivity of actors. This particular tension is not necessarily unique to Buffalo, especially if the *National Trust's* superstructure becomes the subject of examination. A controversy in St. Louis positioned the *National Trust* in support of demolishing the neo-classical Century Building and siding with the developer despite the objections of the local preservation group, the *Landmarks Association of St. Louis*, which successfully added the Century to the *National Registry of Historic Places*. Whether the motives of

the *National Trust* were rooted in saving access to an adjacent structure, or supporting the financial interests of its subsidiary *National Trust Community Investment Corporation*, which loaned money to the developer, mattered little to Michael Tomlan, director of Cornell University's graduate program in historic preservation. Tomlan decried the *National Trust's* position as "…morally and in any number of senses ethically inappropriate. It violates preservation's Hippocratic Oath: if you can't be supportive, for gosh sakes shut up."[82] So, national and local preservation groups may readily find themselves at odds when the vision of historic preservation loses focus, but with Buffalo, however, the situation has an additional layer at the local level. Yet, the term "layer" connotes a hierarchy, so - as evidenced above- the more appropriate diagnosis identifies parallel, preservation groups, which hinders collective action efficacy. Looking at the long arc of preservation history in Buffalo clarifies the gradual establishment of separate active organizations as well as the evolution of a consciousness of a heritage/cultural commons. The development of multiple preservation groups in Buffalo may, in fact, merely delineate another expression of the contestations between preservation activists and establishment actors in delineating the right to determining the city's literal fabric.

A report on historical preservation in Buffalo was produced in 2008 to provide a strategic planning trajectory and outline a path for consolidating multiple- sometimes competing- preservation groups into a "strong lead preservation organization." The opening paragraph of the report outlines that

> The Northeast Office of the *National Trust*, the *Landmark Society of the Niagara Frontier*, the *Preservation Coalition of Erie County*, and the *Campaign for Greater Buffalo History, Architecture and Culture* commissioned an issues and opportunities assessment to identify ways to enhance the visibility and effectiveness of preservation related activities in

[82] Bradford McKee, "When Preservation Equals Demolition," *The New York Times,* March 31, 2005.

> Buffalo to build on the successful collaboration to bring the National Trust for Historic Preservation 2011 conference to the city.[83]

The four organizations (my italics) are listed in the chronological order that they were established, however it should be stated that while the *National Trust* and *Landmark Society* play significant roles in establishing status for structures, the activism, confrontation, organizing, pamphleteering, pedagogical touring, and legal maneuvering has been generated almost exclusively by the *Preservation Coalition of Erie County* (PCEC) and the *Campaign for Greater Buffalo* (CFGB).[84] This is worth noting when reading conclusions in Waters' report that state "The lack of a strong, full service preservation organization creates significant gaps in preservation leadership and services available to the city," and that

> The lack of leadership and coordination of preservation activities in Buffalo has resulted in a somewhat limited vision for historic preservation. Most of the successful preservation activity in Buffalo and surrounding communities has focused on saving individual landmarks rather than neighborhoods, vernacular architecture, and landscapes.[85]

The report also suggests that the preservation activism over the previous three decades did not contribute enough to educating the people of Buffalo as to why preservation was important, contributing to the activists "being seen by people outside the preservation community as 'obstructionist,'" yet, on the other hand, suggesting that "The major exceptions to this are the independent private corporations that have been created to focus on the preservation of individual, landmark properties. These efforts in general have been

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[83] Elizabeth B. Waters, *Buffalo Historic Preservation Issues and Opportunities Assessment*. (Charlottesville, VA: February 1, 2008),1.

[84] Evidence of the depth and breadth of efforts in communication and grassroots organizing can be found in the Appendix. I was given access to the archives of the PCEC and CFGB periodical publication (*The Preservation Report*) and I was able to compile an index of sorts (while certainly not comprehensive) of the organizations' activities, communications, and successes.

[85] Waters, 3.

quite successful."[86] The report presumably refers to corporations such as the MHRC (discussed above) and the Richardson Center Corporation (RCC) discussed in Chapter V, both of which formulated after, and as a result of, long grassroots efforts and legal action taken by the two of the local preservation groups in question. The report further states that "the preservation community in Buffalo is still small and described by some as elite."[87] This may certainly have been true, in regards to the city commoners who are the most disenfranchised, such as the poor, minority, or immigrant/refugee population, however most of the report's recommendations regarding a "full service lead organization" are presented in the context of enhancing the "heritage tourism" industry and consolidating leadership within a "steering committee of 8-10 individuals."[88] This recommendation seems inconsistent with the reasoning of the report, especially considering the fact that the CFGB was created six years earlier by leaders of the "700-member" PCEC to increase "public participation in neighborhood planning… and expand the notion of what is worthy of saving and enhancing… beyond historic buildings."[89] A potential explanation for this inconsistency is implicit in the final recommendations of the Waters report:

> Organizational histories and recent events suggest an attempt to merge two or more of the three existing preservation organizations to achieve a single, strong organization would be difficult. It is possible one of the existing organizations could be transformed to become the lead, full-service group, but organizational cultures and past differences can be hard to overcome and a new start may be needed to gain wide public and financial support.[90]

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[86] Ibid., 4.
[87] Ibid., 7.
[88] Ibid., 5-9.
[89] Mark Sommer, "Preservation Coalition Seeks Executive Director," *The Buffalo News*, November 14, 2002, C-5.
[90] Waters, 9.

Obviously, this conclusion refers to some internal, organizational schism, which presumably generated the need for the report in the first place. Schweitzer's organization, PBN, evolved from this report's recommendations, and according to the organization's founding document "Buffalo's preservation organizations have always been small, financially fragile, at times divided, and often relying totally on volunteers. This lack of a substantial, professionally staffed preservation organization has limited Buffalo's movement in many ways."[91] Whatever the exact motives or intentions were in developing parallel preservation organizations in Buffalo, this statement clearly indicates that the new organization will adopt a structure similar to a professional agency, bureaucratic mechanism, or even a corporate model quite different from a grassroots, activist organization. The Case Statement also declares intentions in courting stronger relationships with real estate developers and nonprofit organizations for funding,[92] which appears in action, as well as philosophy, at the Buffalo Common Council meeting deliberating the status of the two Wright homes discussed above.

Second, I argue that this schismatic aspect of historic preservation in Buffalo represents an attempt to coalesce a commons movement of appropriation into a predictable structural entity, easily controlled by the city's state and market actors. Whereas the activist preservation movement had become increasingly aggressive and effective in determining the course of major decisions around the city's built environment by directing frequent attention and criticism towards the failure of state and individual efforts to maintain heritage structures, such as Wright's Martin House, the establishment

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[91] *Case Statement for Preservation Buffalo Niagara*. (Prepared by Henry McCartney for the Transition Committee and revised through workshops with the committee and the trustees of the Landmark Society and Preservation Coalition. September 21, 2008.), 2. url: http://www.preservationbuffaloniagara.org/files/documents/Annotated-Case%20Statement.pdf.

[92] Ibid., 3.

response attempts to commandeer the political power preservation activists had cultivated. Foster explains that collective governance can evolve in ways that ossifies certain power structures, stating that

> If one of the benefits of allowing collectivities to manage an urban commons is the innovation and flexibility these groups bring to task, then ossification of a management regime poses significant dangers. One danger is that commons management groups may be resisting the type of change in the use of the commons that is healthy over a long run and that best reflects changes in the way society (or a community) views the commons. Another danger is that incumbent institutions may develop, or even expand, their "grip" on the commons in ways that work to the advantage of particular commons users and powerbrokers.[93]

However, I would flip Foster's point to reframe the ossification as a phenomenon that does not result from incumbent preservation activists, but rather from a container- or more appropriately an enclosure- forced upon a social activist movement by way of organizational redundancy. The above mentioned dispute over the landmark status of the two Wright homes may seem fairly inconsequential to the largest number of commoners in a city suffering the latter stages of capitalist abandonment, but I suggest it illustrates distinct approaches to what remains of a city in crisis. Who will determine the ultimate designation and management of the built environment in the wake of market fallout: private interests, individuals with agency and capital, the state, or collective action in the form of confrontational activism?

When considering who will take the reins of determinate power, it *does matter* - and *does not matter*- that the structures in dispute are a couple of early 20th century

[93]Sheila R.Foster, "Collective Action and the Urban Commons," *The Notre Dame Law Review* vol. 87:1 (2011): 57-133.(http://scholarship.law.nd.edu/ndlr/vol87/iss1/2, Accessed: 4 March 2015), 132.

mansions for wealthy corporate managers. If we accept ultimately the "urban"[94] is what is at stake in this struggle in a postindustrial city like Buffalo, than the structures in dispute become leverage in a broader negotiation. Understanding the relationship between the preservation of an historic structure and the preservation of the "urban" requires some explication of urban theory. For instance the object/structure *does matter* because, as urban theorist Neil Brenner states

> Critical urban theory is thus grounded on an antagonistic relationship not only to inherited urban knowledges, but more generally, to existing urban formations. It insists that another, more democratic, socially just, and sustainable form of urbanization is possible, even if such possibilities are being suppressed through dominant institutional arrangements, practices, and ideologies.[95]

So, to focus resources on preserving or rebuilding historical manifestations of capital, at first consideration, appears to be antagonistic to a theoretical approach envisioning greater enfranchisement within an urban superstructure. Yet, when the effort appropriates property and the determination of the future of that property, ultimately insinuating the property into a commons consciousness, then the preservation effort is commensurate with Brenner's proposal. The structure *does not* matter when leveraging it to preserve the *urban,* the phenomenon that Buffalo is gradually losing due to degradation and, as Brenner puts it, the "uneven stretching of an 'urban fabric'" resulting from uneven capital global investment. The object or structure could very well be any building by any architect, or any collection of buildings, or any neighborhood. Yet, it must have some historical residue that ultimately provokes a political will to activate around a resource

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[94] I am employing the term "urban" as Lefebvre's notion of something that occurs in a city, but is not necessarily bounded by, or fixed to a particular city. Christian Schmid explains this succinctly in Chap. 4 of *Cities for People, Not for Profit: Critical Urban Theory and the Right to the City.*

[95] Neil Brenner, "What is Critical Urban Theory?" Chap.2 in Neil Brenner et al., *Cities for People, Not for Profit: Critical Urban Theory and the Right to the City* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 14.

with high use value, and this value (whether it takes the form of a museum or merely provides desirable urban density) provides the leverage for the preservation activists to establish a cultural/heritage commons in Buffalo. This commons then provides access to the qualities of the urban that seem to be disappearing amidst enclosures of empty space and alienation in Buffalo. In analyzing Lefebvre Christian Schmid articulates the elements responsible for transforming Buffalo:

> … Lefebvre derives his understanding of urbanization as a reshaping and colonization of rural areas by an urban fabric as well as a fundamental transformation of historic cities. The crucial consequence of this transformation is the dissolution of the city itself: for Lefebvre, the city can no longer be understood as an object or as a definable unit… The question thus arises as to how the urban can still be theoretically grasped under conditions in which society as a whole has been urbanized. Lefebvre's inquiry into this question yields three core concepts: mediation, centrality, and difference.[96]

Most diagnostic statements on the condition of Buffalo or similar cities would include the recital of suburban flight as a severely detrimental development for the "centrality" historically attached to rust belt cities. Schmid probably considers this as only one development among many in the "dissolution of the city," but the "difference" and "mediation" conceptualizations are of particular interest to the preservation activist. As discussed in chapter I, the greatest threat to difference and Lefebvre's concept of "simultaneity" is homogenization in the postindustrial city. This may come as diverse urban density gives way to spatial vacuums, or as state schemes for urban redevelopment homogenize and alienate urban commoners. As far as "mediation" goes, the struggle for control of "cultural patrimony" discussed above exemplifies theory and praxis as preservation activists retain the "urban" in defiance of further dissolution. Schmid

[96] Christian Schmid, "Henry Lefebvre, the right to the city, and the new metropolitan mainstream," Chap. 4 in Neil Brenner et al., *Cities for People, Not for Profit: Critical Urban Theory and the Right to the City* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 46.

explains that industrialization and globalization produce "a universal rationale shaped by technology, and thus a tendency towards homogenization," and that therefore

> The unique traits of place and its location thus seem to disappear. On the other hand, space is parceled out and submitted to a corporate, individual logic. In this attack from "above" and "below," the city is threatened with attrition… In this context, he [Lefebvre] suggests, the city must be seen as a social resource. It constitutes an essential device for the organization of society, it brings together diverse elements of society, and thus it becomes productive.[97]

One may also include an attack from the "side" when looking at the organizational rivalry around collective management of the heritage/cultural commons. Additionally, if we return to the reconstruction of portions of the Martin Complex as part of its preservation and restoration history, the notion of producing or reproducing a heritage commons comes into question as well, and the critical analysis brings us back, finally, to the authenticity debate.

If the historical preservation activists succeed in restoring a structure to its condition in a former time period, or, more radically, rebuild a structure that had been demolished (the Larkin Building), the discourse turns to authenticity. The Martin Complex and the Larkin Building are not the only Wright structures in question here, as there are two cases of posthumously constructed Wright designs in Buffalo as well: The Blue Sky Mausoleum and the West Side Rowing Club Boat House. I do not intend on going into the history of these cases other to say that the Mausoleum was built in a slightly different location in Buffalo's Forest Lawn Cemetery than intended, and that the Boat House was not even intended to be built in Buffalo at all. The degrees to which the posthumous constructions, and their altered locations, deviate from archival plans are outlined by Neil Levine, leading him to conclude that "In betraying the archive, the

[97] Ibid., 47.

building of the unbuilt replaces its authentic record of the past with something that for many people will create not only a false impression of history but also ultimately debase the very legacy of the architect the building was meant to enhance."[98] Levine discusses many nuances in differentiating preservation from "restoration, reconstruction, or re-creation… or even 'Disneyfication,'"[99] and I think his essay offers a fair criticism, if not a fair warning in the production of a cultural common. The goal to maintain the "urban" through the preservation and production of a cultural/heritage commons in Buffalo cannot escape, nor should want to forget, a history of capitalist crisis that has brought the city to its malaise. And, insofar as the structures of historical notoriety and pedagogical opportunities attract people to the city or make the city urban and attractive, these same structures may also therefore flow between use value and exchange value within the boundaries of a heritage commons. However, when the objects, structures, and neighborhoods that have been maintained by the preservation activist are re-commodified as new products of exclusive exchange value, there is a reversal of fortune for the commons and the commoners. Massimo De Angelis cautions that

> When the purchased commodities exit the market sphere and enter the spheres of social cooperation (households, associations, networks, etc.), they often enter the complex, culturally and politically diverse and variegated sphere of the commons. It is here that the cultural and physical reproduction of labor power, the value-creating commodity so critically important for capital, occurs- outside the control of capital, but, of course, strictly coupled to it.[100]

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[98] Neil Levine, "Building the Unbuilt: Authenticity and the Archive," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 67, no. 1 (March, 2008), 17. Accessed May, 25, 2012. url:http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/jsah.2008.67.1.14.
[99] Ibid., 14.
[100] Massimo De Angelis, "Crises, Capital and Co-optation: Does Capital Need a Commons Fix?" in *The Wealth of the Commons: A World Beyond Market & State*, eds. David Bollier & Silke Helfrich (Amherst, MA: Levellers Press, 2012), 185.

The preservation activist movement, and commoners who produce and reproduce the heritage/cultural commons, also must maintain an awareness that the enemy may always be within the gates. Transforming the built environment into an amusement park attraction re-commodifies the use value of the city's material fabric, subsequently enclosing and making exclusive the notions of the urban commons. Just as the commons may appropriate property and aspects of the structural fabric (even if only conceptually at times), re-appropriation by capital can occur just as easily. In the following chapters IV and V, this exchange will be addressed in greater detail.

Chapter IV

Downtown Preservation: From the Guaranty Building to Canalside

Up to this point, I have considered the famous Wright structures in Buffalo and the dialectical, and sometimes paradoxical, preservation debates that frame their histories. Shifting to the downtown urban core of Buffalo allows a vantage point of early preservation success, a subsequent grassroots movement, and a very recent redesign of Buffalo's long suffering waterfront. I will start by giving some history of the preservation efforts around Adler and Sullivan's Guaranty Building (1896, formerly the Prudential Building), the building's design elements as leverage for further preservation efforts, and the preservationist theories of John Randall, who worked in the context of mid-century International Modernist redevelopment trends. Furthermore, I will argue that the preservation movement sparked in this downtown core led to the establishment of one of Buffalo's earliest historic districts and eventually the victory for historic preservation activists at the former site of the Erie Canal terminus on Buffalo's waterfront. The Canalside project, which resulted from contestation around the waterfront development, represents an important contribution to the heritage/cultural commons conceptually and tangibly; Canalside appropriates a former symbol (Erie Canal) of transnational capitalism, and re-imagines the site as a commons for regular assembly and access to the city's waterfront.

