



**Erie Canal Harbor  
Development  
Corporation**

A Subsidiary of Empire State Development

**ERIE CANAL HARBOR DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
at the offices of  
Empire State Development – Buffalo Regional Office  
95 Perry Street, Suite 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203

**Meeting of the Directors**

Monday

December 10, 2018 – 10:30 AM

PROPOSED AGENDA

CORPORATE ACTION

1. Canalside Design Committee - Authorization to Designate Canalside Design Committee Members and to Take Related Actions

FOR INFORMATION

2. South Aud Block Redevelopment – Oral Report
3. Vice President’s Report – Oral Report

**Item #1**



**FOR CONSIDERATION**

December 10, 2018

**TO:** The Directors

**FROM:** Steven P. Ranalli

**SUBJECT:** Canalside Design Committee

**REQUEST FOR:** Authorization to Designate Canalside Design Committee Member and to Take Related Actions

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**I. Background**

The Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation's (the "Corporation") Canalside Project (the "Project") is a mixed-use neighborhood that will reconnect Downtown Buffalo to the Lake Erie waterfront through a network of streets, canals and public spaces, evoking the City's history, while creating a timeless neighborhood that will help define its future. With approximately 1.1 million square feet of development, including retail, restaurant, hotel, office, cultural, and residential uses, Canalside is made up of multiple development parcels within approximately 20± acres on the Buffalo Riverfront ("Project Area").

The Canalside Design Guidelines ("Guidelines") were prepared in July 2009 and revised March 2010 and apply to all development parcels within Canalside. These Guidelines take as their foundation, both in terms of intent and detail, the guidelines approved as part of the 2005 Erie Canal Harbor Amendment to the Urban Renewal Plan for the Waterfront Redevelopment Project. The emphasis of the Guidelines is on public spaces and the goals are to provide high quality, attractive and active spaces that employ contemporary techniques but connect to the unique history of the site and Buffalo as a whole. To this end, the Guidelines are focused on the impact of buildings on the public environment. The Guidelines seek to create spaces, not projects. The goal is to create an ever changing, lively atmosphere and visual appeal throughout the Project Area (which is not a traditional business or residential district). The focus is on the pedestrian - to provide a human scale, good wayfinding, and a comfortable walking environment.

The Guidelines are also intended to create visual interest from near and far. Up close, ground level design standards produce comfortable, inviting, and stimulating environments. From afar a variable skyline of roof edges, vertical shafts, and signage create interest.

These objectives are achieved through a general consistency of design intent, communicated through standards concerning such features as fenestration, materials, color,

scale, lighting, and signage. The Guidelines also encourage visual interest throughout the Project Area, achieved through a variety of forms and materials. At full build-out, the Project will have the appearance of a variety of buildings and spaces that have been built over time, by different owners and designers. The Guidelines are mostly concerned with visual content relating to any and all parts of buildings (seen up close as well as from afar) in Canalside. They are guidelines and not rules.

The purpose of the Guidelines is to give direction and help provide an efficient review and response to proposed development actions. To facilitate the process, the Corporation established a Design Review Committee in 2010, which is composed of local professionals with specific training and/or expertise in urban/architectural/landscaping, design, construction, and development to review and make recommendations to the Corporation Board of Directors on the design of private development proposals at Canalside with regard to their consistency with the Guidelines.

## II. Canalside Design Committee Composition and Function

### A. Purpose

As articulated in the Guidelines, the purpose of the Canalside Design Committee (“Committee”) is to assist the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation Board of Directors (“Board”) with the development, adoption and implementation of the Guidelines. The Committee’s role is to help ensure that the Guidelines and all development at Canalside promote a cohesive atmosphere that is inspired by the architecture of Buffalo’s historic canal district.

### B. Composition, Selection, and Qualifications

As originally drafted, the Guidelines anticipated that the Committee would be comprised of three members appointed by, and serving at the discretion of, the Board with input from the Mayor of the City of Buffalo. The members are to serve until their resignation, retirement, removal by the Board, or until their successors are appointed. The Guidelines also contemplated that once the Committee has completed review of all proposed permanent structures within Canalside, the Committee shall be dissolved and have no further duties.

