

CREATING THE CAPACITY FOR GROWTH:

RPA'S EIGHTH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

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Addressing an audience of nearly 600 during a special mid-morning program at RPA's 1998 Regional Assembly on May 6th, New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman praised RPA for its work in the region. "Throughout the years, RPA has set the tone for sound planning and in the process has set an example for other regions across the nation. In producing the Third Regional Plan, you once again offered a blueprint for keeping our states on the path to progress. That document strikes a proper balance among diverse goals for the region, and I know I speak for my counterparts in Albany and Hartford in applauding you..."

Our state is going through the second round of an extensive cross-acceptance process [of the NJ State Plan] with the hope of giving local governments a greater stake in the success of the plan. And here I want to acknowledge the commitment to the State Plan made by my predecessor, Jim Florio, who is now a member of your board."

With the Tri-State region entering its sixth year of growth, the anxiety that existed in the early 1990's has finally been replaced by a renewed sense of confidence in the region's future. This confidence, however, is tempered by reminders that a similar mood existed prior to the region's decline in the late 1980's. We clearly remain over-reliant on Wall Street with its inherent volatility and cycles of boom and bust. There is also concern that problems related to growth—labor shortages, high housing costs, congested highways and subways, disappearing open space, increased emissions and waste—could damage the region's quality of life and threaten the duration of the expansion. *Creating the Capacity for Growth* explored how we could harness our many assets—our transportation network, our waterfront and parkland, potential development sites in our cities, and the diverse and creative people who live there—to sustain growth, expand prosperity and enhance quality of life.



New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman at RPA's 1998 Regional Assembly.

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CREATING THE CAPACITY FOR GROWTH

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In his Keynote Address, Columbia University Historian Kenneth T. Jackson reminded us that in the past, New York City and the region have overcome much more formidable challenges than those that face us today.

In her luncheon address, Adele Simmons, President of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, stated that unlike Daniel Burnham, architect and creator of Chicago's first regional plan, she said, "you and I are dealing with problems which have built up over more than half a century which, by their very nature, are difficult to grasp. We speak of sprawl, brownfields, job displacement, tax bases, school funding, affordable housing, and social equity. We are talking of problems driven in part by commerce, but also—at their core—by a tangled web of federal, state, and local government policies...In finding solutions we must deal with hundreds of municipalities, untold numbers of bureaucracies and a highly diverse population of citizens."

Workshops at the Assembly addressed the following:

- *Suburban Highway Congestion: What To Do When We Cannot Build Our Way Out Of It*
This workshop explored perspectives on enhancing mobility and the region's quality of life, and stressing the importance of managing the entire transportation spectrum more effectively.
- *Crosstown 116th: Bringing the Principles of Habitat II Home, From Istanbul to Harlem*
This workshop focused on new plans for 116th Street that would bring city building principles of the UN's Habitat II Conference to Northern Manhattan.
- *Riding on the Edge: Transit, Land-Use and the Remaking of Suburban Sprawl*
Concentrating on the Nassau Hub, this workshop investigated the potential and limitations of using transportation improvements to turn sprawl centers into true places.
- *Parks that Pay for Themselves*
This panel analyzed whether parks can be developed with little or no public funds, citing Governors Island, Liberty State Park and the Hudson River Waterfront.

- *At-Risk Students in the Information Economy*

This workshop examined the impact of recent educational reforms, and considered whether small scale successes can be transported to scale large urban school systems.

- *Regional Rail: Where Are We Two Years After the Third Plan?*

A series of major rail initiatives were proposed in the Third Plan to create a seamless, modern, user-friendly system. This workshop highlighted the progress made in turning the plan into reality.

- *Climate Change and the New York Region: Will We Become the "Baked Apple?"*

This workshop explored the potential impacts of the weather on our region's growth, mainly how business will affect and be affected by climate change and policy options governments are considering.

- *Redeveloping Brownfield Sites: Market vs. Planned Approaches*

This workshop explored market-based and planned approaches for brownfields and vacant land redevelopment. Panel I focused on market approaches, such as tax abatements or liability protection that help move sites back into productive use, while the second panel considered planned approaches for sites that require heavier public involvement and commitment. •

For background information from the Regional Assembly, or for a transcript of Gov. Whitman's or Adele Simmons' speech, visit our website at www.rpa.org, or call 212.253.2727 x309.



"Regional Rail: Where Are We Two Years After the Third Plan?" workshop, with panelists (l-r) Jeff Zupan, Carl Weisbrod, Edward Seeley, Jr., Brenda Levin, Peter Herman and Thomas Prendergast.