John Randall, an architect based in Chicago, labored to prevent the demolition of several Sullivan Buildings but did not succeed in preservation until he went to St. Louis to campaign for the Wainwright building in 1972. Randall came to Buffalo the following year with the Guaranty Building as his primary focus and almost single-handedly invoked a preservation movement. While many diverse parties contributed in the restoration of the Guaranty- including Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Flynn Battaglia Architects [Fig. 7], and Hodgson Russ LLP[101]- Randall's knowledge, enthusiasm, and possession of Sullivan's original plans, documents, and artifacts positioned him well to generate a commons perspective on architectural appreciation and preservation. Historian Mark Goldman conveys the Guaranty's desperate condition, and Randall's catalytic role in leading the preservation effort:

> By the mid-1970s, the Guaranty Building's owners had defaulted on their mortgage and their tax payments, and, following a nearly disastrous fire in 1977, the building's primary creditor (a bank in Oklahoma), eager to rid itself of the problem, prepared to demolish it. Now, however, a group of preservationists, led and inspired by an architect named John Randall, who had moved to Buffalo in 1973 specifically to save the Guaranty, sought the support of New York's Senator…[102]

Goldman's assessment of Randall as leader and inspiration to a preservation activist movement in Buffalo is reinforced in many articles spanning the architect's involvement with the city. In 1975, the *Buffalo Courier-Express* cited Randall as the leader of a two-year campaign to designate the Guaranty as a National Historic Landmark,[103] and the

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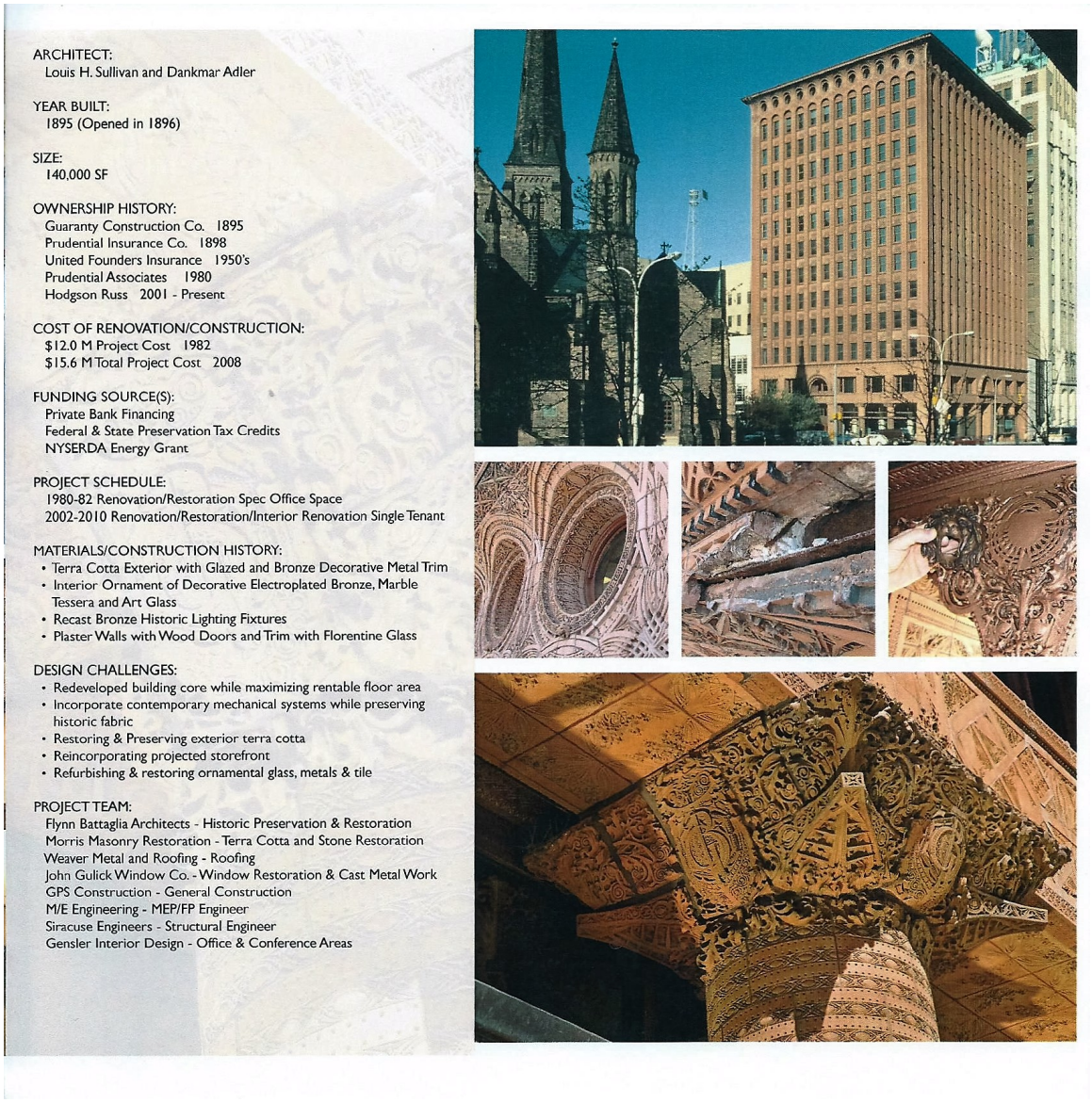
[101] A complete overview of the restoration of the Guaranty may be found in: *The Guaranty Building*, a pamphlet [Fig. 7] published by Flynn Battaglia Architects outlining details and costs for the 1980-82 and 2002-10 restoration work; "Public Financing Key to Historic Renovation," a 1985 article in October's *Building Design and Construction* outlining tax credits and costs for the first renovation; and from lectures given at the National Trust Conference in October, 2011 by Peter Flynn of Flynn Battaglia Architects and Richard Campbell of Hodgson Russ LLP (current building occupants) titled "Sullivan's Guaranty Building: A Tale of Two Rehabilitations."

[102] Mark Goldman, *City on the Edge, Buffalo, NY* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2007), 320.

[103] "Prudential Building Designated National Historic Site," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, June 13, 1975.



ARCHITECT:
Louis H. Sullivan and Dankmar Adler

YEAR BUILT:
1895 (Opened in 1896)

SIZE:
140,000 SF

OWNERSHIP HISTORY:
Guaranty Construction Co. 1895
Prudential Insurance Co. 1898
United Founders Insurance 1950's
Prudential Associates 1980
Hodgson Russ 2001 - Present

COST OF RENOVATION/CONSTRUCTION:
$12.0 M Project Cost 1982
$15.6 M Total Project Cost 2008

FUNDING SOURCE(S):
Private Bank Financing
Federal & State Preservation Tax Credits
NYSERDA Energy Grant

PROJECT SCHEDULE:
1980-82 Renovation/Restoration Spec Office Space
2002-2010 Renovation/Restoration/Interior Renovation Single Tenant

MATERIALS/CONSTRUCTION HISTORY:
- Terra Cotta Exterior with Glazed and Bronze Decorative Metal Trim
- Interior Ornament of Decorative Electroplated Bronze, Marble Tessera and Art Glass
- Recast Bronze Historic Lighting Fixtures
- Plaster Walls with Wood Doors and Trim with Florentine Glass

DESIGN CHALLENGES:
- Redeveloped building core while maximizing rentable floor area
- Incorporate contemporary mechanical systems while preserving historic fabric
- Restoring & Preserving exterior terra cotta
- Reincorporating projected storefront
- Refurbishing & restoring ornamental glass, metals & tile

PROJECT TEAM:
Flynn Battaglia Architects - Historic Preservation & Restoration
Morris Masonry Restoration - Terra Cotta and Stone Restoration
Weaver Metal and Roofing - Roofing
John Gulick Window Co. - Window Restoration & Cast Metal Work
GPS Construction - General Construction
M/E Engineering - MEP/FP Engineer
Siracuse Engineers - Structural Engineer
Gensler Interior Design - Office & Conference Areas

Figure 7. *The Guaranty Building*, Flynn/Battaglia Restoration pamphlet.

Buffalo Evening News wrote extensively on his success with the Wainwright in St. Louis and his leadership of the Guaranty campaign in Buffalo earlier that same year.[104] When he died in 1999, his obituaries in the *Buffalo News* and *Chicago Tribune* respectively concentrated on his "key role" in saving the Guaranty,[105] and his diligence in producing booklets, pamphlets, and letters to the editors of local papers to educate fellow commoners on the importance of architecture.[106] Randall's distinction in Buffalo today, as the man who came to Buffalo to save the Guaranty Building, illustrates the importance of Adler and Sullivan's building to a parochial Buffalo community as well as a much larger cosmopolitan heritage/cultural commons, but it also chronicles the evolution of preservation activity from pedagogical instruction on architectural history to activist techniques.

Randall's arrival into Buffalo after his success in St. Louis tells the story of a personal crusade to reestablish an architect who had fallen into obscurity, if not total rejection by mid-century. The Guaranty Building was the last skyscraper Adler and Sullivan constructed as the partnership ended just prior to the Guaranty's completion. Sullivan received few commissions, especially on the scale of the Guaranty, and died impoverished in 1924 despite his esteemed position as what the *New York Times* declared the "dean of American architects."[107] And although his and Adler's contributions to the tall office building informed skyscraper design on a subliminal formal level for most of the twentieth century, his poetic, nature inspired ornamentation and his sensitivity to locale were not taken up by the next generation of urban architects. Scully explains that

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[104] Jean Reeves, "The Fight to Save a Sullivan Legacy," *Buffalo Evening News*, January 1, 1975. C-7.
[105] "John D. Randall, architect who played a key role in saving famed Guaranty Building, dies at 79," *The Buffalo News*, January 13, 1999. B-6.
[106] Meg McSherry Breslin, "John Randall; preserved buildings," *Chicago Tribune*, January 4, 1999.
[107] Robert Twombly, *Louis Sullivan: His Life and Work.* (New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1986), 443.

"Insistence upon another model, that of the International Style, was to sack and denature scores of city centers later in the century," and that "Sullivan's urbanism exploited the particular and respected, even loved, existing conditions…[a] lesson… absorbed and used later by Venturi and others in the urban counter-attack of the 1960's."[108] It's noteworthy that Scully partially credits the modernist movement for Sullivan's critical fade because the homogeny of the International Style is treated severely in Randall's own writing, which is analyzed below. The Guaranty was commissioned to occupy a similarly shaped site to the Wainwright's, and was a further expression of an already established type of steel-framed tall office building by Adler and Sullivan, but the two felt the Buffalo building would be the definitive, perfected addition to this type.[109] Daniel Burnham's much larger Ellicott Square Building (1895-96), erected contemporaneously to the Guaranty, sits one block east, and provides further evidence of Sullivan's attention to the immediate surroundings. The Ellicott Square building is covered in glazed terra cotta and a grey brick veneer, decorated in Beaux-Arts references, and stands in sharp contrast to the Guaranty's organic, unglazed terra cotta coloration. The decision to leave the terra cotta bare compliments the nearby St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1849-1851) by Richard Upjohn and the now demolished Erie County Savings Bank (1893, 1967) by George B. Post, which were both built with randomly coursed, monochromatic ashlar sandstone. Sullivan also avoided historic references in favor of pure geometry and arabesque ornamentation, and although only two stories higher than Burnham's "Wedding Cake," horizontally programmed building, many scholars reflect on the Guaranty's upward

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[108] Vincent Scully. *American Architecture and Urbanism.* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1988), 129.

[109] Joseph Siry, "Adler and Sullivan's Guaranty Building in Buffalo," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 55, no. 1 (March, 1996), 9. Accessed September, 13, 2010. url: http;//www.jstor.org//stable/9991053.

visual thrust afforded by Adler and Sullivan's decision to recess the spandrels behind the vertical piers. While innovative, the Guaranty still shows sensitivity to the surrounding environment and the importance of place within the historic urban core. Later modernist additions reverse this priority by putting the sculptural quality and distinctiveness of the structure ahead of discourse with the existing heritage/cultural commons.

Moreover, the Guaranty Building exemplified not only Adler and Sullivan's greatest skyscraper collaboration, but also the pride the resident patron wished to express through architecture. Hascal L. Taylor, a wealthy oil man, commissioned Adler and Sullivan to build "the largest and best office building in the city," but as Joseph Siry reveals, both Taylor and Wainright "identified primarily with [their] regional city. Neither man was primarily engaged in speculative building; their fortunes came from other sources."[110] The Guaranty was not just an exceptional Adler and Sullivan pile, it was also an expression of the city of Buffalo's residential pride, and therefore a deliberate enhancement of what I am referring to as the cultural commons. Randall saw the preservation of the architectural achievement inextricably linked to this pride and, I argue, to the commons perspective. By the mid-1970s, Randall could have stood on the corner of Church and Pearl Streets beholding the dilapidated Guaranty as it suffered increasing obsolescence in the shadows of newly constructed International or Post-Modern styled office buildings such as Skidmore, Owings and Merrill's Marine Midland Center (1969-1974), Harrison and Abramovitz's Erie Savings Bank Building (1965-1969), or Minoru Yamasaki's M&T Bank Building (1964-1966). Randall clearly had this vista [Fig.8] in mind when he jabbed to the *Buffalo News* in 1979 that "One of my goals is to fight against the post-modern kitsch that so many people do- things such as mirror-

[110] Ibid., 6.

glass buildings, that's not architecture."[111] Evidently, Randall saw his task as reminding the populace in Chicago, St. Louis, and Buffalo that they were delinquent in their appreciation of Adler and Sullivan and guilty of forgetting the architects' teaching on two counts: the lack of pride of place and ignorance of what constitutes genius architecture.

Figure 8. The Guaranty Today: Note the reflection of the Harrison and Abramovitz International Style, Erie Savings Bank Building in the windows, as well as Upjohn's St. Paul's Episcopal Church at the left (photo by author).

The former issue of civic pride frequently appears in Randall's own writing, while the latter, apparent sense of himself as teacher and taste barometer makes it somewhat problematic to classify him as a commons activist. Both elements describe a man who is- despite being partially responsible for provoking an activist preservation movement- not likely to have ostensibly considered his work "activism" in the way the word is treated in this paper. Indeed, Peter T. Flynn, Principal at Flynn Battaglia Architects, PC and

[111] Philip Langdon, "Architects Help Sullivan Museum Draft Its Future," *The Buffalo News*, July 7, 1979.

managing architect of two of the Guaranty's restorations, suggested that Randall thought of himself as a "gatekeeper" of sorts; throughout the restoration, he would keep his collection of papers, historic photos, and blueprints to himself, serving as the middle man between the restoration team and the treasured primary sources.[112] Yet, although Randall may not have overtly sought to establish a commons movement in Buffalo he did suggest that the larger community had a claim to the city's great architecture in his booklet *Buffalo and Western New York: Architecture and Human Values*.

> [The] message attempted here is constructed around the original purpose of bringing our community's architectural/building-industry achievements to the prominence they deserve; no other city has a foundation like ours- and that of our region- on which to re-create a magnificent way of life ahead. Of course we need to know more of our past and more knowledgeable interpretation by those who are more capable of the historical analysis of the actions of our predecessors. Most of all we need positive leadership, and a will based on the love we have of our home.[113]

So, Randall simultaneously floods his writing with phrases of "community" pride and collective ownership of a distinguished historical narrative in bricks and stone along with subsequent warnings that an elite, or- at the very least- highly educated group must take up the reigns to preserve and perpetuate the "will to greatness." In his *Historic Structures Report: The Prudential Building, July 1980,* Randall also outlines three "special aspects the building has on our lives," including such public oriented concerns as "Sullivan's teaching of the importance of architecture as a stage for the idealistic fulfillment of the dreams and principles of our democracy; Sullivan's teachings about the mutuality of human behavior and creativity- that architecture surpasses the purely visible in its vast

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[112] Peter Flynn, "Re. John Randall." Email correspondence to Matthew J. Bach. November 29, 2012.
[113] John Randall, *Buffalo and Western New York: Architecture and Human Values,* (Buffalo, NY: a private publication of John Randall, 1976), 3. Note: 500 copies of this meticulously researched and indexed book (about 200 pages long) were printed by Artcraft-Burow in Buffalo, NY. They were distributed by Randall to educate and activate the residents of Buffalo to take action in preserving the built environment. I was able to find and attain a copy at an antiquarian book dealer shop.

meanings;" and finally "that the development of contemporary architecture can benefit greatly from Sullivan's [example]."[114] Yet, for all his utopian socialist affirmations, he does demand that the reader not categorize great architecture as merely a bourgeois distraction and explicitly outlines two critical positions he cannot abide by:

> One is that 'architecture is concerned with esthetics, and has nothing to do with individual moral qualities or the values of the society it represents'. This is pure tommy-rot of the mechanists. The other is about a broader urban scene of which architecture is an expression; that is that, 'our urban complexes are moulded by some kind of exploitation, elitism, or (per the textbook) a culture of profit in the worst sense', that every element of society is somehow caused by inhuman imperialism of such downtown/community builders here praised so highly.[115]

At a time when socialist utopian ideals still informed the architectural styles that Randall disapproved of, and the sensibilities of the International Congress of Modern Design (c. 1928-1960) continued to denounce the pre-1945 urbanism of many postindustrial American cities, it's easy to see why a preservationist would want to distance one's critical self from, or emphatically resist, a Marxian interpretation of architecture and city-planning. Clearly at odds with the Corbusian axiom "Fewer but higher buildings with open space between them" expressed in Jose Luis Sert's lecture to the Chicago Institute of Design, and the CIAM philosophy of social reorganization through architectural formalism as a basis for redesigning cities that appear too chaotic or diverse,[116] Randall, and the preservationists who followed, would obviously favor the Paleo-Urbanist perspective of Jane Jacobs. For example, contrary to the renewal philosophy embodied in

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[114] John D. Randall, *Historic Structures Report: The Prudential Building,* (July, 1980), 2. This book was produced by Randall and contains sections titled: Introduction, Significance, Preservation Philosophy, Historical Information, Proposed Treatment/Restoration, and Proposed Historic District. I was granted permission to read this book in the Guaranty Building conference room in 2011 by Peter Flynn, who has the only copy.

[115] Randall, *Architecture and Human Values,* 4.

[116] Eric Paul Mumford, *Defining Urban Design: CIAM Architects and the Formation of a Discipline, 1937-69*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 25.

South-Side Chicago's 1941 Illinois Neighborhood Redevelopment Act (and its countless siblings across American cities), Jacobs clarified the need for old and aged buildings, declaring that "In the back-of-yards Chicago…In Greenwich Village, almost no old building is scorned by middle-class families hunting a bargain in a lively district, or rehabilitators seeking a golden egg. In successful districts, old buildings 'filter up.'"[117]

On the other hand, while Eric Mumford suggests that the CIAM, modernist architects were more keen on abstract ideas regarding urban renewal than actually providing a universal template or any "official solutions,"[118] much of their theorizing seems to imply an inherent need to demolish and reestablish cities with greater attention to social justice. For example, Mumford explains that

> …CIAM, through the voice of Sert, seems to be encouraging a belief in a set of abstract commandments about what constitutes sound city development, presented as transcendent rules emerging from the Zeitgeist, "a collective spirit capable of organizing community life to the lasting advantage of the many rather than the immediate profit of the few."[119]

Yet, Mumford subsequently attempts to fill in the nebulous utopian theorizing with actual CIAM member discussions on what the city should be with regard to what Corbusier and Giedeon, among others, referred to as the "New Monumentality:"

> Giedeon believed its focus should be new, publically financed community centers. His image of these community centers seems to have derived in part from his experience of crowds in modern pavilions at the 1937 Paris Exposition and the 1939 New York World's Fair. In "The Need for a New Monumentality," he invokes these fairs as "great spectacles capable of fascinating the people" with "waterplays, light, sound and fireworks."[120]

Mumford continues with Sert's expansion on Giedeon:

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[117] Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. (New York: Random House, Inc., 1961, 1993), 251.
[118] Eric Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960*, (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2000), 138.
[119] Ibid., 139.
[120] Ibid., 151.

> Giedeon did not develop in detail the link between his New Monumentality and CIAM urbanism, but Sert took up the task in his companion essay, "The Human Scale in City Planning,"…Clearly in line with Le Corbusier's earlier polemics for design in accord with the human scale, Sert's essay emphasized the need to plan for "human values" and to design cities based on the compact neighborhood unit. In this essay Sert went beyond simply restating Garden City thinking about neighborhood units; he also argued that pedestrian civic centers ought to be created…This conception of the civic center, of course, bares more than a passing resemblance to earlier Beaux Arts or City Beautiful notions, but these parallels were not acknowledged by Sert.[121]

Ponderously, the modern architects involved in CIAM appear to repeatedly disregard the attributes of existing, or incumbent, urban vitality, only to reinforce them later in explanations of what ought to be recreated in fully comprehensive and renewed urban design. Jacobs mentions this in her discussion of Stuyvesant Town, referring to a lecture she gave on the "social need for commercial diversity in cities."[122] Her students incorporated the "corner grocery store" in their large "one time construction" projects only to see them underused in places like Stuyvesant. Jacobs states that 22 % of the incorporated commercial areas in Stuyvesant were in disuse a decade after opening, whereas the diverse, different aged buildings on surrounding streets exhibited only a "disuse or underuse" of 7%.[123] Yet, CIAM modernists, and the government subsidized urban renewal infrastructure they proposed and took advantage of through commissions, took it for granted that "out with the old, and in with the new," in totality, was the only pathway to a more just and vibrant city.

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[121] Ibid., 152.
[122] Jacobs, 248.
[123] Ibid., 250.