The Committee currently consists of two (2) members: Rishawn Sonubi and Audrey Ross Sanders. At this time, the Board is being requested to appoint one (1) new member to the Committee.

From a member selection perspective, Committee members are to be knowledgeable in matters pertaining to architectural design and historical context as it relates to Canalside. The Guidelines state that Committee members are prohibited from being an employee or an immediate family member of an employee of ECHDC, ESD or any developer or tenant of a proposed permanent structure within Canalside.

### III. Committee Member Appointment

Mark Mistretta is requested to be designated as a member of the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation's Canalside Design Committee.

Mark is currently the Director of the Western District, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Mark is responsible for the planning, development, management and evaluation of all operations, as well as overseeing facilities and programming within Niagara Falls, NY. He manages and oversees staff in the Allegany and Genesee Regions of the State Parks. Mark provides exceptional leadership and direction necessary for the coordination, implementation and integration of programs and services including park operations, maintenance and rehabilitation, engineering land acquisition, planning, development, human resource management, fiscal administration, environmental management and compliance, historic preservation, programs and community services, grants administration and public relations.

Mark graduated from Rutgers University, State University Of New Jersey, with a B.S. in Landscape Architecture and is a registered Landscape Architect in NYS. Mark was the initial Project Landscape Architect working for Wendel, a multi-disciplined and well-known landscape architect firm, for 27 years; displaying his dedication and his exceptional work ethic.

Mark has been very instrumental in implementing various projects for the Regional Initiatives and Historic Landscapes which include: Niagara River Greenway Plan and GEIS; Olmsted Park and Parkway system Master Plan and Phased Improvements; Erie County Parks System Wide Master Plan; University of Buffalo, North & South Campus Landscape Master & Management Plan; Scajaquada Corridor Study and EPP; Waterfront Corridor Initiative; Niagara Falls Downtown and Waterfront Transportation Plan; Niagara Falls Airport Development Plan; Lewiston Streetscape Improvements; and Peace Bridge/Niagara Falls Bridge Authorities Master Plan, just to name a few. He also has been involved in a variety of projects which include waterfront/shoreline restorations, sustainable landscapes, and master planning and phase improvements for large parks and recreational facilities.

Mark's dedication, architectural insight and outstanding leadership are paramount to the array of projects he has done and continues to envision, providing new and improved access to public lands within WNY. He has also received prestigious awards and accolades from Business First, Leadership of Buffalo, and the Frederick Law Olmsted Award. Mark is also affiliated with the American Society of Landscape Architects, Urban Land Institute and WNY Environmental Alliance.

### IV. Environmental Review

ESD staff has determined that the appointment of a Canalside Design Committee member does not constitute an "action" as defined by the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act ("SEQRA") and the implementing regulations for the New York State Department of

Environmental Conservation. No environmental review is required in connection with this appointment.

V. Requested Action

The Directors are requested to appoint Mark Mistretta as a member to the Canalside Design Committee to assist the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation with the development, adoption and implementation of the Canalside Design Guidelines issued by the Corporation in July 2009 and revised March 2010 and to take all related actions.

VI. Recommendation

Based upon the foregoing, I recommend approval of the requested actions.

VII. Attachment

Resolution

December 10, 2018

ERIE CANAL HARBOR DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION – Canalside Design Committee -  
Authorization to Designate Canalside Design Committee Member and to Take Related Actions

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BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the basis of the materials presented to this meeting (the “Materials”) a copy of which is hereby ordered filed with the records of the Corporation, Mark Mistretta is hereby appointed to the Canalside Design Committee to assist the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation Board of Directors with the development, adoption and implementation of the Canalside Design Guidelines; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Vice President of Development of the Corporation or his designee be, and each of them hereby is, authorized and directed to take any and all action necessary to carry out the foregoing resolution and to carry out any authority or delegation granted to the Corporation in conjunction with such authorizations, including, but not limited to, the preparation and execution of any agreements, instrumentation and/or documents as may deem necessary or appropriate.

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