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SAVE THE DATE!!!

Thursday, April 29, 1999

RPA's Ninth Annual
Regional Assembly

at the

Sheraton New York
Hotel & Towers

GUEST COLUMN: Linda Dickerson on The Hudson Valley Redevelopment Partnership

A new brownfields partnership is bringing an innovative regional approach to the redevelopment of abandoned and underutilized properties, many of which are older industrial or commercial sites in historic or waterfront districts of Hudson Valley cities. The partnership, supported by a \$200,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, is the only regionally-funded initiative in the tri-state metropolitan area. As part of a national pilot program by the EPA to help revitalize the economies of communities across the country, the goal of the Hudson Valley Brownfields Redevelopment Partnership is to create a model that can be adapted by other regions nationally.

The project, to be managed by Mid-Hudson Pattern for Progress, a nonprofit regional planning and policy group, will help implement recommendations from RPA's Third Regional Plan, "A Region At Risk." Working with RPA staff members, Pattern last year launched a project chaired by RPA board member and Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation CEO John E. Mack, III to bring a strategic approach to such issues as urban development as a Hudson Valley spin-off of RPA's *Competitive Region Initiative*. Brownfields clearly emerged as an area where there was a match between RPA's findings and opportunity in the Hudson Valley. In its Third Regional Plan, RPA estimated that the tri-state region has more than 50,000 "brownfield" acres, many of which could be reclaimed for productive use, particularly in the region's cities and other centers. In the Hudson Valley, these brownfield sites are especially critical since so many of them—a legacy of the region's proud industrial past—line the shores of the Hudson, now federally designated as an American Heritage River. Reclaiming them and returning them to productive use will not only create employment opportunities, redirect growth back to urban centers, and add to the tax base, but also

help catalyze major waterfront development and public access projects in the region.

Working together to make this happen is a regional brownfields redevelopment partnership that is a broad-based coalition of more than 25 groups and agencies representing a diverse spectrum of government, business, planning, environmental and citizens organizations. The goals of the two-year project are to:

- *Assess the impact of brownfields on the community;*
- *Conduct a systematic, coordinated inventory of brownfields in the Hudson Valley region, beginning with sites that are predominantly in or around the region's cities;*
- *Establish a regional outreach program to assist public and private owners of these potentially, environmentally impaired properties with the necessary information and resources to stimulate redevelopment;*
- *Coordinate training programs for regional and local organizations, including environmental and economic development groups who are either promoting the clean-up of or undertaking the remediation of brownfields to help with site selection and assessment;*
- *Develop a site screening process to both identify sites and rate their potential for redevelopment, and publish a site directory of properties that are available for redevelopment;*
- *Identify a limited number of pilot sites for actual site investigation;*
- *Identify resources within the region and create a database and clearinghouse of information for enhancing brownfields redevelopment, including organizations with expertise, financing tools, incentives and job opportunities;*
- *Create a model with long-term benefits, sustainability and national replicability.*

The project builds on urban redevelopment work underway in the cities of Beacon, Kingston, Middletown, Newburgh, Poughkeepsie and Port Jervis through the Hudson Valley Urban Coalition, which began two years ago as a joint effort by the economic and

community development agencies of the six cities. The group, also coordinated by Pattern, published a comprehensive regional urban investment portfolio, held training programs for the development and banking communities about financing urban investment projects, and helped broker deals that eventually sparked approximately \$200 million in new capital investment projects in the six cities. The brownfields project aims to convey the message that the same market development approach can successfully be brought to older industrial sites which could be profitably redeveloped for adaptive reuse.

In its Third Plan RPA calls these abandoned brownfields sites regional assets. Pattern agrees. In fact, the classic cities of the Hudson Valley, which had begun to experience the same pattern of urban erosion so common in the tri-state metropolitan region are now enjoying a renaissance with renewed interest on the part of the development community in neighborhood revitalization and larger-scale commercial projects. The Hudson Valley brownfields partnership has the potential to build on the momentum of numerous local county and private-sector activities that are reclaiming the region's small cities, and a regional strategy will provide greater access to technical expertise, new technologies and economic opportunity for local communities who simply do not have the resources to take on a project of this magnitude alone. The goal is to not only have a significant impact on the region, but to serve as a model for other small cities throughout the nation. •



Ms. Dickerson is President of Mid-Hudson Pattern for Progress. For more information about the brownfields redevelopment partnership, write to her at: 280 Broadway, Newburgh, NY 12550.