Ironically, Randall's language in calling for Historic Districts[124] in Buffalo [Fig. 9], while attempting to blockade urban renewal, has much in common with the socialist utopian and "New Monumentality" philosophy of CIAM:

> The community benefits in many ways from the citation, preservation, and encouragement of development in Historic Districts. .. Suffice it to say that the objectives motivating such district recommendations are not unique or innovative; they are, in essence, those of the recognized importance of the general quality in an area's character, of amenity, education, historic linkage, diversity of appearance, and even financial. Special districts, by their restrictiveness, attract and develop creative activity, which in turn creates income and higher value of assets of the locale. In addition, a case may be made easily that *the community as a whole* [my italics] benefits by the influence of such programs in terms of cultural, recreational, and other economic returns, to say nothing of downright pleasurable experience.[125]

Both Randall and the leading modernist architects of the second half of the twentieth century appear to have sought the same thing regarding the city: a vibrant urban expression of civic and human values with inherently designed-in mechanisms for the advancement of the public welfare. Randall, however, employed the strategy of preserving established urbanism for the benefit of a community desperately clinging to its fading city. Moreover, despite Randall's reluctance to view the city as a battleground for materialist struggle, and his identification as educated elite preservationist leading the charge to save symbolic architectural achievements like Sullivan's Guaranty Building, the struggle to stop demolition and evisceration of Buffalo's urban core often pitted

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[124] One such district, a nineteen block section of downtown named after Buffalo's first city planner Joseph Ellicott, was established in 1983 through the efforts of the PCEC (see Mark Goldman, 320). Randall called for the creation of this district in his 1980 *Historic Structures Report: The Prudential Building,* and his 1976 *Buffalo and Western New York, Architecture and Human Values,* in which he declares the district home to such "treasures" as the Ellicott Square Building, The Old Post Office, Erie County Hall, and St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, among others (18). The CFGB later sought to extend the district southeast to the former terminus of the Erie Canal and the Buffalo River waterfront- an effort (discussed below) that has met some significant success and continues to develop today while providing a commons for assembly, entertainment, and public access (the first in over 100 years) to the Buffalo River.

[125] Randall, *Architecture and Human Values*, 18.

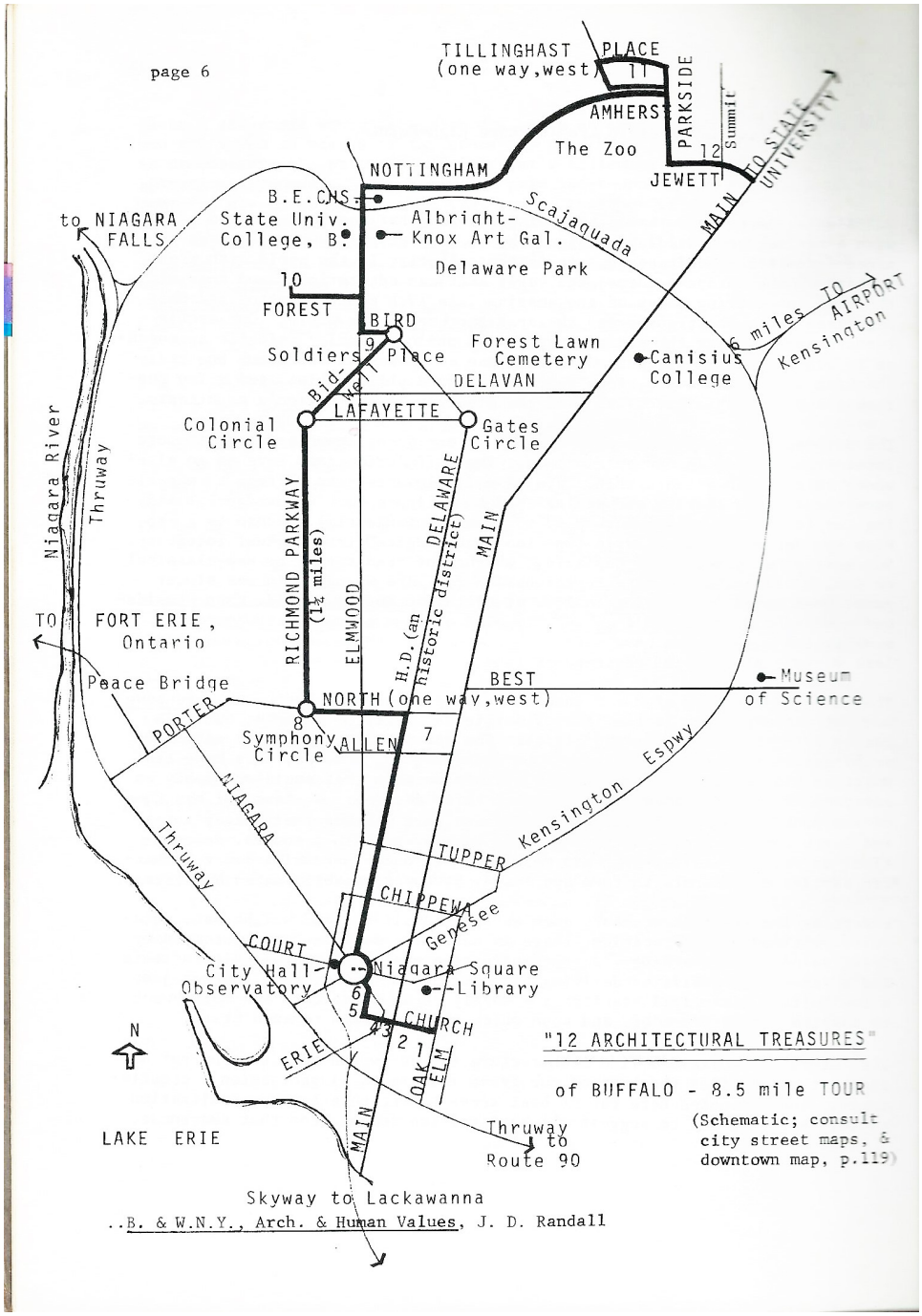

Figure 9. Randall's Map of Historic Structures: While Randall provides this for historic touring walks, his proposal for a historic district accentuates the southern portion of the tour. Note nos. 10 and 12: indicating the Richardson Complex and the Martin House respectively. (from *Architecture and Human Values,* page 6).

organized activism against moneyed interests, establishment institutional power, and institutionalized preservation. The phase in Buffalo preservation that followed Randall, whether it was inspired by him and his ilk or evolved out of necessity, would utilize individual, celebrated structures, such as the Guaranty Building, as leverage in an ongoing urban mediation, buttressed by militant activism, to preserve Buffalo's urban fabric, re-conceptualizing much of it as a heritage/cultural commons requiring citizen maintenance against state and market belligerents.

An exceptional example of this commons, both in conceptualization and actual tangible spatial reality is the recent development of Buffalo's inner harbor/waterfront at the site of the excavation of the historic Erie Canal terminus. About three blocks southeast of the Guaranty Building, and one block from the Seneca Street boundary of the Joseph Ellicott Historic District, the terminus of the Erie Canal had been filled in, and covered by parking lots and an expressway ramp called the Skyway (in the spirit of Robert Moses) since becoming obsolete around the mid-century. The Erie Canal was the historic symbol of commerce, capital accumulation, and economic prosperity in Buffalo, and the neighborhood that developed around the terminus witnessed a convergence of activity from Great Lakes Cities to the west as well as Albany, New York, and even Europe to the East. The canal contributed to the construction of the enormous grain elevators that were built along the serpentine Buffalo River- the same elevators that exhibited such purity of form that they frequently are cited as inspiration for the bêton brut revolution of Corbusier, Gideon, and Gropius. The appropriation of a force for mercantile capital, re-conceptualized into a commons, and the creation of a downtown

geographic commons occurred despite state and market advances in remaking the location in the image of large-scale retail.

The initial shift from a mercantile neighborhood around the Erie Canal to a concrete, urban dead zone was long recognized as a major blight on Buffalo's downtown waterfront design [Figs. 10 & 11]. The many steps in resolving the problematic urban

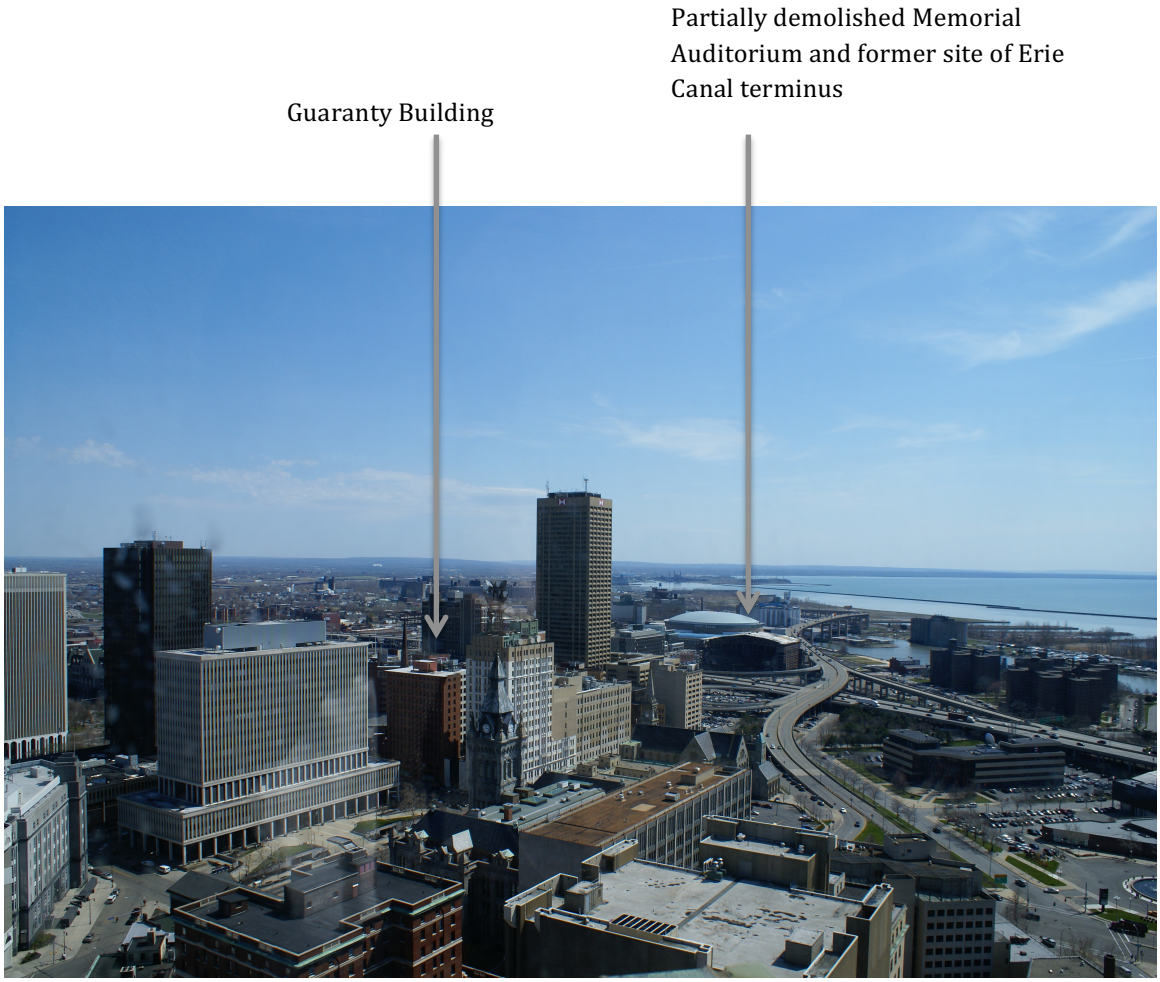

Figure 10. Downtown Buffalo from City Hall Observation Deck: The "Skyway" exit ramp and the partially demolished Memorial Auditorium obscure the view of the waterfront and reside on top of the former terminus of the Erie Canal (Photo by Author).

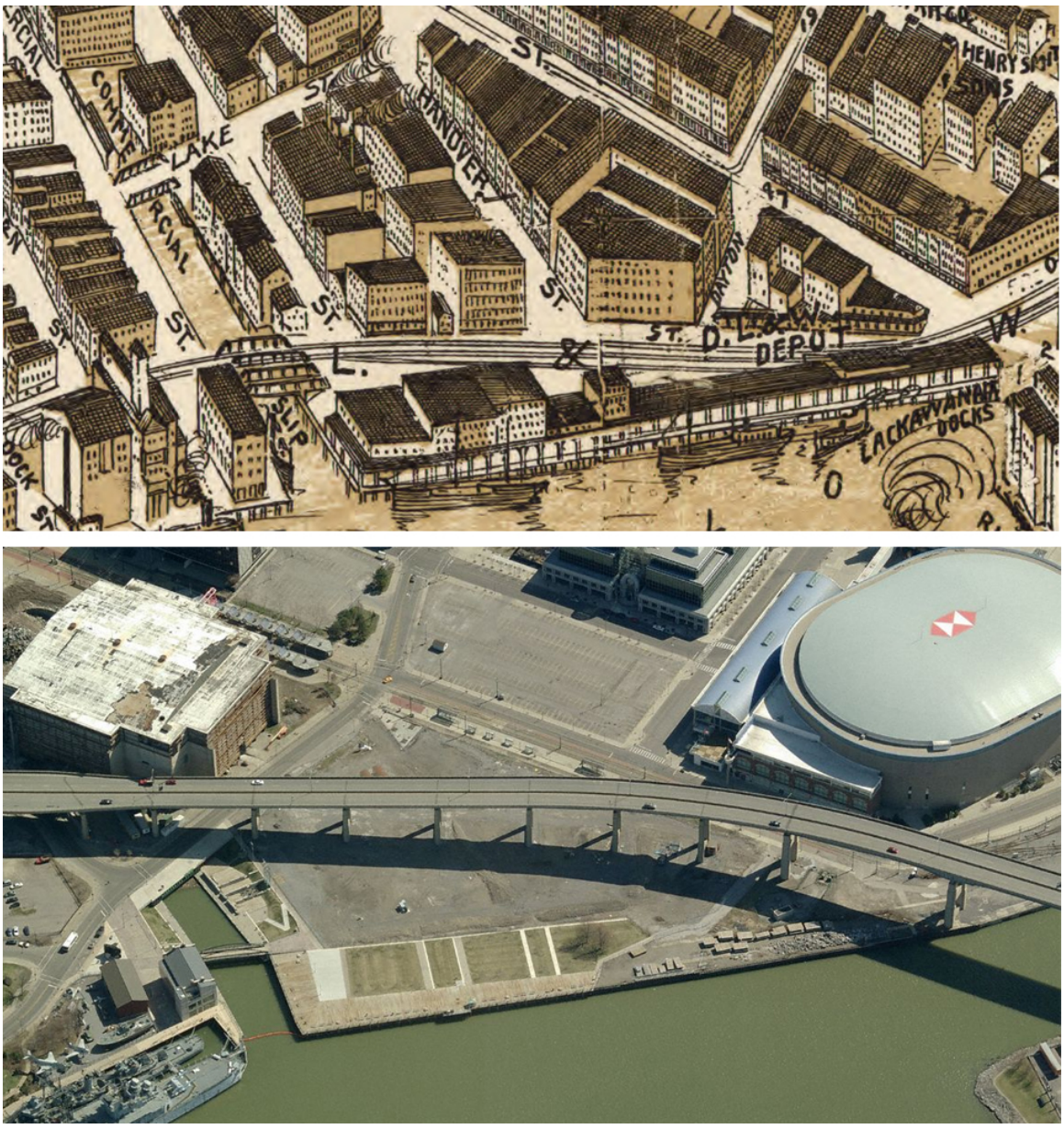

Figure 11**.** Arial of "Canal Zone:" The images above depict an illustration of the historic Erie Canal Terminus neighborhood, a vibrant mixed use, small scale and diverse built environment, and the eventual demolition and burial of the neighborhood by mid-century. The site is essentially a large parking lot between a New Deal era auditorium on the left and a modern arena on the right, spanned by an elevated Robert Moses-type expressway. The Image is from the State University of New York, "This summer, UB archaeologists will dig wider, deeper and longer for Buffalo's Erie Canal artifacts," News Center: url: http://www.buffalo.edu/news/releases/2013/06/016.html.

space are listed by the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation (ECHDC) on a timeline available at their website, but a critical event pivoted the trajectory of the development with the 1999 federal lawsuit filed by the PCEC against the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC).[126] The lawsuit specifically addressed the failure of the state and federal agencies to conduct a proper Environmental Impact Review/Statement (which is discussed in greater detail below), but the strategy of the preservation activist organization most likely sought to delay or halt implementation of a development plan that did not follow excavating the historic elements of the canal terminus. State and Market actors frequently speculated and courted "silver bullet" development solutions to the waterfront site, such as destination attractions or destination retail; for example an Aquarium or a Bass Pro shopping center respectively. The most aggressive push for development by state, county, city, and private developers was the luring of and incorporation of a Bass Pro shopping center. The 2009 *Environmental Quality Review: Final Scoping Report for Generic Environmental Impact Statement*, which ultimately resulted from the PCEC lawsuit, repeatedly refers to "A Bass Pro Outdoor World Store and associated support facilities" as the primary anchor tenant in any development scenario.[127] Part of the report refers to a public commentary meeting in which it was suggested that alternative, no Bass Pro design should be considered:

> A comment suggested that the Project should analyze an alternative that does not include Bass Pro as the anchor tenant. The DGEIS [Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement] will analyze alternatives *with* [my

[126] The Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation, "Development Timeline." Accessed on February 18, 2016. url: http://www.eriecanalharbor.com/timeline.asp.
[127] Parsons Brinckeroff, *Environmental Quality Review: Final Scoping Report for Generic Environmental Impact Statement.* Canal Side Project, Bufffalo, NY. April 17, 2009. Lead Agency, New York State Urban Development Corporation. Project Sponsor: Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation.

> italics] Bass Pro, a destination retailer to establish development thresholds for impact analysis. However, other types of uses could occur on this site as long as such uses do not exceed the impact thresholds created by the Bass Pro scenarios.[128]

The public concern is not actually addressed here, and although this is an environmental impact report, it's puzzling to read a response that apparently does not consider the absence of "big-box retail" to be a viable subject worth analyzing. On the other hand, when another comment expressed concern at the massive tax incentives provided to Bass Pro (at the expense of already established local businesses), the environmental report responds that "This is a public policy issue beyond the scope of this environmental review, and does not warrant environmental analysis."[129] Although accurate, it provokes the question of why is it within the scope of the environmental analysis to determine alternative development is only viable if it conforms to the Bass Pro "threshold?" David Harvey discusses the collusion of state and market entities in his analysis of the similarly dilapidated waterfront susceptible to predatory capitalism in Baltimore:

> During the 1990s nearly a billion dollars went into two publicly financed sports stadiums ($500 million), an extension to the Convention Center ($150 million) and other major downtown projects(e.g. the addition of a light rail stop for the football stadium to be used no more than twenty times a year for $5 million). The argument for such investments is that they create jobs and generate income. But a careful cost-benefit analysis by two respected economists (Hamilton & Kahn, 1997) showed a net loss… Meanwhile, libraries have been closed, urban services curtailed, and investment in city schools has been minimal.[130]

In much of the planning and speculation around Buffalo's waterfront development, professional sports stadiums, convention centers, and other similar large scale solutions were floated before the proposal for a Bass Pro took decisive hold. Harvey could have

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[128] Ibid., 34.
[129] Ibid., 36.
[130] David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (Berkley: University of California Press,2000), 142.

been referring to Buffalo, or many other post-industrial cities of the American rust belt in his analysis. The preservation activists certainly were cognizant of this reality when they demanded a second environmental report, and an injunction on further steps in developing the site for Bass Pro.

The primary reason the report was written (the PCEC lawsuit) actually was a determination to make the historic remains of the Erie Canal terminus the defining element in downtown, water front development. Eric Ortner writes that the federal court ruled in favor of the PCEC, quoting the decision:

> Defendants now must expeditiously prepare a draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement that will inform the public about the significant information that has come to light since the Final Environmental Impact Statement was completed – namely the Stage III archeology excavation, the discovery of the Commercial Slip wall, and the decision to bury the wall in order to preserve it.[131]

Confusingly, the first environmental report, which the PCEC challenged, found historic remnants of the Canal's "Commercial Slip wall," and the government development agencies decided to bury the historic remains to "preserve" them. The decision was partially based on the archaeological aspect of the original report that suggested the historic materials may explode if exposed to Buffalo weather patterns. Ortner also reported that the archaeologist, Dr. Warren Barbour, would continue to advise the environmental study process to which the executive director of the ECPC responded that

> Warren Barbour is a paid developer; he is being paid by the people who want to bury the slip and excavate these other areas. People have to bear that in mind. Further, the historic preservation office is part of the state executive government. However, we hired the best and most experienced canal restoration firm in the United States. That firm is Ryan-Biggs Associates from Troy, New York. H. Daniel Rogers from the firm has

[131] Eric Ortner, "Judge Reaches Decision on Inner Harbor Project," *The West Side Times*. March, 2000. Available at Nickelcity.net. Accessed January 2, 2016. url: http://www.nickelcity.net/news/00_03/judge_inner_harbor.htm.

> reported, "Our experience at other sites along the Erie Canal and elsewhere indicates that deterioration of limestone pieces has not been a major problem…"[132]

It seems implausible that such intrigue could surround a few ancient limestone blocks that provided a retaining wall for the Erie Canal, but the interests in economic development and the relatively small set of state and market actors directing developmental design clearly desired to maintain their authoritative positions. This lawsuit, however, is only one example of the preservation activism confronting the agencies of Buffalo's downtown/waterfront development, and providing alternative scenario's based on the community's local history rather than the subsidizing of a large scale retail corporation.

Indeed, the preservation activism around the Canal site actually dates back as early as 1994, when the PCEC published an early alternative design plan for the waterfront site [Fig. 12] in January/February issue of the *Preservation Report.* The emphasis of the plan was community access to the Buffalo River waterfront, and the creation of a historically informed commons space. The design plan, although far less lucrative to market interests, and far less alluring to the political class, actually lines up relatively close to what eventually became a reality at the Erie Canal site today [Figs. 13 & 14]. Drawing attention to this link, the CFGB reported that the final master plan designed by Peter Flynn of Flynn Battaglia Architects PC, and Thomas Blanchard, Director of Research & Planning for the Western New York office of Empire State Development Corporation was internationally recognized as well:

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[132] Eric Ortner, "Friday Marks Important Date for Future Development of Key City Resources," *The West Side Times*. January, 2000. Available at Nickelcity.net. Accessed January 2, 2016. url: http://www.nickelcity.net/news/00_03/judge_inner_harbor.htm.

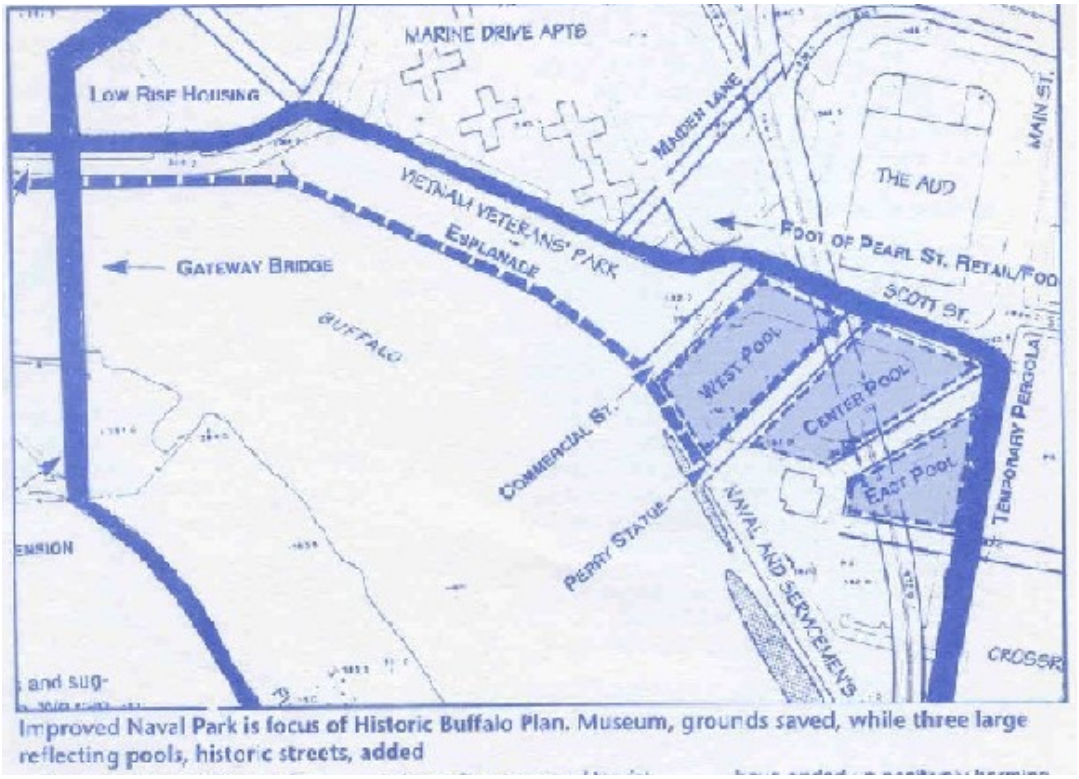

Figure 12. Alternative Canal Zone Plan: The alternative design plan for the downtown Canal Zone Development published in the January/February 1994 *Preservation Report* utilizes historic pathways and traffic routes to define an open access space to the Buffalo River waterfront. Eventually, the site labeled "The Aud" becomes part of the overall plan when the New Deal structure is demolished to provide room for "Destination Retail" giant Bass Pro. When the Bass Pro plan falls apart, more commons space becomes available to for leisure and assembly activity. [note: the proposed "reflecting pools" become congregating space for the most part]

Figure 13. The “People’s Plan:” The plan above shows what the CFGB trumpeted as the alternative to “big box retail” on the waterfront. The plan has flexible and historically informed structures based upon the neighborhood that originally occupied the site. From the “Erie Canal Harbor Project Master Plan,” Flynn Bataglia Architects PC, November, 2004.

Figure 14. Canalside: Today, Leisure and assembly has appropriated and re-conceptualized an historic symbol of capital accumulation. Preservation activism not only prevented the exploitation of a tremendous space within the city, but also provided an Alternative to state and market proposals to redevelop the urban oeuvre. Photo from Canalside information Bureau: Accessed February 18, 2015. url: https://www.canalsidebuffalo.com/visit-canalside/faqs/.

> The Final Master Plan for the Erie Canal Harbor Project, the "People's Plan" resulting from the input of dozens of civic organizations and hundreds of individuals at a series of public meetings and comment periods, itself the result of a lawsuit that sought meaningful public input, has won the prestigious Planning Honor Award from the international Waterfront Center at its 19th Annual "Excellence on the Waterfront" program competition.[133]

The eventual abandoning of the Bass Pro anchor tenant, and the adopting of smaller scale structures, based on historic footprints and more flexible to future modification, both came after persistent activism from the historic preservation community. The CFGB relentlessly blogged about and criticized the detrimental impact the large scale retail chain would have on the valuable downtown urban vitality: "The sheer size of the Bass Pro, and its one-level design for loading docks and sales floor, leads to hundreds of feet of frontage on Pearl Street and The Terrace being high blank walls, tractor-trailer loading docks, and other dead space."[134] From the perspective that the *urban* provides a diverse and stimulating experience to city dwellers, the CFGB critique exposes the Bass Pro as a definitive enclosure. The retail monolith acts not only as a private enclosure on potentially gratifying public/urban space, but also, as per Harvey's analysis, robs public coffers as a privileged private enclosure on economic relations with the state. The CFGB states that "the project has devolved into a commercial project with an emphasis on helping Bass Pro and Benderson Development to profit, without competition, from the available funds," and, while quoting the initial project agreement, that

> "Under the agreement, ECHDC will own the building and Bass Pro Shops will pay common area maintenance and fees of $300,000 a year for an initial 20-year lease with renewals to 50 years for a total of $15 million."

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[133] "People's Plan for Canal District Wins International Award," *The Greater Buffalo Blog*, The Campaign for Greater Buffalo. May 16, 2007. Accessed February 3, 2016. url: http://greaterbuffalo.blogs.com/gbb/2010/01/index.html.

[134] "Campaign responds Erie Canal Harbor Development Corp.'s latest attempt to 'mall-' Buffalo's Canal District," *The Greater Buffalo Blog*, The Campaign for Greater Buffalo. January 20, 2010. Accessed February 3, 2016. url: http://greaterbuffalo.blogs.com/gbb/2010/01/index.html.

> It is absurd and mendacious to call that paltry payment, less than $3 per square foot per year for the retail space, not including the free parking, free boat docking and free use of a new large exhibit hall…[135]

The unique aspect of the one-sided agreement that the CFGB exposes and criticizes is the fact that the public space, in a visionary nascent phase, is already being enclosed upon by capital. So, essentially one enclosure (the empty space of urban decay) is being a replaced by another (a manifestation of corporate capital) without the opportunity of ever actually offering any sort of common pool resource to the community in between. This is not always the case in architectural preservation process in terms of a heritage/cultural commons. For instance, the Guaranty Building was built to provide an urban monument to local pride, serve a market commodity (office space), but then lost both identifications. After Randall's efforts, it returned entirely as a symbol of the conceptual heritage/cultural commons in Buffalo, and was then re-commodified as office space. The site of the Historic Erie Canal, however, may have gone from one worthless spatial development (the decay of postindustrialism) to another (an empty, inflexible retail space Bass Pro no longer had use for) if the arguments and organizing of the preservation activist community had not prevailed.

The current development of the Canalside site actually has followed what the CFGB refers to as the "People's Plan," as the political and merchant class has bowed to the public and activist pressure in recent years to turn away from a "destination retail" answer. Canalside, by virtually all accounts, successfully re-imagined the downtown waterfront, which hosts canal skating in the winter, and assembly space for music, festivals, and political rallies in the warmer climates. I argue that the published criticisms, alternative proposals, not to mention community organizing and willingness to file

[135] Ibid.

federal lawsuits, jestated the necessary political will to wear Bass Pro down and subsequently create a tangible urban commons where collective history had all but been buried under neglect catastrophic urban development schemes. Conceptually, and arguably more significant, the appropriation of an historic symbol of transnational capital accumulation and commerce (The Erie Canal Terminus) into a site for assembly, leisure, and the first uninterrupted public access to the Buffalo River waterfront in a century, reframes city spatial development within a commons consciousness. Without the leveraging of decades of historical preservation activity and success, it's questionable whether the public agency to negotiate such an outcome would have ever existed. Agnes Katharina Müller explains that "Referring to the 'collaborating' and 'empowering' level of public participation, urban commons could be more adequate partners than the 'general public.' Urban commons have already developed common visions and requirements and could be able to bring the necessary collective power along to take an active political role."[136] That is not to say that an urban commons which collectively manages, say, water resources, public parks, or some other urban ritualistic activity would not have been just as successful in turning Canalside into a tangible and conceptual urban commons, but it was the historic architectural preservation activists that did succeed. The communications and pedagogical activity of John Randall in the 1970s, and the further work of the PCEC and CFGB took preservation activism from the conventional focus on individual structures to commoning empty urban space with the leverage of collective historic/cultural heritage.

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[136] Agnes Katharina Müller, "From Urban Commons to Urban Planning- or Vice Versa? 'Planning' the Contested Gleisdreieck Territory," in *Urban Commons: Moving Beyond State and Market* (Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag GmbH, 2015), 160.

Chapter V

Richardson, Olmsted, and the Commoning of Structure and Space

Calling to mind Martin Oppenheimer's 1969 examination of urban collective action, Mark Goldman refers to the leaders of the *Preservation Coalition of Erie County* (PCEC) and the *Campaign for Greater Buffalo* (CFGB) as "urban guerrilla warriors" in the acknowledgement section of his book *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York*.[137] While not engaged in the violent or revolutionary struggles Oppenheimer analyzes, two of the leading preservationists do assess their work as political, social, and populist. A founding member and frequent president of the PCEC, Sue McCartney is adamant that her preservation work was "A people's movement that welcomed the use of public, political pressure and brute force," and that she often attempted to "inform and organize people based on the notion of injustice to [ultimately] increase membership and attend public meetings with numbers- gangs, mobs… whatever strategic advantage was available."[138] Tim Tielman, a former PCEC leader, current CFGB director, and prolific contributor to the former group's publication, *The Preservation Report*, declares that their mission has always been advocacy "with a two pronged approach in the arena of public relations and a willingness to use legal force… you must confront, force people into identifying where they stand on issues, you cannot fight abstractions.[139] Both McCartney and Tielman propose historical preservation as not merely a cause for individual structures and

[137]Mark Goldman, *City on the Edge, Buffalo, NY* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2007), 411.
[138] Matthew J. Bach, interview with Sue McCartney, January 4, 2012.
[139] Matthew J. Bach, interview with Tim Tielman, October 20, 2011.

celebrity architects, but more importantly a conflict to retain a rich urbanism for Buffalo's citizens against institutional failure and what McCartney refers to as "predatory capitalism."[140] Indeed, McCartney and Tielman have worn many hats as organizers, tour leaders, plaintiffs, entrepreneurs, pamphleteers, and lightning rods, to the point of being sued for $10 million by developer and New York gubernatorial candidate Carl Paladino for libel because they published a satirical article implicating him in arson of a building he wished to demolish.[141] Often linking preservation with social justice and democratic values, the two activists qualify as one example of what Peter Marcuse calls "agents of change," in the dialectical interpretation of Henri Lefebvre's questions regarding the "right to the city," such as "What does the right to the city mean?... Whose right are we talking about? What right is it we mean?" and most importantly in terms of this paper, "Which city is it to which we want the right?"[142] After three decades of defending Buffalo's urbanity and architecture, their militant activism meanders through many vignettes, particularly the ongoing, massive challenge Henry Hobson Richardson's Buffalo State Hospital presents preservationists, academics, politicians, planners, and developers. And although their work has helped to produce a conceptual and tangible urban commons out of Buffalo's remaining built environment, the Richardson structure, and the landscape around it, may both become re-commodified as the city continues to evolve through the next phase of postindustrial capitalism.

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[140] In my interview with McCartney, she suggested that she may have picked this term up from an article in *The New York Times*, although, in Buffalo's context, it may reference Naomi Klein's thesis outlined in her book *Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism.*

[141] Matt Gryta, "Sharp Review is Sued for Defamation," *The Buffalo News*, March 31, 1990, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.

[142] Peter Marcuse, "Whose right(s) to what city?" in *Cities for People, Not for Profit: Critical Urban Theory and the Right to the City,* ed. Neil Brenner et al., (New York: Routledge, 2012), 29.

The Buffalo State Hospital (also referred to more recently as the Buffalo Psychiatric Center) holds a unique position in this commons perspective analysis; not only a civic commission built to serve the public interest, the monumental pile represents a significant breakthrough in Richardson's style and a harmonious collaboration with Frederick Law Olmsted [Fig. 15].

Figure 15. The Buffalo State Hospital: Long abandoned, the building is currently undergoing stabilization treatment (Photo by author).

Under construction from 1870 to 1896, and coinciding with Olmsted's work on over 400 acres of Buffalo parks and parkways, the Hospital expresses a growing concern for public health during a period of rapid industrialization and urbanization. Specifically, the Hospital itself initially addresses a basic demand of persons living in close proximity, as

Marcuse explains: "…the demand is of those who are excluded, the aspiration is of those who are alienated; the cry is for the material necessities of life, the aspiration is for a broader right to what is necessary beyond the material to lead a satisfying life."[143] The urban organization of people changed dramatically with regard to the hospital; rather than ignoring or imprisoning the marginal and alienated, the city and the architect of the 19th century began collaborating to bend and redistribute the city and state resources to address the most disenfranchised. The resulting hospitals, parks, and other institutions either reflect urban enhancements for better quality of life, or urban enclosures for greater statist control (see Álvaro Sevilla-Buitrago, discussed below). Either way, conventional assessments of the State Hospital seem to diminish it as an important achievement for Richardson- not to mention Olmsted and Vaux- and also sap the political will to rehabilitate the vacant building due to the original purpose of the structure. Christyn Mobarak declares that "One of the complex's biggest hurdles to rehabilitation is its unpleasant past as a mental hospital. People need to overcome the prejudices associated with the sites past and open their minds to the possibilities rehabilitation can bring…"[144] While this generalization may lack concrete evidence, Lawrence Downes recently wrote of similar stigma regarding Kings Park, NY where he suggests that the hospital and others like it across the country were "…made obsolete by new drug therapies and a new understanding of the rights of the mentally ill."[145] Downes also cites patient abuse, and better care in group homes as solutions to the ominously characterized "Ghost Hospital," but the abandonment of these public health structures also pulls the veil back on

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[143] Ibid., 31.
[144] Christyn Mobarak, "Buffalo as an Architectural Museum: The Rehabilitation of the Buffalo State Hospital and the New York Central Terminal of Buffalo." (MA thesis. State University of New York, Buffalo State College. Self-Published: Saarbrucken, 2009) 41.
[145] Lawrence Downes, "Erasing the Past At the Ghost Hospital," *The New York Times*, August 5, 2012.

privatized treatment, intensified pharmacological markets, and an expropriated public who relied upon infrastructure and a social contract which has been neglected in recent decades. Market driven medicine provides a satisfactory excuse for the state, city, and institution to accept capital enclosure on treatment, and resolve that a therapeutic hospital in disuse- like a steel factory that has been left vacant in a globalized economy- is an emblem of failure. And although the subjection of institutionalized treatment to criticism is necessary, Loïc Wacquant indicates that "…the current reconfiguring of capitalism involves not only the vast reshuffling of firms, jobs, and people in *space* but a sea change in the organization and experience *of space* itself… from communal 'places' suffused with shared emotions, joint meanings, and practices and institutions of mutuality, to indifferent 'spaces' of mere survival and contest."[146] When adaptively reused, the Buffalo State Hospital will most likely not serve the structure's original purpose, however the preservationist activists campaigned to explicitly endow the community with the political purpose of protecting monuments of social welfare from advanced deference to profit. So, disregarding the building as a symbol of a homogeneous subset within the heterogeneous commoners should be seen and characterized as a wound to all. Moreover, when referring to what he calls the "human rejects of the social services and criminal justice systems, long term recipients of public aid and the chronically 'homeless', disgruntled offsprings of the declining fractions of the working class," Wacquant concludes that "The absence of a common idiom by which to unify themselves symbolically accentuates the objective social dispersion and fragmentation of the new

[146] Loïc Wacquant, "The Rise of Advanced Marginality: Notes on its Nature and Implications," in *Of States and Cities: The Partitioning of Urban Space,* ed. Peter Marcuse and Ronald van Kempen (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2002), 226.

urban poor."[147] While not ostensibly serving the constituent interests of the psychologically disabled, the preservation movement in Buffalo does provide an "idiom" which coagulates numerous, diverse commoners into a collective political force. This political force not only spreads architectural appreciation, but also shapes the urban and spatial relations through struggle and willful determination. In the case of the Hospital, this struggle reached a crest with McCartney's persistent legal action.