TRI-STATE SUPPORT FOR OPEN SPACE INITIATIVES

The Connecticut State Legislature responded to Governor John Rowland's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Open Space by passing legislation allocating \$166 million over the next five years for open space acquisition. The goal is to have the state, municipalities, land trusts and water companies hold 21 percent of the state's land mass as permanent open space by the year 2023.

During Task Force deliberations and public hearings last fall, it became clear that the public was deeply concerned over the sale of surplus water company properties. Recent deregulation of electric utilities will compound this concern when this industry's non-productive assets will be offered on the open market. Both the water and electric utility situations have the potential to create an open space retention crisis over the next several years.

Guided by the Third Plan and Connecticut's new commitment

to funding the preservation of open space, RPA/CT is proposing a program that seeks to enhance public understanding of the acquisition issues unique to the disposal of utility properties, such as identifying and cataloguing each parcel for its open space value and establishing acquisition priorities. This will also contribute to balanced and strategic open space preservation in the state and region. An active coalition of organizations will be created, representing broad-based interests, whose purpose is to find common ground for principles and priorities in the disposition of surplus utility properties, and to advocate for specific land uses of and preservation strategies for key parcels.

New York & New Jersey have also undertaken significant open space programs.

New York Governor George Pataki, the State Legislature and the voters successfully enacted the \$1.75 billion Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act. These

bonds will provide approximately \$300 million for parks and natural resource protection over the next 10 years. In addition, the Environmental Protection Fund annually allocates approximately \$50 million for open space acquisition and parks.

In New Jersey, Governor Whitman has called for the preservation of more than one million acres of open space in the next 10 years. Recently, she approved a \$340 million bond issue to preserve open space and historic sites, and approved the purchase of more than 80,000 acres of open space to protect the environment and provide for recreation. •

Building a Metropolitan Greensward outlines RPA's proposals to preserve open space and natural resources in the Tri-state region. To order, send \$5 to: RPA, 4 Irving Place, 7th floor, New York, NY 10003, or call 212-253-2727, x309.

RPA has received the following new grants:

Town of Hempstead and Nassau County, \$100,000 for RPA's portion of a joint project with the Long Island Regional Planning Board...**Charles H. Revson Foundation**, \$50,000 as the second installment of a three year grant for Third Plan implementation...**The Nathan Cummings Foundation**, \$40,000 toward Regional Rail...**Lincoln Institute of Land Policy**, \$30,000 for Remaking Suburban Sprawl Centers...**Pinchot Institute for Conservation**, \$1,000 for Urban Forestry.

The following companies continued their support by making Leadership grants:

Chase Manhattan Bank, \$55,000...**Merrill Lynch**, \$50,000...**Bell Atlantic**, \$30,000...**Merck & Co.**, \$30,000...**Pitney Bowes**, \$30,000...**Xerox**, \$25,000.

RPA would like to thank the following Underwriters of the 1998 Regional Assembly:

Affordable Housing Construction Corp....**American International Group, Inc.**...**American Express Company**...**AT&T**...**Bell Atlantic**...**Benjamin Moore & Co.**...**Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation**...**Chase Manhattan Corporation**...**Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc.**...**Davis Polk & Wardwell**...**The Depository Trust Company**...**Downtown Lower Manhattan Association, Inc.**...**Eastern Consolidated Properties, Inc.**...**European American Bancorp.**...**Mr. George Fox**...**Fortune Brands Inc.**...**Goldman, Sachs & Co.**...**GPU, Inc.**...**The Guardian**...**Peter W. Herman, Esq.**...**The Hillier Group**...**IBM Corporation**...**Independence Savings Bank**...**Johnson & Johnson**...**KPMG Peat Marwick LLP**...**Mack-Cali Realty Corporation**...**Maraziti, Falcon & Healey, LLP**...**MarketSpan Corporation**...**MBIA Insurance Corporation**...**Merck & Co., Inc.**...**Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc.**...**Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy**...**Morgan Stanley, Dean Witter, Discover & Co.**...**Morse Diesel International**...**National Broadcasting Company**...**Parsons Brinckerhoff, Inc.**...**People's Bank**...**Pitney Bowes**...**Polytechnic Institute of New York**...**The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey**...**Price Waterhouse LLP**...**The Prudential Insurance Company of America**...**Public Service Electric & Gas Company**...**RCPI Trust**...**F. D. Rich Company**...**Mr. David Rockefeller**...**Russell Sage Foundation**...**Schering-Plough Corporation**...**The Sulzberger Foundation, Incorporated**...**TIAA - CREF**...**TishmanSpeyer Properties, Inc.**...**Treiber Insurance Group**...**U.S. Trust Company**.