In July of 2002, after many years of building public awareness of the State Hospital's architectural significance, McCartney filed suit against the state of New York's neglect of the building and grounds. According to the *Buffalo News*, the litigation forced local and state political figures to choose sides: "Joining the [Preservation] coalition's side will be Assemblyman Sam Hoyt, D-Buffalo-- who interestingly finds himself, as a state official, technically suing himself—and Common Council Members Joseph Golombek Jr. and David Francyk."[148] After initially winning the case, the PCEC victory was overturned in a state appellate court, but the public will had been set on an irreversible course. Mark Sommer reported that a shamed Governor George E. Pataki, despite winning at the State Supreme Court, pushed for $100 million in rehabilitation funds in the 2004-05 state budget, and secured $7 million for stabilization work in the previous year.[149] The financial achievement resulting from the PCEC's confrontation illustrates one of the most significant accomplishments of Buffalo's preservation movement; the will to organize and confront institutional power, in this case, secured resources without actually having to articulate the resource's comprehensive utilization

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[147] Ibid., 228.
[148] "A Landmark Lawsuit," *The Buffalo News*, July 8, 2002. http://infoweb.newsbank.com.
[149] Mark Sommer, "Court Frees State From Richardson Upkeep," April 7, 2004. http://infoweb.newsbank.com.

beyond preservation. This was recognized by Assemblyman Hoyt: "Typically, you have grand plans for a major project and you don't have the money to pay for it. In this case, we've got the money to pay for a major project, but there isn't a consensus as to how it ought to be spent, other than the general idea that the Richardson buildings need to be restored."[150] Yet, while the ability to wrestle funds from the state without an absolute restoration plan reflects the strength of the PCEC, the clear and present danger of state government reallocating portions of the earmark opened other avenues of political conflict discussed below.[151] Additionally, despite the success of the PCEC as a leading advocacy group for the Richardson/Olmsted complex (and the indirect benefactor to the Darwin Martin Complex for that matter), McCartney's and the PCEC's decisive role is sometimes downplayed in the histories of Buffalo's architectural evolution. In her book, Maria Scrivani included a chapter on the "Richardson Complex," that she had previously published in *Western New York Heritage Magazine*, in which she highlights *Buffalo News* publisher Stanford Lipsey as a preservationist distinctively standing out among a "consortium of community leaders, state officials, and nationally-known landmark guardians," continuing that

> Lipsey, who championed restoration efforts at the Darwin Martin house and the Prudential Building, helped secure $100 million from the state, to be divided between the Burchfield Center, Martin House and Richardson Complex, the latter grant comprised of the biggest share, some $73 million, including $20 million for a visitors center which would highlight architectural treasures beyond the Richardson site.[152]

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[150] Tom Precious, "Despite $100 million in state funding, Richardson at risk," *The Buffalo News*, January 9, 2006. http://infoweb.newsbank.com.

[151] The lack of specific utilization of the $100 million from the state incentivized institutional opportunism as the Darwin D. Martin Restoration Corporation and the Burchfield-Penny Art Center (An art museum associated with Buffalo State College) cut into the total with "shovel ready" projects. So, the Preservation Coalition essentially provided the necessary funding for the completion of the Martin restoration, but also indirectly supplied Buffalo State College the opportunity to disrupt more of Olmsted's landscape with a modernist Burchfield-Penny Art Center- which is further discussed below.

[152] Maria Schrivani, *Brighter Buffalo: Renewing a City.* (Buffalo: Western New York Wares, 2009), 175.

Scrivani does mention the lawsuit filed by McCartney towards the end of the chapter, but only in the context that the PCEC was one of many interested parties that worked under the implied leadership of State Assemblyman Sam Hoyt- the only individual plaintiff named by Scrivani.[153] So, the largest preservation success in Buffalo's architectural history to date, a confrontation with the bureaucratic leviathan known as New York State and the subsequent allocation of enormous funds, is presented by Scrivani as willfully directed by establishment market and state actors like Lipsey and Hoyt rather than a collective group.

And yet, even the recognition and appropriation of Buffalo's preservation movement by the well-to-do and political establishment may not be enough to secure the Richardson/Olmsted Complex in its entirety. State funding, perpetually the subject of political machination, was also qualified in the Richardson case in that the "$76.5 million [is] for the restoration of the 'footprint'--primarily the towers…," implying the entirety of the structure and Olmsted's landscape are secondary priorities.[154] Goody Clancy's *Richardson Olmsted Complex Historic Structures Report* also reflects an acceptance that a comprehensive "Preservation approach does not provide enough flexibility in the treatment of the buildings and is not recommended for this complex," and although some landscape reconstruction may be warranted, it would occur "in limited locations where this would help reestablish the importance of landscape features to the buildings."[155] The determinations of treatment, Goody Clancy states, must follow judgments regarding the

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[153] Ibid., 183.

[154] Henry L. Davis and Michael Beebe, "Deal Reached on Psychiatric Center Funds- Most of the $100 million would be spent on the landmark Richardson Complex," *The Buffalo News,* Jan. 15, 2006. http://infoweb.newsbank.com.

[155] Goody Clancy, *Richardson Olmsted Complex Historic Structures Report,* (Prepared for the Richardson Center Corporation, July, 2008) 296-298. url: http://www.richardson-olmsted.com/learn/planning-and-reports/.

significance of each component of the structure: "Each building must be assessed on its own merits, as well as its context on the entire site. This juxtaposition of the significance of the building within the site makes the task of treatment recommendations complicated."[156] The scholarly treatment, or defense, of Richardson's achievement at the Buffalo State Hospital approaches disunity, or even ambivalence, adding to the complicated nature of its preservation. Therefore, at this point I will discuss academic assessments of the structure and landscape and what the context of the aggressive nature of the economic decline and the architecture's social purposes contribute to re-imagining the complex as firmly situated in the heritage/cultural commons.

Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer accounts for the key construction dates, but her overall analysis of its significance is superficial or largely absent in *Henry Hobson Richardson and His Works*, the first monograph published on an American architect.[157] Jeffrey K. Ochsner's entry for the building in his encyclopedic catalogue also understates its relevance by declaring that "The plan is not unusual, but follows the model developed by Samuel Sloan and Dr. Thomas S. Kirkbride," and that, at best, it was important because "…Richardson continued lines of investigation and development begun in the Brattle Square Church… which led to his mature style."[158] James F. O'Gorman favors an analysis of the more accented and contemporaneous commission of Trinity Church, Boston, which he maintains is the beginning of Richardson's use of the Romanesque, and that, in relation to the other buildings in Harvard Yard, it was Sever Hall that, "within this historical framework, first created that 'quiet and monumental treatment of wall surfaces

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[156] Ibid., 295.
[157] Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer, Henry Hobson Richardson and His Works (New York: Dover, 1969), 53.
[158] Jeffrey K. Ochsner, *H. H. Richardson: Complete Architectural Works* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1985), 78-79.

which [Richardson] said formed his chief aim as a mature designer."[159] Yet, although materials at the hospital were clearly economized, Richardson does emphasize the interplay between "mass and void" by banding the fenestration together to accentuate more surface area of quarry-cut, randomly coursed Medina sandstone [Fig. 16].

Figure 16. Richardson's Towers: notice the fenestration banding, something Wright also designed into his several Buffalo houses- could he have been emulating Richardson? On other parts of the building, Richardson cascades the fenestration where it parallels interior stairways. This nod to the functional elements of the building would have impressed Sullivan (Photo by Author).

[159] James F. O'Gorman, *H. H. Richardson: Architectural Forms for an American Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 38-42.

The overall effect is described by O'Gorman when he discusses other, later commissions, highlighting "…that 'living architecture' [Richardson] had aspired to build from the moment he returned from France. He controlled but did not forsake the richness of surface that characterized the work of his peers."[160] Beholding the Buffalo State Hospital even in its current condition, I cannot absorb the visual cum tactile grandeur that the approximately 20,000 ft. long monochromatic façade (with pollutant patina) affords and agree with O'Gorman's omission of the building in his discussion of Richardson "disciplining the picturesque." Mobarak suggests that lack of appreciation stems from the layout based on Kirkbride's general system and quotes O'Gorman's *Living Architecture*, which accounts for the hospital's second tier status: "…because it depends so heavily upon the ideas of others, it has never been ranked among his greatest works."[161] Although he writes little on the hospital, Henry-Russell Hitchcock awards a more favorable place in the Richardson pantheon, stating "The formation of Richardson's style took place when he designed the Brattle Square Church and the Buffalo State Hospital. Trinity, as has been implied, was something of a sidetrack. His style, however, continued to develop through the seventies, reaching complete maturity by about 1878."[162]

More recently, Margaret Henderson Floyd speaks of the building's unique derivations from medieval forms and digressions from the picturesque:

> Its spectacular location and great paired towers made the Buffalo State Hospital one of the most striking public buildings to be erected in America. Richardson retreats from the ornate Gothic of Van Brunt's Memorial Hall to a Romanesque style drawn from simple Norman forms… At Buffalo, Richardson's French planning techniques emerge as

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[160] James F. O'Gorman, *Three American Architects: Richardson, Sullivan, Wright, 1865-1915*(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 44.
[161] Mobarak, 37.
[162] Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *The Architecture of H. H. Richardson and His Times* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1961), 181.

> well. The mullioned windows are banked symmetrically in the base of the towers and the walls of the building, while the dormers and raised parapets of the tripartite façade suggest a tension between symmetry and the picturesque that characterizes Richardson's contemporaneous designs for Trinity Church, Boston.[163]

Henderson Floyd may have also mentioned the foreshadowing of Sullivan's and Wright's work respectively; Richardson presents us with exposed functional elements on the pavilion façades with cascading windows which insinuate interior stairways, and his banded fenestration above the corbel work on the towers arguably informs similar treatments of the Prairie Style Heath House. She continues with a fine assessment of the stone work, insisting that

> While exterior polychromy is less aggressive in Buffalo than on Copley Square, the sense of texture that associates Richardson's work so strongly with English Arts and Crafts ideologies is apparent in the raised parapets, the construction of the segmental arches, and the magnificent handling of the stonework… the dressed trim of lighter stone achieves a soft polychromy where it is inlaid at the oculus windows in the gable ends of the pavilions. Here, and in the exterior stairs, ornament is largely architectonic.[164]

This description validates Richardson's expressed goals (goals O'Gorman references in discussing Chicago's Marshall Field Wholesale Store) which favor "beauty of material and symmetry rather than the mere superficial ornamentation," and the "plain" effects dependent on relation of parts, voids and solids, which produce "massive and quiet architecture."[165] The hospital also exemplifies Richardson's genius treatment of symmetric elements, as Henderson Floyd says "Although the central administration building is rigidly symmetrical, the vertical thrust of the towers enhances the picturesque profile of the larger complex…, an effect intensified by the curved links connecting the

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[163] Margaret Henderson Floyd, *H. H. Richardson: A Genius for Architecture* (New York: Monacelli Press, Inc., 1997), 69.
[164] Ibid.
[165] O'Gorman, *Three American Architects,* 50.

central building with the pavilions that are successively set back from the central structure."[166] The set back of the pavilions creates a view that compliments the organic sensation at the Hospital; one does not see the building terminate, but it rather fades into the surrounding environment and vegetation as if the ground cracked open and parthenogenesis formed the sandstone composition amongst the trees. This often observed characteristic, along with the nonparallel orientation of the building to Forest Avenue- allowing a three dimensional view from any approach- proposes two picturesque notions: that Kirkbride's contribution is mostly overstated in the assessment of the building, and that the collaboration with Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux is inextricable from the natural aesthetic of the Buffalo State Hospital. The fact that Richardson's and Olmsted's work at the hospital cannot be bifurcated produces a complex preservation problem, but also insinuates a commons resource (Olmsted's landscape) no matter what determines the eventual reuse of the structure. So, in the first place, as the building' reception continues to evolve as an aspect of symbolic urban mass, its use value as a ruin and fragment of the historical built environment may gradually subside to its commodification through adaptive reuse. Secondly, the grounds the building inhabits may preserve a commons-like access to the complex, but also may become endangered by the process of the complex's re-commodification.

The first point relates to the changing nature of scholarly appreciation and acceptance of the hospital as a significant Richardson building, but the second point highlights the social and humane progress of urban design, which -in turn- illustrates yet another preservation battle in the city of Buffalo. Francis R. Kowsky carefully attributes credit for the general layout where due, but distinguishes Richardson's hospital from pure

[166] Henderson Floyd, 69.

mimicry of Kirkbride, suggesting that "…the birds-in-flight configuration of central administration building and flanking patients' wards inclined towards the southeast. The angle allowed patients to enjoy maximum sunlight during the winter months."[167] Kowsky also echoes Hitchcock's aesthetic appraisal in elevating the rank of the hospital in Richardson's artistic development: "The buildings that make up the Buffalo hospital… possess the sense of massiveness and, in the central structures, the rough stone surfaces that together came to be hallmarks of Richardson's mature architectural style."[168] And John Coolidge states unequivocally that although there are typical elements linking the structure to other hospitals, including a lack of scholarly treatment, "It is unique in the originality of its architectural form; for architectural historians it is the most important asylum in the country."[169] Coolidge also assesses early sketches for the hospital, remarking on architectural elements found in Richardson's later commissions, but criticizes them for adding clutter to the building. He refers to this as "…a characteristically youthful attempt to cram all of one's ideas in a single paragraph," and that the essential nature of the commission demanded a more sober and reverent approach: "This was to be a government sponsored institution, large and necessarily expensive, a most vivid expression of the state's responsibility for individual citizens. Inevitably it would determine the image of its neighborhood. It had to be a

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[167] Fransis Kowsky, "The Veil of Nature: H. H. Richardson and Frederick Law Olmsted," in *H. H. Richardson: The Architect, His Peers, and Their Era*, ed. Maureen Meister (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999), 60.
[168] Francis Kowsky, "Architecture, Nature, and Humanitarian Reform," ch. 1 in *Changing Places: Remaking Institutional Buildings*, ed. Lynda Schneekloth, et al., (Fredonia, NY: White Pine Press, 1992), 47.
[169] John Coolidge, "The Architectural Importance of H. H. Richardson's Buffalo State Hospital," in *Changing Places: Remaking Institutional Buildings*, ed. Lynda Schneekloth, et al (Fredonia, NY: White Pine Press, 1992), 87.

monument."[170] Coolidge identifies the key problem of the institution for historians here, as well as the importance of Olmsted's involvement in the project: while reconciling the progressive and humanitarian urbanism inherent in its purpose with the grandiose, monumentality of architectural forms, the Buffalo State Hospital looms as a scold directed at our contemporary society's inadequacies in architecture and social values.

Preservationist activists understand the use value inherent in such a significant monument to collective memory, especially when it comes to the comprehensive goal of saving not just the building, but also Olmsted and Vaux's landscape [Fig. 17].

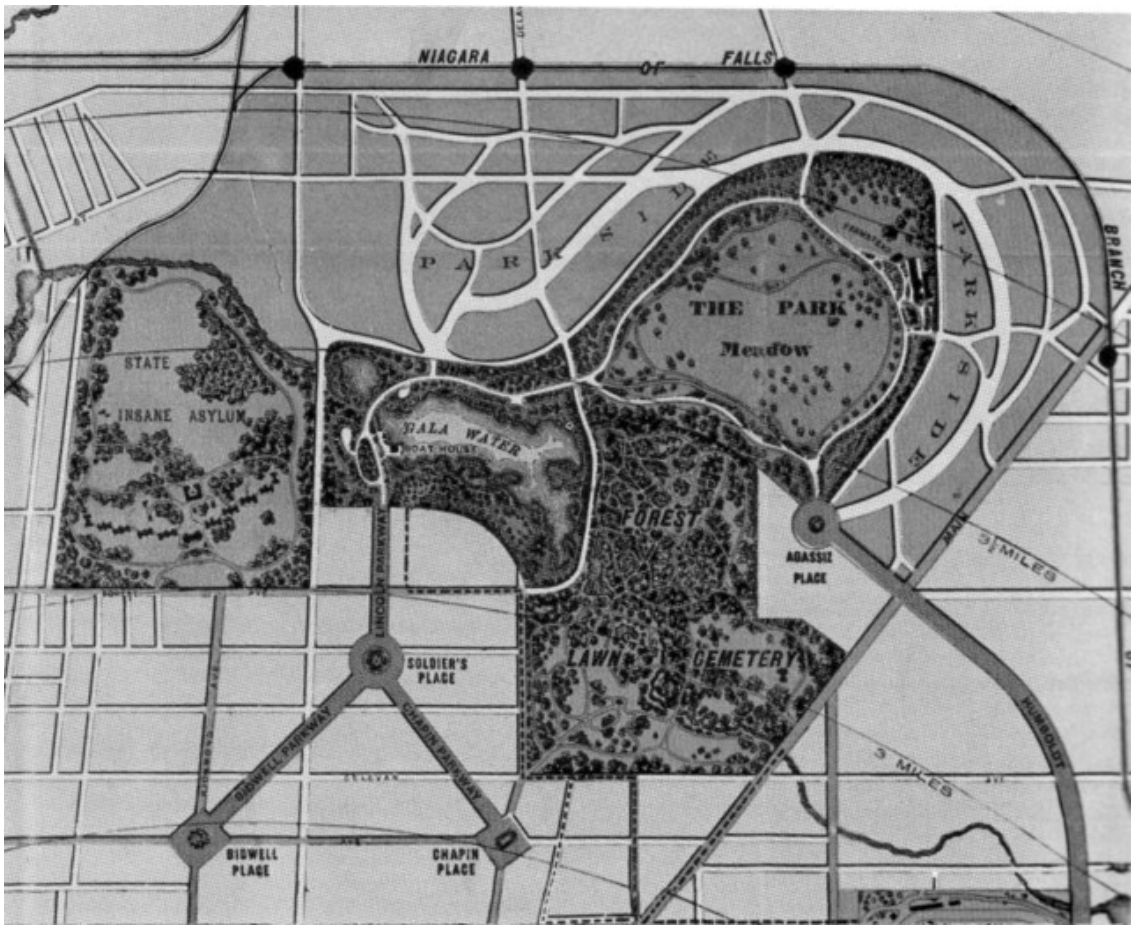

Figure 17. Historic image of Olmsted's park and parkway network: Note the layout of the hospital in the western portion of the map, and its picturesque, diagonal alignment to Forest Ave (image from: Buffalo State College, Url: http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/).

[170] Ibid., 97.

While the deterioration of the Hospital, and its growing significance with scholars have both seen more charitable documentation in recent years, Olmsted and Vaux's grounds continue to be a metaphorical preservation battlefield, ebbing in and out of the conventional consciousness of urban architectural space. Yet, there is nothing within the built environment as emblematic of the commons as an Olmsted park, parkway, or other landscape design. Olmsted in particular, complicates the dialectical aspect of historic preservation and the commons because on the one hand, some scholars have associated his work with developing enclosures within the city to control and discipline the urban proletariat.[171] Yet, on the other hand, preservation activists have linked his designs to progressive issues and a humanitarian approach to urbanism, in which they frame the democratic and social relevance of fighting to preserve the city landscape architecture as well as the building architecture. In either assessment, his role in Buffalo's development- environmentally and symbolically- has been tragically obscured by the severe contractions of capitalist spatial development, and, at times, is prioritized second to architecture because it can opportunistically, if not ironically, be dismissed as empty space.

Like the architects and buildings discussed above, I contextualize -to some extent- the raison d'être for Olmsted's landscape preservation within his intentions as an urban planner. Olmsted was, to a degree, an activist[172] in that he sought to improve urban

[171] Álvaro Sevilla-Buitrago, "Central Park Against the Streets: The Enclosure of Public Space Cultures in Mid-nineteenth Century New York," *Social &Cultural Geography* (Routledge, 2013), 10: accessed December 17, 2013. DOI: 10.1080/14649365.2013.870594.

[172] Obviously Olmsted is not an activist in the context that the word is used to describe the modern preservation movements in this paper, and Twombly is very hesitant in describing Olmsted as anything close to a radical. However, while avoiding anachronistic characterizations, I would suggest that Olmsted is part of a tradition of urban activism primarily concerned with social improvement of services, albeit his methodology and designs may have more parallels with Jeremy Bentham's subtle control mechanisms than collective ideologies of commons scholarship.

conditions for a larger portion of city dwellers. Witnessing the dire inhumanity of the Civil War as the Union Army's Sanitation Commission Director, co-founding and editing *The Nation* magazine, and consistently concerning himself with the quality of urban life in its most turbulent developmental period situates Olmsted as a leading candidate for the characterization as *progressive* urban planner. Robert Twombly, while cautiously avoiding the term "social reformers" in his description of the "landed gentry" Olmsted was born into, does emphasize that Olmsted broadened the charitable tendencies of his social class to include political machinations that were frowned upon by his forbearers.[173] For instance, despite the conventional wisdom that "collectively generated progress, people banding together in labor unions or radical political parties… or in government provision of services…, all of which were considered anti-democratic constraints on individual liberty," Olmsted tended to accept that "certain cooperative movements… and improvement of the physical environment by government action… were also beneficial to democracy."[174] Furthermore, Olmsted was adamant in his own lectures and writings, such as "A Consideration of the Justifying Value of a Public Park," that the value of parks must be "…guarded against… a habit of mind, cultivated in commercial life, of judging values by the market estimate."[175] Subsequently, after much contemplation regarding the definition of a park, Olmsted describes the transition of private or royal lands into parks based on "use" by the public and concludes his soliloquy on the qualities of parks by proposing a few rhetorical questions on intense interest of contemporary intellectuals in natural scenery:

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[173] *Frederick Law Olmsted: Essential Texts,* ed. Robert Twombly (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 30-31.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Ibid., 287.

> Why this great development of interest in the natural landscape and all that pertains to it; to the art of it and the literature of it? …Considering that it has occurred simultaneously with a great enlargement of towns and development of urban habits, is it not reasonable to regard it as a self-preserving instinct of civilization?[176]

He then answers himself by listing some "drawbacks" of the expansion of towns and the remedies which the park- in essence- delivers:

> … to all of the economic advantages we have gained through modern discoveries and inventions, the great enlargement of the field of commerce, the growth of towns and the spread of town ways of living, there are some grave drawbacks. We may yet understand them so imperfectly that we but little more than veil our ignorance when we talk of what is lost and suffered under the name of "vital exhaustion," "nervous irritation" and "constitutional depression"; we speak of tendencies, through *excessive materialism* [my italics][177], to loss of faith and lowness of spirit, by which life is made, to some, questionably worth living.[178]

And finally that the park

> …is mainly the reconciliation of adequate beauty of nature in scenery with adequate means in artificial constructions of protecting the conditions of such beauty, and holding it available to the use, in a convenient and orderly way, of those needing it; and in the employment of such means for both purposes, as will make the park steadily gainful of that quality of beauty which comes only with age.[179]

So, Olmsted's philosophy sets a tone for the ongoing dialectic about the therapeutic and potentially democratic nature of spatial relations in the city [Fig. 18]. Yet, Álvaro Sevilla-Buitrago meticulously constructs an alternative analysis of Olmsted's landscape production. He suggests Olmsted and his collaborators (covertly, and sometimes overtly), intentionally enclosed park spaces within cities to discipline the working class. He

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[176] Ibid., 307.
[177] When he says "excessive materialism," I take Olmsted to mean consistent stimulation and sensation from the synthetic materials and activities that confront the urbanite. However, he also mentions commercial activity quite often in his diagnosis of urban ills, so although he is no Marxist, Olmsted does more than hint at the need to counterbalance a relentless capitalism (or the reactions of a volatile proletariat for that matter) with boundaries meant to protect a therapeutic urban landscape.
[178] Ibid., 307-308.
[179] Ibid., 308.

suggests that "While the official narrative had it that all classes and ethnicities would have their practices and habits reformed through the experience of the park… it was the working class that became the prime target in the re-education of public space deportments."[180] The purpose of an Olmsted park was not to create an urban commons

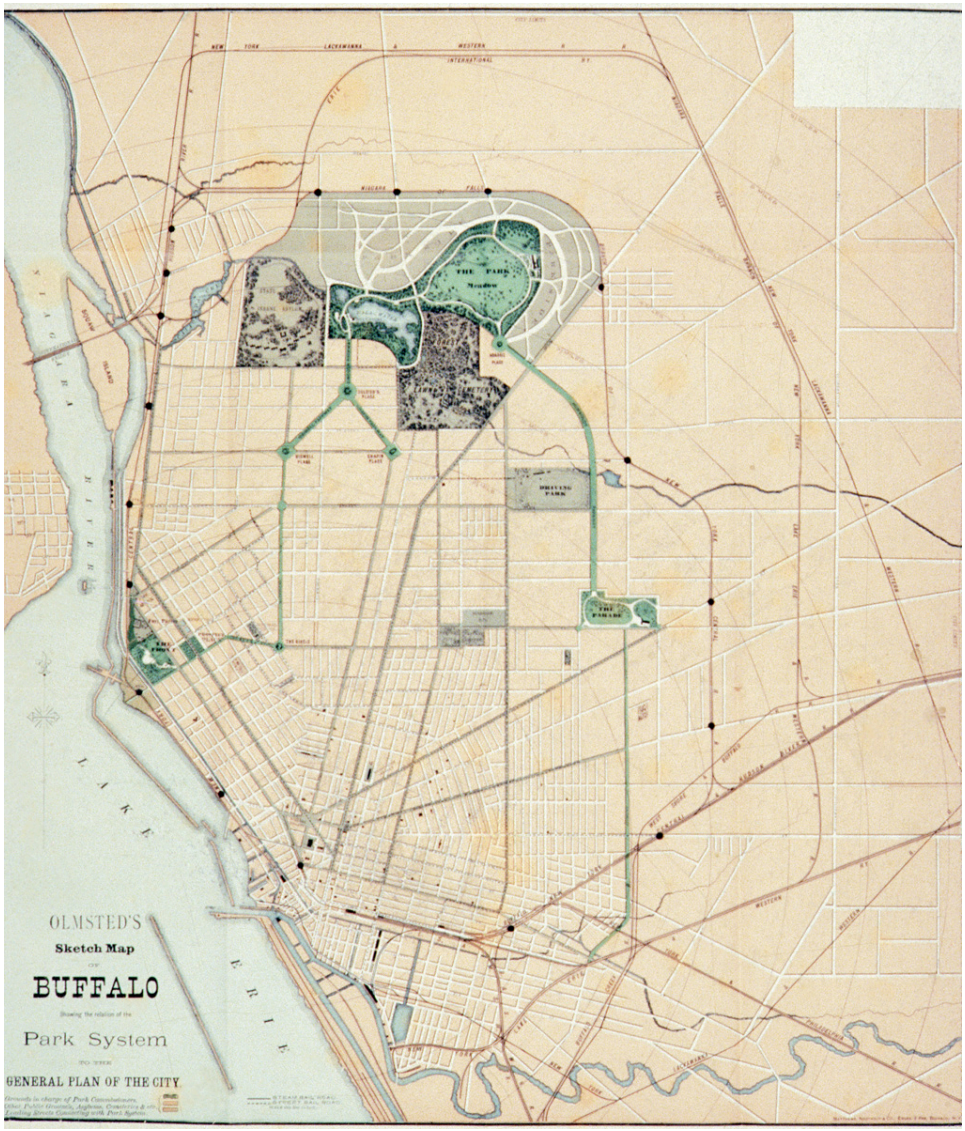

Figure 18. Olmsted's Sketch Map: This illustrates the comprehensive Olmsted system in Buffalo. His attempt to bond the parks together by networks of parkways certainly falls within Sevill-Buitrago's assessment of Olmsted as a fastidious planner intent on controlling the urban masses (image from Buffalo State College. Url: http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/).

[180] Sevilla-Buitrago, "Central Park…," 10.

then, but to rather enclose the urban commons within a controllable space, so that agitated groups could not just occupy street space for political expression. Sevilla-Buitrago continues that Central Park in New York City was essentially "… an enclosure regime conceived to eliminate the processes of spontaneous appropriation of public space and to educate the users in a pattern of heteronomous spatial practices."[181] Even so, Sevilla-Buitrago does conclude that if Olmsted meant to design park space as a pedagogical tool to pacify the unruly lower class, that goal was eventually confounded by the social agitations of these groups as they redefined the park's purpose over time:

> … reality would soon complicate this grand scheme, converting the park into a new arena for class struggle in the form of a collision of antagonistic material cultures of public space use. Olmsted and Vaux imagined new spatial practices radiating from Central Park to the rest of the city. After several years, the culture of the park was not disseminated beyond its boundaries, but quite the reverse; it was the commons of the streets that slowly penetrated the park's enclosure.[182]

In Buffalo, a similar treatment of Olmsted seems to have played out as the spatial designs he rendered have evolved from therapeutic or disciplinary spaces to crucial aspects of the heritage/cultural commons.

Henri Lefebvre argues that the city must be accepted as a work of art, or oeuvre, and that we come to find the most important elements of this oeuvre in escaping the commodified materials of the built environment. He concludes that

> …[cities] are centers of social and political life where not only wealth is accumulated, but knowledge (*connaissance*), techniques, and *oeuvres* (works of art, monuments). The city is itself '*oeuvre*', a feature which contrasts with the irreversible tendency towards money and commerce, towards exchange and *products.* Indeed, the *oeuvre* is the use value and the product is exchange value. The eminent use of the city, that is, of its streets and squares, edifices and monuments, is *la Fête* (a celebration

[181] Ibid., 11.
[182] Ibid., 16-17.

> which consumes unproductively, without other advantage but pleasure and prestige and enormous riches in money and objects).[183]

Is not the most extravagant "*oeuvre*" the pleasure and prestige of having nature and the beauty of natural scenery recreated and preserved within the city? At the least, the Olmsted landscape within the modern city certainly exemplifies what Lefebvre means when he talks about "use value," and literally becomes the commons and sometimes the battleground for the "right to the city." The park is the utmost statement of "unproductive" space in the industrial city, almost an antagonistic refutation of the market forces that conspired to make the city in the first place. Lefebvre celebrates this confrontational essence of urbanism as the most enfranchising aspect of the city, even in the most industrialized and economically deplorable situations of disparity and oppression: "In the urban context, struggles between factions, groups and classes strengthen the feeling of belonging. Political confrontations between the 'minutopopolo' the 'popologrosso', the aristocracy and the oligarchy, have the city as their battleground, their stake," however

> When exploitation replaces oppression creative capacity disappears. The very notion of 'creation' is blurred or degenerates by miniaturizing itself into 'making' and 'creativity' (the 'do-it-yourself', etc.). Which brings forth the arguments to back up a thesis: *city and urban reality are related to use value. Exchange value and the generalization of commodities by industrialization tend to destroy it by subordinating the city and urban reality* which are refuges of use value, the origins of a virtual predominance and revalorization of use.[184]

Lefebvre both lauds the "unproductive investment in the city" (in this case the park, unproductive structure, or monument) and implies the virtue in the struggle and conflict to preserve these urban "realities." So, when looking at the preservation and adaptive

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[183] Henry Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities,* Trans. Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 66.
[184] Ibid., 67-68.

reuse of Richardson's building, Olmsted's landscape must also be considered as an inextricable aspect of the endeavor. Especially if the Richardson hospital re-enters the commercial market as a commodity, as has been insinuated local elites who envision a "boutique hotel" and/or "Architectural Center."[185]

As the Richardson building moves closer to an exclusive use and identity, the landscape designed by Olmsted becomes more essential in retaining commoner access to the use value of the entire complex. Many lacerations into Olmsted's work have occurred over the last century including the construction of the Scajacquada Expressway, the adjacent Buffalo State College campus, and the modernist Burchfield-Penny Art Center. However, even in the 2009 Master Plan for the stabilization and reuse of the Richardson Olmsted Complex, there have been further attempts to utilize Olmsted's grounds for contemporary redevelopment. The plan depicts an "East-West Address Road," which separates the north western lands from the complex for "possible low density development," presumably by Buffalo State College.[186] The CFGB published several criticisms of this apparent "land-grab," arguing that

> The splitting of the site by the east-west road is exacerbated by two other circulation decisions. First, as the east-west road would split the site into north and south sections, a new north-south connector between Rockwell Road and Forest Avenue would splinter the site further, resulting the unmistakable [perception] that the Buffalo Psychiatric Center and its portion of the site are physically and tempermentally separate and distinct, which would likely worsen over time. Building this connector would also require the demolition of the National-Register eligible Male Attendants' Home. Second, Olmsted's looped circulation plan is destroyed by eliminating the section of roadway along the Female wards and foregoing

[185] Lee H. Skolnick Architecture + Design Partnership in association with ConsultEcon Inc., *Buffalo Architectural Center: Richardson Center Corporation Institutional, Operational and Pre-Development Planning Report* (December 2011).
[186] Chan Krieger Sieniewicz, Architecture & Urban Design, *The Richardson Olmsted Complex, Buffalo, NY Master Plan 2009* (Booklet based on original Master Plan), 13-15.

> the opportunity to rebuild the [Olmstedian] loop in the northeast quadrant of the site…[187]

The CFGB again utilized the General Environmental Impact Study (GEIS) as a tool enabling preservation activism. The CFGB employed the GEIS to make the case that the development plans did not follow the outlined intentions in the legal document:

> These principles [certain statements of intent from the GEIS] often mesh with the "Guiding Principles of the Master Plan," as enumerated in The Richardson Olmsted Complex Master Plan 2009 booklet and the more extensive Master Plan for the Richardson Olmsted Complex, both of September 2009. While the principles often mesh, the proposed execution, as illustrated in Alternative 1, often does not. These are the points we feel should be addressed in the GEIS. It should be noted that the general plan as illustrated in the booklet is much different than the later sketch of Alternative 1, and that the booklet as designed and distributed, is much more accessible to the general public than the Draft Scoping Report. Consequently, the public may not be fully aware of the significance of the changes to the site proposed in Alternative 1 of December 2009…[188]

The CFGB also recognizes the historical significance of the Olmsted landscape, and, in referencing the stated intent ("Principles") of the GEIS, leverages that historic value to preserve not only the landscape, but also common access to the landscape: "Principle IV, "extending the Olmsted Parks System," does not appear to be optimally met by the east-west road route, either. Its orientation and the implicit new construction would seem to lead precisely through the area with minimal Olmstedian character, rather than through the reconstructed and preserved landscape along Forest and Elmwood avenues [Figs. 19 & 20]."[189] By focusing on the historical integrity of the "Olmstedian" the CFGB strengthens the connection between preservation and the production of a tangible urban commons, demanding that

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[187] "Proposed Through-routes Raise Concerns Over Richardson Plans," *The Greater Buffalo Blog*, The Campaign for Greater Buffalo. January 20, 2010. Accessed February 3, 2016. url: http://greaterbuffalo.blogs.com/gbb/2010/01/index.html.
[188] Ibid.
[189] Ibid.

Figure19. The Richardson/Olmsted *Master Plan*: The CFGB has annotated the page from the public pamphlet to expose deviations from publicized intent to preserve the historic landscape (from the CFGB: "Proposed Through-routes Raise Concerns Over Richardson Plans," *The Greater Buffalo Blog*, The Campaign for Greater Buffalo. January 20, 2010. Accessed February 3, 2016. url: http://greaterbuffalo.blogs.com/gbb/2010/01/index.html.).

Figure 20. The CFGB's alternative landscape rehabilitation design: (*The Greater Buffalo Blog*, The Campaign for Greater Buffalo. January 20, 2010. Accessed February 3, 2016. url: http://greaterbuffalo.blogs.com/gbb/2010/01/index.html.).

> It must be demonstrated that the goals and objectives of the project cannot be met by simply being faithful to the designers' intent by reestablishing a circulation loop that would discourage through traffic and visually and practically unify the site as parkland, from Elmwood Avenue to Rees Street and from Forest Avenue to Rockwell Road. Such a loop would have much lower traffic volumes, and thus be friendlier to pedestrians and bicyclists whether traveling along the road or crossing it.[190]

So, the preservation activism goes beyond saving the historic structure or the nominally classified landscape to ensure both enter and endure within the heritage/cultural commons.

The rehabilitation and reuse of the Richardson/Olmsted Complex continues today as of the writing of this paper, and the work of the preservation activists also continues as developers, state & market actors, and institutions follow or deviate from the path to an urban commons. The most serious threat to this commons conceptualization emerges from market recreation of this storied chunk of the built environment into an exclusive commodity. Therefore the social labor and productive activity of the preservation activists are not complete and continue as part of the contentious reality of the urban material fabric. When analyzing the reuse of the Complex, Anthony D. King reminds us that

> … buildings are also social and political resources. They are contested terrain. They are never neutral, but become platforms for promoting particular interests. Quite early in its life, "for the insane" disappeared from its name. It became the Buffalo State Hospital, promoting the interests of doctors. Then, in the 1970s, it became the Buffalo Psychiatric Center, promoting the interests of psychiatrists. In the last few years an interesting development has taken place: the building has become the

[190] Ibid.

> Richardson-Olmsted Complex, which suggests it has been appropriated by architects to promote the interests of architecture.[191]

Indeed, to echo Marcuse: whose building and landscape, and what rights, and whose rights? I don't suspect that King, the preservation activists, or any other Buffalo commoners will hold out hope that the structure could be identified as the *Urban Commons Complex*. However, the ongoing urban confrontation and negotiation that determines the tangible and conceptual boundaries of the Richardson/Olmsted Complex are clearly a collective work of production. And this declarative point actualizes the recognition that the city itself is collectively produced, and therefore should be collectively managed, and collectively enjoyed.

[191] Anthony D. King, "Building Institutionally Significant Histories: On Understanding Adaptive Reuse of Buildings," ch. 5 in *Changing Places: Remaking Institutional Buildings*, ed. Lynda Scheekloth, et al., (Fredonia, NY: White Pine Press, 1992), 135.