Thank you.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE TRI-STATE REGION

Most scientists agree that human activities affect air quality, water availability and purity, soil and tree conditions, which in turn affect the climate. RPA has launched an effort to identify policy responses that make sense under the widest range of political, economic and scientific circumstances.

Many government agencies are responsible for one or another aspect of climate change. Yet climate change impacts often go beyond particular political, bureaucratic or disciplinary boundaries. Dealing with its impacts will require both regional and systems approaches and input from such fields as transportation, construction, energy use, finance and insurance, coastal change, land use patterns, water supply and immigration.

RPA's initiatives over the past year included a series of breakfasts for senior representatives of the financial and business sectors, a survey of government agencies in the region and a workshop at the Regional Assembly.

As a regional, national and global center of the financial industry, the Tri-state region can play a key role in propos-



Participants at a recent breakfast meeting on Climate Change included Granger Morgan of Carnegie Mellon University and RPA Board Member Governor James Florio.

ing and responding to the initiatives now under discussion nationally and internationally. The more than forty participants at the breakfasts expressed strong interest but noted that their industry is not yet addressing climate change as a strategic issue.

Topics at the breakfast included a scientific assessment of climate change impacts on the region, U.S. policy considerations pre- and post the Kyoto international negotiations and a modeling process for integrating the range of climate change issues.

Government Actions on Climate Change in the Metropolitan NY/NJ/CT Region was part of the documentation for the Metro East Coast Climate Impacts Assessment Workshop organized by the Columbia University Earth Institute with RPA. In this survey of 80 public agencies in the region, respondents described innovative initiatives going forward in individual departments, but so far largely unconnected to the kind of policy formulation or inter-agency communication that effective climate change planning requires. A notable exception is the New Jersey Climate Change Work Group which is preparing a State Climate Change Action Plan, and which engages staff on a working basis from many government departments as well as from local government and the private sector.

The breakfast meetings were co-sponsored by EPA Region II. RPA hopes to continue the series in 1998-1999. •

For more information on climate change, contact Rob Pirani at 212-253-2727 x305. To order RPA's report, please send \$5.00 to Publications Department, RPA, 4 Irving Place, 7th floor, New York, NY 10003.

A FASTER WAY TO JFK

On-site airport construction has finally begun on Port Authority's long-awaited Light Rail System, to be completed in 2002. Airport customers will have fast and efficient interterminal access and connectivity to the region's mass transit system with seamless transfers at Jamaica and Howard Beach. Designed to be compatible with the LIRR and/or NYCT trains to allow for a future one-seat ride into Manhattan, the PA project is a good first step towards accomplishing that goal. However, the off-airport Jamaica segment — which allow all of New York and Long Island rail access — must undergo a Uniform Land Use Reform Procedure (ULURP) approval. Show your support for this very important project by contacting the New York Council Land Use Committee at 212.788.7100.

Blueprint

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Program Development, Aram
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x310, or send an e-mail to
aram@rpa.org.*

The passage of the **Hudson River Park Act** in July was a notable exception to an otherwise undistinguished 1998 Albany legislative session. To create the Hudson River waterfront park, which stretches from Battery Park City to 59th Street, the State and City agreed to put up the necessary capital funds and to share jurisdiction over the mix of commercial and open space uses. Governor George Pataki and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani reached agreement on this innovative solution with significant contributions from legislative leaders and after two years of civic coalition building and negotiations. The adjacent communities were given representation on a new form of public benefit corporation to administer the park's operations within strictly drawn parameters. The private revenues generated within the park boundaries were dedicated to maintaining the park. This bill, resulting from a hard-won cooperative effort between government and civic groups—including the Hudson River Park Alliance, of which RPA is a member—establishes a template for future mixed-use park developments such as Governors Island.

• • •
Joseph J. Maraziti, Jr., a former member of RPA's New Jersey Committee was appointed as Chair of the New Jersey State Planning Commission.

• • •
RPA President Claude Shostal was appointed to **Governor Pataki's Land & Water Conservation Task Force**, which is seeking renewal of federal funds for state funded open space projects.

• • •
Newly elected to **RPA's Board of Directors**: **William Bolster**, President of CNBC; **Richard J. Carbone**, Chief Financial Officer, Prudential Insurance Co. of America; **Michael R. Cowan**, Sr. VP, Corporate Real Estate & Purchasing, Merrill Lynch & Co.; **Ira H. Jolles**, Sr. VP & General Counsel, GPU, Inc.; **Matthew S. Kissner**, President, Pitney Bowes Financial Systems; and **Gary M. Rodolitz**, Principal, The Rodolitz Organization.

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