Chapter VI

Synthesis

The cases outlined in the previous chapters obviously represent structures by celebrated architects. I selected the particular cases because they tell almost a chronological history of architectural preservation in Buffalo, beginning in the 1950s with the demolition of the Larkin Administrative Building, progressing through the development of individual and organizational preservation efforts, and concluding with the ongoing Richardson/Olmsted project. While all of the cases rely on individual structures as starting points, I intended to show how these buildings were leveraged by preservation activists to expand a contestation regarding the entire urban environment. I argue that the success, for instance, in preserving the Guaranty Building provided a political will for historic preservation, and a fluency in the language of urban commons values which laid the foundation for preservation success at Canalside. Each case proposes that the work of historic preservation can advance a social consciousness regarding the production of the city, and a conceptualization of the produced city within the urban heritage/cultural commons. In conclusion, I will summarize these arguments in the following order:

1. The city is produced by the labor of all urban commoners and therefore the city is a common pool resource.
2. The city of Buffalo presents a particular case where the urban commons resource dissolves due to disuse.
3. The antithesis of the urban commons in Buffalo is demolition and/or homogenization.

> 4. The thesis of the urban commons in Buffalo is preservation of the built environment, and alternative planning to adjustments in capitalist spatial formation.
> 5. The synthesis of these proposals forwards an alternative assessment of historic architectural preservation; an assessment which argues historical preservation contests capitalist enclosures and asserts a commons approach to the production of the city.

I also propose that the work of historic preservation activism should not end with the preservation of a particular monument, building, landscape, or neighborhood. Historic preservation activism should open a conversation among many urban commons movements. For instance, I am not arguing for the rebranding of Buffalo as an architectural museum or tourist destination for increased capital and development, but rather I am trying to identify a mechanism by which the city can clearly be seen as a common resource. The boundaries, uses, alterations, and reproduction of this common resource, it follows, are determined through collective action rather than the contractions of market and state paradigms alone.

The first point proposes that the collective labor of generations of urban commoners produced the city of Buffalo, so the postindustrial phase and dissolution of the city also dissolves that collective labor, unless that dissolution is contested. Lewis Mumford poses that "The city as a purely physical fact has been subject to numerous investigations, but what is the city as a social institution?"[192] I have argued in the previous chapters that the city is a common pool resource that provides as much *use value* to the urban commoner as it does *exchange value* to commercial ventures. Mumford continues that

> The city is a related collection of primary groups and purposive associations… The essential physical means of a city's existence are the

[192] Lewis Mumford, "What is a City?" *Architectural Record* (1937), 93. Accessed February 28, 2016. url: http://www.contemporaryurbananthropology.com/pdfs/Mumford,%20What%20is%20a%20City_.pdf.

> fixed site, the durable shelter, the permanent facilities for assembly, interchange, and storage; the essential social means are the social division of labor, which serve not merely the economic life but the cultural processes. The city in its complete sense, then, is a geographic plexus, an economic organization, an institutional process, a theatre of social action, and an *aesthetic symbol of collective unity* [my italics]… One may describe the city, in its social aspect, as a special framework directed toward the creation of *differentiated opportunities for a common* [my italics] life and a significant collective drama.[193]

Mumford links the collective labor of the city commoner to the aesthetic and physical representations within the city, and he also explains that the physical manifestations of this collective labor provide interlocutions for a common experience between diverse, heterogeneous starting points. As the monuments, buildings, landscapes, and neighborhoods change, reproduce themselves, or disappear by segmentation, the response should also follow a collective approach. Preservation of the material fabric of the city may mean reuse, but it also may mean allowing ruins to stand as emblematic annunciations of history, as in the case of the Richardson State Hospital or even the mammoth grain elevators[194] that line the serpentine Buffalo River. What better example of the experience of industrial ruins I addressed in the chapter on the Larkin Administration Building, than the towering elevators? Again, Mile Orvell puts it eloquently when he dialogues with Tim Edensor:

> …in a society of surveillance (and Britain might lead the United States in this), industrial ruins represent a zone of freedom, a rebuke to the "normative aesthetic orderings" of Le Corbusian space and rational, rectangular order. Such spaces, Edensor argues, represent "a radical critique of the myth of universal progress." Ruins, from this perspective,

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[193] Ibid., 8.

[194] Although not addressed in depth in this paper, the grain elevators of Buffalo are quickly becoming the next preservation cause. Many have been in disuse and abandoned, while a few still operate. The utilitarian structures inspired the likes of Walter Gropius and Corbusier, and attract gawkers and revelers who organize summer festivals between the towering ruins today. For example, the Emerging Leaders in the Arts, Buffalo (ELAB) organized the "City of Night" arts festival at the Elevators for the past few summers attracting large assemblages (http://www.elabuffalo.com/city-of-night/). The festival resembles other commons-like "Pop-UP" arts initiatives in many cities.

> represent a higher degree of authenticity, in a culture of bland uniformity and shiny surfaces.[195]

And most importantly Orvell states that "Ruins rebuke capitalist notions of endless progress,"[196] reminding the urban commoner of the availability of alternative forms of collective action and governance.

So, the cases discussed in the previous chapters teach us that the acceleration of urban development, whether in the direction of greater density or rapid dissolution, is a matter of collective labor, and therefore collective management and design. As Peter Linebaugh states, "… political and legal rights can exist only on an economic foundation. To be free citizens we must also be equal producers and consumers… the commons- the theory that vests all property in the community and organizes labor for the common benefit of all- must exist in both juridical forms and day-to-day material reality."[197] The Larkin Administrative Building represents a collective loss, and subsequently a celebration of open space (Larkinville) in memoriam of a collective history. The other Wright homes, including the Martin Complex, reflect the gradual transference of individual property into the collective stewardship of a heritage/cultural commons. The process of this transference shows that appropriation of urban property, whether symbolic or actual, contributes another aspect of contestation to urbanity- one which may engage at multiple levels of organizational processes. Contestation around the development of the waterfront (Canalside) represents a significant consolidation of power and momentum within the preservation movement; the movement which essentially starts with an

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[195] Miles Orvell, "Ruins," ch. 4 in Miles Orvell, et al, eds. *Architecture/Technology/Culture : Rethinking the American City : An International Dialogue* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 78. ProQuest ebrary. Accessed February 28, 2016. url: http://site.ebrary.com/lib/aps1/reader.action?docID=10806825&page=92&ppg=92.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Peter Linebaugh, *The Magna Carta Manifesto: Liberty and Commons for All* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008), 6.

individual campaign to save an individual building (The Guaranty) evolves into an activist movement willing to utilize legal obstruction tools to transform an empty space into an urban commons. Finally, the Richardson/Olmsted Complex actually incorporates all of the formerly mentioned activity into a comprehensive negotiation of the meanings attached to the urban, socio-political, institutional identities of the structure and landscape.

The second point classifies the city of Buffalo presents a particular case where the urban commons resource dissolves due to disuse. As I stated in Chapter I, the unique conditions of Buffalo's urban commons fall outside the traditional assessment of commons, or common pool resources, subject to the danger of overuse. The opposite problem presents itself in the postindustrial city as the urban fabric requires use to remain relevant. The preservation activism that propels the remaining elements of the built environment into a commons consciousness actually provides the rational for an atmospheric commons, and tools to beat back at a general *horror vacui* ever present in the city in crisis. Linebaugh introduces us to two medieval terms that have great applicability in Buffalo's situational degradation: first he says that *Afforesting* is "To convert into a forest or hunting ground; Henry II afforested many woods and wooded wastes. Essentially, a juridical process of management, rather than an act of planting," and that an *Assart* is "A piece of forest land converted to arable by grubbing up trees and brushwood; the action of doing so. Urban squats qualify as a mod. amp."[198] I suggest that the situation at the Richardson/Olmsted Complex may potentially end up qualifying as *Afforesting*. The Complex went from institutional/public service to abandoned ruin, and then to appropriation into the heritage/cultural commons by the labor of the preservation

[198] Ibid., 301-302.

activists. However, if the Buffalo State College and elite establishment in Buffalo completely re-commodify the complex as a boutique hotel or college development space, the ordeal represents a traditional enclosure process. On the other hand, if historical structures and landscapes continue to suffer demolition, such as the Larkin Administrative Building, than the built environment succumbs further into a perpetual assart. Rather than looking at modern squatting, as Linebaugh suggests, I argue the assart in the postindustrial city takes form when the material fabric is gradually cleared by segmentation to provide open space for new development. The perplexing aspect of this gradual demolition of the historical city comes into focus more when the presumed development does not follow the clearing of space. This phenomenon is best exemplified in the case of the Larkin Administrative Building as the trucking company that pledged to build on the cleared site abandoned the plans after the costly demolition.

My third point, that the antithesis of the urban commons in Buffalo is demolition and homogenization, has been outlined in chapter I and the succeeding chapters extensively. An additional point, however, parallels Richard Sennett's proposal that the urban and the city develop in a similar pattern to individual humans. He outlines the development of what he terms the "purified city" in four stages beginning with adolescence, which he describes as an "imbalance between the capacity of experience and the fund of experience available that could guide new powers and strengths."[199] He continues that the adolescent replaces parental authority with an incorporation of "value rules" which develop from a "social context wider than the family."[200] Identification with a group or community follows, but then so also does a desire for "coherent order," which,

[199] Richard Sennett, *The Use of Disorder: Personal Identity and City Life* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 1970), 114.
[200] Ibid.

as I understand Sennett's analysis, means an outward projection of identification upon the surrounding environment. So, in the deteriorating city the collective consciousness searches for order after it has emerged from the paternal discipline of industrial capitalism. Statist solutions engage in clearing away cluttered neighborhoods and ruined historical structures to impose large urban renewal projects, while small pockets of capital suck public funds to establish large "silver-bullet" solutions such as the Bass Pro endeavor in chapter IV. Yet, Sennett suggests that the desire for order and homogenization may be obstructed, and possibility of a "purified identity" is shattered. He argues, though, that "…out of this process can come a kind of human concern centered on and appreciative of the 'otherness' in the world."[201] Sennett uses the metaphor to explain the crucial value of diversity in a city: the young and the old; the black and the white; authority and anarchy; and the historic and the not-yet-envisioned. Activist preservation has maintained significant diversity by reframing the built environment within a heritage commons in Buffalo, and each of the previous chapters illustrates how state and market institutions pursued the homogenized alternative as a default setting. And while Mumford promotes the idea of "unified plans" for the city, he also states that "What men cannot imagine as a vague formless society, they can live through and experience in a city," suggesting that heterogeneity provides opportunities for integration and personal "distinction… through wider participation in a concrete and collective whole." [202] Rationalizing urban space, in the way the mid-century modernists sought, ultimately produces the lengthy spans of alienating, monolithic design that early Buffalo preservationists like John Randall reacted against. Also, demolition as a genesis

[201] Ibid., 115.
[202] Mumford, "What is a City?" 94.

for future, newer development essentially enclosed pockets of remaining city within gluts of emptiness.

The fourth point presents historic architectural preservation as a socio-political exercise in resituating the built environment within a commons conceptualization. I have given four examples of Buffalo's historic architectural preservation history to illustrate an evolution of practice and a production of an urban commons. The evolution follows this course: failure to stop the demolition of the Larkin Administrative Building; to haphazard activity around preserving the Martin Complex, and organization contests around other Wright houses; to successful establishment of a movement after the Guaranty's preservation; to a multi-layered debate around the Richardson/Olmsted Complex, the largest and most difficult preservation project to date. Each case study ebbs and flows in a different trajectory on the historic preservation and urban (heritage/cultural) commons axis [Figs. 21 & 22], but each case also provides instructive scenarios on reframing the urban fabric as a collective resource.

Finally, the synthesis of these analyses argues that historical preservation contests capitalist enclosures and statist homogenizations in Buffalo, and asserts a commons approach to the production of the city. Like other social activist movements, historical preservation operates under many different presumptions depending on what type of organization or group happens to be under examination. However, as an abstract force in Buffalo, preservation activism has succeeded in retaining heterogeneity in the urban built environment, re-conceptualizing buildings and landscapes as common pool resources, and providing alternative designs for the production of the city. Each of these endeavors follows the fundamental philosophy, which criticizes the needless cycle of disintegrating,

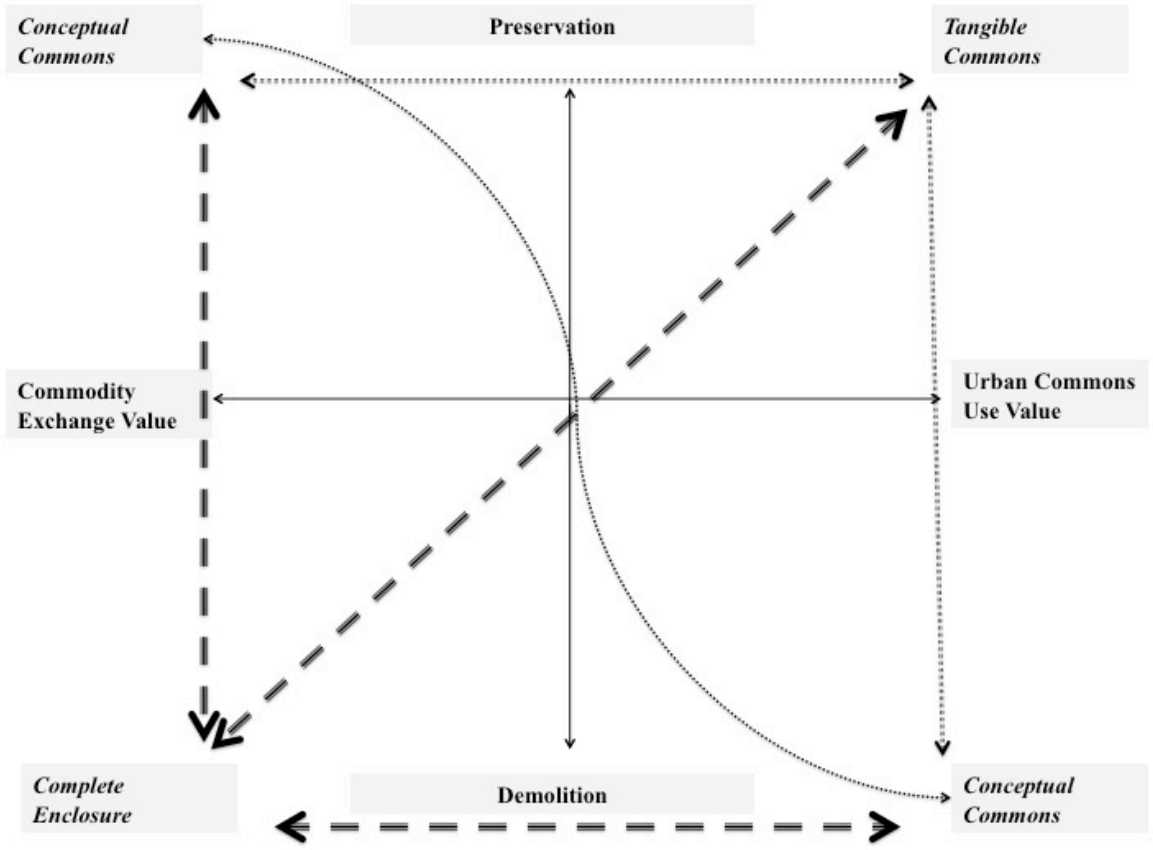

Figure 21. The Preservation Axis Diagram 2: Drawn with vectors indicating the ebb and flow of the different case studies analyzed.

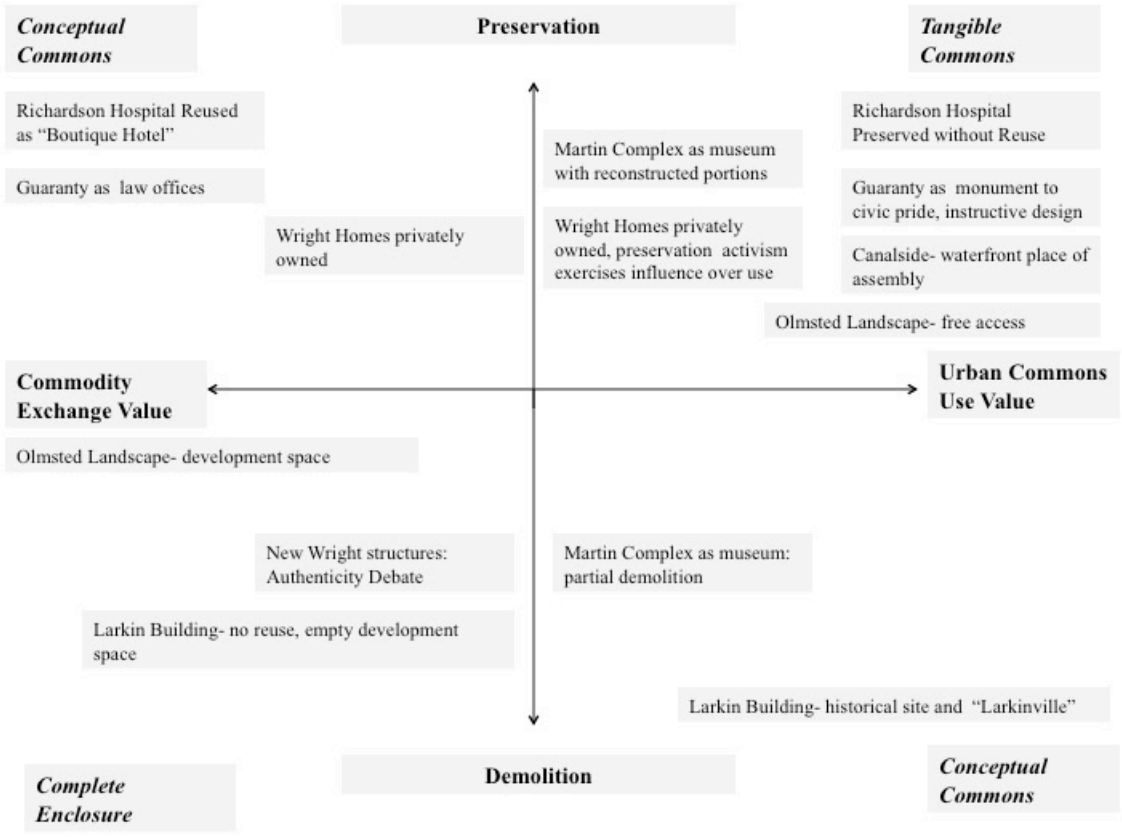

Figure 22. The Preservation Axis Diagram 3: Complete Synthesis.

remarketing, and redeveloping urban space in a postindustrial city. When Sennett asks "How can the urban-based large-scale bureaucracies be transformed so that better communal lives are possible,"[203] architectural preservation offers solutions to multiple urban problems rooted in state and market shortcomings. Sennett continues that "It is a question of learning how to use the system of life-producing affluence in order not to be

[203] Sennett, xvi.

smothered by it,"[204] and, in Buffalo, that smothering was initially difficult to diagnose. It was not the smothering by way of heavy density and congestion in urban space, but rather the gradual dissipation of the urban fabric into empty space.

This dissipation, or dissolution, has far reaching consequences- well beyond the scope of this paper- and often relates to environmental conservation arguments for architectural preservation. Although I am not attempting to penetrate this area of urban studies deeply, I am addressing the larger, global issue to contextualize the urban commons question within an integrated phenomenon of societal consequences. Neil Brenner addresses the larger, global notion of the urban, saying "As Lefebvre recognized, this process of creative destruction (in his terms, "implosion-explosion") is not confined to any specific place, territory or scale; it engenders a "problematic," a syndrome of emergent conditions, processes, transformations, projects and struggles, that is connected to the uneven generalization of urbanization on a planetary scale."[205] Typically referring to urban metropolis/megalopolises and networks of cities, Brenner argues that the urban is not a "bounded settlement," but a reality where all corners of the planet are subordinated to urban processes. In the case of Buffalo, the external effects of reorganized spatial development stem from the dissolution of the city rather than the city's expansion into suburbia, town, and country. I suggest that this situation is no less significant, as the people leave and spread out, and subsequently occupy more space, the city crumbles and the remaining inhabitants grow more alienated and disenfranchised. Brenner refers to this interdependent relationship between different, and traditionally distinct, spaces as "Extended urbanization: the process of sociospatial and

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[204] Ibid.
[205] Neil Brenner, "Theses on Urbanization," ch. 13 in Neil Brenner ed., *Implosions/Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization*, (Berlin: Jovis Verlag GmbH, 2014), 188.

socioenvironmental transformation that facilitate and result from urban development across places, territories and scales," and that "Urbanization contains two dialectically intertwined moments- concentration and extension."[206] Buffalo's degradation actually contributes to the larger scale urbanization- maybe even more intensely than cases of intensified densification- because the former residents spread into the outer margins of Brenner's urban process. The activist preservationist works as an environmental conservationist in this context, as many in the field often repeat the clichéd statement that "the greenest building is the one already built." Additionally, preservation labors to re-enfranchise the urban commoners through the leveraging of the built environment, and may indirectly re-enfranchise the commoners not typically thought of as urban. For instance, Brenner points out that

> Current debates on the right to the city have productively drawn attention to the politics of space and the struggle for the local commons within the world's giant cities, the densely agglomerated zones associated with the process of concentrated urbanization. However, foregoing analysis suggests that such struggles must be linked to broader politics of the global commons that is also being fought elsewhere, by peasants, small landholders, farm workers, indigenous populations and their advocates, across the variegated landscape of extended urbanization.[207]

A simple illustration of the postindustrial city's contribution to Brenner's analysis comes to mind when pondering the suburbanite, who has- in effect- been expropriated form the city's walkable commons, and forced to rely upon automobile transportation. Indeed, as Linebaugh states: "… as an aspect of the recent enclosures, planetary woodlands are being destroyed in favor of commercial profit… petroleum products are substituted as the base commodity of human reproduction and world economic development… indigenous

[206] Ibid., 190-194.
[207] Ibid., 199.

people worldwide- commoners all- are expropriated."[208] So, preserving and returning the built environment to the commoners of Buffalo, and encouraging the preservation of the city's fabric may assist in the struggles for the commons on a cosmopolitan level as much as a parochial one.

In conclusion, I have a few more general remarks on my alternative assessment of historic architectural preservation and the cultural/heritage commons. I have argued that the capitalist enclosures in Buffalo actually manifest themselves as empty space, where abandonment and demolition have occurred, essentially expropriating the urban commoners from the very fabric of the built environment. This occurs both in a tangible way that results in displacement of large numbers of the city population, as well as atmospherically, resulting in a degradation of communal/experiential reciprocity in the city. In analyzing early enclosures, Álvaro Sevilla-Buitrago discusses Marx's theories on early capitalist accumulation and alienation stating that "… the social reproduction of the community is basically oriented towards preservation of the regimes of relative self-subsistence and self-government upon which communal autonomy is based. Enclosure entails the destruction of these regimes and is therefore embedded in the broader Marxian ontology of alienation."[209] Historic architectural preservation has contested the destruction of the "regimes of communal autonomy" in Buffalo (manifested in buildings representing a collective history, neighborhoods, and monumental symbols), and actually produced/created communal agency and self-government where it had not existed (Canalside) with activist alternatives to state and market designs. Preservation activists

[208] Linebaugh, 5.
[209] Álvaro Sevilla-Buitrago, "Urbs in Rure: Historical Enclosure and the Extended Urbanization of the Countryside," ch. 16 in Neil Brenner ed., *Implosions/Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization*, (Berlin: Jovis Verlag GmbH, 2014), 239.

have slowed the repetitive churning of the built environment for the sake of purification and redevelopment as well. Sevilla-Buitrago explains an "*ongoing* moment of accumulation by dispossession, characterized by the continuous reworking and creative destruction of already capitalist realms of social life, as the subsumption of labor is deepened and new aspects of sociality are commodified and recommodified,"[210] which clearly relates to the postindustrial conditions and state/market interventions in Buffalo. The preservation activists have actually halted this perpetual "creative destruction" in some cases (the Guaranty Building), reversed it in others (Canalside), and continue to confront it still in others (Richardson/Olmsted Complex).

My assessment of historic architectural preservation and the production of a cultural/heritage commons in Buffalo is intended to elaborate on the arguments for all of the atmospheric and experiential value a differentiated built environment provides. Many times throughout this paper, I have proposed degradation and demolition of the built environment as only *half* of the threat to the urban commons. The other *half* emerges, as a cure worse than the disease, in the form of remaking and purifying the city's abandoned, blighted, or forgotten sectors. Criticizing the modern architects of the previous century, Richard Sennett offers a particularly insightful diagnosis of Le Corbusier:

> I used the term "compulsive neutralizing" to describe their work, a phrase which may seem to characterize the neutralizing impulse psychologically. In fact this compulsion to empty in order to build reflects a belief the modern artist holds about his or her status as an inventor. The inventive person stands in a hostile relation to the existing society. When we use words like "provocative" and "arousing" to describe modern invention of an artistic sort, these words carry the implication of a challenge to, a negation of, what already exists… Negation is a trap; like the young Le

[210] Ibid., 241.

> Corbusier, the artist can wind up representing only his own act of denial.[211]

Building upon Sennett's analysis, I argue that architectural preservation may fall into aggrandizing the old regime as it were, but (in Buffalo anyway) may also resurrect a solidarity with social production and reproduction that urban commoners may have forgotten in the postindustrial malaise. In his analysis of the Chilean *pobladores*, Daniel Opazo Ortiz reminds that "Judith Revel and Antonio Negri have stated that what is common to men (and women) is not their origin, 'their soil,' but instead what they build collectively,"[212] so the importance of re-appropriating the built environment on historical grounds cannot be overstated. Ortiz refers to the "*pobladores* (poorly translated into English as slum dwellers)" as active commoners on the tangible and conceptual level; they occupy public spaces to prevent privatization, demand public housing construction, and also refer to Chilean political history as a commons.[213] So, the first element of contestation for the preservation activist is the built environment, the second element is designs on replacing said built environment through creative destruction, and the third is the history itself- or the story urban commoners attach to the built environment.

In closing, I want to mention one other perspective that dialogues well with my alternative assessment of historical preservation. Walter Benjamin's work around representation and the city contradicts some of what I have argued here, but his assertions regarding ruins stands out as at least parallel to, if not supportive of, my analysis. In her presentation of Benjamin's contemplation of ruins, Susan Buck-Morss says "Because

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[211] Richard Sennett, *The Conscience of the Eye*, (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), 172-174.
[212] Daniel Opazo Ortiz, "Creating and Appropriating Urban Spaces- the Public versus the Commons: Institutions, Traditions, and Struggles in the Production of the Commons and Public Spaces in Chile," ch. 8 in in *Urban Commons: Moving Beyond State and Market,* ed. Peter Neizke (Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag GmbH, 2015), 118-119.
[213] Ibid.

these decaying structures no longer hold sway over the collective imagination, it is possible to recognize them as the illusory dream images they always were. Precisely the fact that their original aura has disintegrated makes them invaluable didactically," indicating that ruins stripped of their meaning show us that "history appears concretely as the mortification of the world of things."[214] In this sense, architectural preservation may seem ghoulish since Benjamin's notion of history illustrates a natural force which transfers living things into fossils. Buck-Morss continues that "… in the image of the fossil, Benjamin captures as well the process of natural decay that marks the survival of past history within the present, expressing with palpable clarity what the discarded fetish becomes, so hollowed out of life that only the imprint of the material shell remains."[215] This sounds somewhat depressing, but I find some positive opportunities in the idea that an object or structure may be recognized as an "illusory dream" through the process of history. Recognizing the built environment as such allows for a more bold and radical determination that it should be shared (as a commons) and not repackaged or rebuilt repetitiously to feed capital accumulation. Buck-Morss quotes Benjamin on this very cycle at the end of her chapter on ruins:

> The course of history as it is represented in the concept of catastrophe has in fact no more claim on the thinking man than the kaleidoscope in the hand of a child which collapses everything ordered into a new order with every turn. The justness of this image is well founded. The concepts of the rulers have always been the mirror thanks to which the image of an "order" was established.- The kaleidoscope must be smashed.[216]

To some significant degree, the work of preservation activism has at least restrained the rotations of that "kaleidoscope" in Buffalo. Moreover, the defense of historic architecture

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[214] Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1989), 159-160.
[215] Ibid., 160.
[216] Ibid., 201.

and the degree to which it has entered a cultural/heritage commons may encourage the work of producing other urban commons in Buffalo, and a wider entitlement to the city itself as a commons in its entirety.

Appendix

Below is a partial list of preservation activities of the *Preservation Coalition of Erie County* and the *Campaign for Greater Buffalo: History, Architecture, and Culture,*

Extracted from 3 Decades of the Publication *Buffalo Preservation Report*:

May/June 1984-

- 3rd birthday of Preservation Coalition
- Advocated and Preserved exterior Terra-Cotta of New York Telephone Building as opposed to covering it with granite
- Stopped construction of Science School #59 which would deface Martin Luther King Park (Olmsted)
- Merit Building- Ellicott District?
- Outlined Preservation Philosophy- President's Column- McCartney
- Theatre District becomes Historic District- May '83- Ellicott District- Sept. '83
- Guaranty Building Guides volunteer- Coalition involved on Master Plan Committee

September/October 1984-

- Great Lakes Industrial Experience tour Guides Developed
- Sue McCartney named to Richardson Task Force
- Coalition Advises restoration of Victor Hugo's- (Buffalo Mansion)

May/June 1985-

- Studied and critiqued proposals, and finances regarding Pilot Field
- Advocated for Chamber of Commerce Building- Seneca and Main
- Saved Delaware Avenue median trees (Olmsted) from being torn out under Scajaquada Bridge- Tielman

September/October 1985-

- Preservation Coalition Co-Plaintiff in suit to stop Science Magnet School construction in MLK Park- State Historic Preservation Office approved construction- Coalition criticizes SHPO
- John Conlin named to consult restoration of Cyclorama

- 1986 Fire at St. Mary's at Broadway Church- stained glass saved by Tielman in face of Mayor Griffin's apathy

November/December 1987-

- Organized and participated in lecture/workshop on Richardson/Olmsted Complex- State promises $1.6 million for stabilization
- Article instructs readers on getting property landmarked in Buffalo- Bill Greene
- Coalition sponsors panel discussion- Past, Present, and Future of Lafayette Square
- National Trust studies the Preservation Coalition to see what makes organizations successful

January/February 1988-

- Coalition negotiates with Landmark Society and National Trust to ensure stewardship of the Roycroft Inn
- Opposed parking ramps between ECC and Ellicott Square Building

December 1988-

- Worked on and with Ciminelli to deconstruct and store Bank of Buffalo building to save structure and rebuild in the future- awarded grant from National Trust
- Landmark Status achieved for St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum (Old Erie Community College Campus)
- Buffalo News Magazine- November 1988- Features cover story on Preservation Coalition
- Alerts community that Pillsbury is considering demolition of the historic Great Northern Elevator

April 1990-

- Coalition pushes Common Council to declare Great Northern a Landmark
- Applies for Landmark Status for Trico Plant in Parkside
- Coalition helped prevent commercial zoning variance on Richmond Ave- retaining the character of the neighborhood

Summer 1990-

- Coalition awarded grant from National Trust to perform engineering study on Great Northern- block demolition
- Joined with Hamlin Park Residents to block construction of Canisius Dormitory
- "A Look Back at the Preservation Coalition: Accomplishments"- Warren Glover

- Connecticut Street Armory
- Allendale Theatre
- Lafayette Square
- St. Mary of Sorrows
- Joseph Ellicott District
- New York Telephone Building
- Bank of Buffalo
- Great Northern

Buffalo Landmark list going back to 1977- Coalition credited for at least 10 of 14 landmarks going back to 1981.

Winter 1990-

- Calumet Building designated Landmark- Coalition's "Making Monuments" Project
- Publication of Waterfront Guidebook- ed. Tielman
- Formulated case for Hamlin Park Historic District

Winter 1991-

- Preservation Coalition applies for and is awarded Landmark Status for Goldome Buffalo Savings Bank building.

Summer 1992-

- 60 Hedley Place- oldest building in Hamlin Park- saved from demolition
- Tielman mobilizes Parkside community and Coalition to prevent parking lots from being built in Delaware Park
- Brekenridge Church designated a Landmark
- Coalition fights to prevent demolition of Fisherman's Wharf- eventually demolished

Fall 1992-

- Helped design reuse for historic Gas Station on corner of Delaware and Allen-Wilson Farms

Winter 1992-93

- Coalition takes part in Central Terminal Task Force

September/October 1993

- Coalition organizes rally for Old Gas Works in the wake of National Fuel negligence
- Published alternate plan for Crossroads Hockey arena sparing Blacksmith, Oldman Boiler, Phoenix Die Cast, as well as cobblestone streets in area known as "Buffalo's Birthplace"

January/February- 1994

- Tielman publishes extensive "Historic Buffalo Plan" as alternative to Horizons Waterfront Committee Harbor Plan released in 1993. Comprehensive plan covers all historic areas of Buffalo's heritage- Commercial Slip, Cobblestone District, Marine Drive, Naval Park, Ellicott District, Downtown and Old Gas Works

Feb/March 1995-

- Fought to save Cobblestone District from Crossroads Arena (First Niagara Center)- including Boiler Works, Indiana Street…etc.
- Prepared Hamlin Park application for Historic District status Continued to Inform on Grain Elevators with a reprinted article from *Scientific American* from 1897 hailing the Great Northern as a marvel of its age.
- Fought to ensure full usage of Old County Hall, preventing any vacancy caused by the construction of a new court house.
- Educated readers on what Preservation Code should be used for- (ex. Eastwood Place Rectory- Hamlin Park)
- St. Mary's Church (burned 1986) Stained Glass displayed at BHS thanks to Coalition Efforts

April/May 1995-

- Advocated accepting Senator Moynihan's allocation of $1.5 million to help refurbish Central Terminal (Public Support Rally)- against Mayor Masiello's "too far gone" stance.
- Published critique on new federal regulations: Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to determine their affect on preservation- Tielman
- Educated public by re-printing Sullivan's "The Tall Office Building"- poetic architectural manifesto

October/ November 1995-

- Advocated smaller, diverse plots of land on waterfront near Canal Terminus
- Advocated reuse and restoration of Marine Hospital in Parkside

- Received $8,000+ grant from New York State Council on the Arts to be used fro study on illuminating Grain Elevators
- Buffalo/Erie County Library puts *Preservation Report* on Microfilm
- Continued the fight to preserve the authentic Cobblestone streets threatened by the Sabres Arena construction

February/March 1996-

- Recognized Mayor Masiello's working paper characterizing waterfront development an extension of downtown development as a step in an improved direction
- Published a suggestion on reusing the Richardson Hospital- Rebecca Randall
- Promoted completion of the lengthy Market Arcade restoration and reuse
- Advocated for smaller building sites near waterfront/canal- Jesse Haines

April/May 1996-

- Organized rally with Local 1286 Longshoreman's union, among others, to fight ADM on demolition of Great Northern Grain Elevator
- Published arguments against "Big Box" retailers in favor of small businesses with themes of community oversight and pedestrian rights/snow removal- Langdon and Tielman
- Continued to expose deficiency of Horizons Waterfront plan and the successor plan by the Empire State Development Corporation, which offered an underfunded version of the unpopular Horizons plan
- Advocated for Olmsted's Front Park restoration in favor of city's destructive plan
- Prepare Hamlin Park community for Historical District Status

June/July 1996-

- Fought to save 159 Swan Street- America's first day care- Fitch Creche 1879
- Coalition and others organized by Tielman to save Asbury Methodist steeple
- Continued critique on Horizon waterfront debacle – Tielman
- Continued advocacy for Central Terminal – Hamilton, Houston Lownie hired by Polish Center to do engineering study
- Continued advocacy for Great Northern Elevator

August-November 1997-

- Central Terminal Restoration Corporation (CTRC) Field, Tielman, Hryvniak purchase the Central Terminal from derelict owners

- Organized “H. H. Richardson’s Buffalo State Hospital: Sell it, Develop it, tear it down”- free lecture with Dr. Frank Kowsky
- Coalition (Tielman) organizes over 300 volunteers to clean- relay cobblestones of Illinois Street to preserve authenticity in the Cobblestone District
- Advocated for the Webb Building as Carl Paladino moved to have it demolished (McCartney- Preservation Board)
- Advocated for the Art Deco 1939 Buffalo air terminal to prevent its demolition
- Fought to prevent demolition of the Schmidt’s Building and Pierce Arrow Showroom and advocated for an adapted reuse of the two terra cotta structures- both city landmarks
- Continued to present plans for the Canal/Waterfront design in which Buffalo celebrates its historic identity and park land remains open to the public

Spring 1999-

- Exposed weakness of Convention Center feasibility study placing the structure on four blocks from Huron to Broadway and Washington to Oak – famously declared it a “Death Star”- also suggested alternative site: Old Lehigh Valley Yards
- Fought Empire State Development Corporation and Urban Development Corporation’s plan to destroy archaeological site of the Erie Canal Terminus. State plan would cost $27 million to destroy “Pompeii-like” Buffalo collection of artifacts to build frivolous attractions
- Provided alternative design and Pan Am site for Olmsted School rather than jeopardize the Richardson/Olmsted site
- Halts Demolition of Pierce Arrow Showroom and offers alternative reuse plan
- Offers alternative “175 Year Birthday of the Canal” plan to the ESD destructive plan- Tielman
- Offers Ashbury Methodist Church reuse plan- Tielman
- Advocated for a Loft District Downtown and the reopening of Mohawk Street- Ruth

Fall/Winter 2005/06

- Criticized and opposed Blue Cross site occupying ten acres, but only using 10% of area- purchased from city in a “stealthy” acquisition the remaining land is gobbled up by Indiana-based developer. “Anti-Urban, drive-by architecture”
- Calls new Federal Courthouse “Design-assisted suicide” transforming downtown from a “complex eco-system into a dehumanized streetscape”
- Opposed construction of casino at Landmarked Delaware, Lackawana &Western railroad station near the Cobblestone Historic District
- Organized Volunteers to recover potentially thousands of Canal artifacts removed from the Commercial Slip and dumped in a Tonawanda landfill- such as shells from Buffalo’s first fresh oyster shipments

- Saves Metzger Building at Main and Virginia from demolition- prepared for rehab
- Advocated for the J.N. Adam (AM&A's) building as an architectural "Modernist must-save"
- Continued advocacy for Richardson/ Olmsted complex- 18 months earlier Governor Pataki and Legislature approved $80 million for saving structure due to lawsuit against state co-signed by Campaign For Greater Buffalo management board member Sue McCartney
- Advocated demolishing thruway that cuts through West Side

These are merely select segments from the publication's many instructive articles on how to save the historic, urban fabric of Greater Buffalo and why certain buildings and built environments warrant preservation. *The Preservation Report* also provides renderings and layouts for alternative development plans as well as satirical criticism of politicians, developers, and parking garages.

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