

Conversation with the Mayor - October 17, 2011

Vicky Daly

An Adventure in Buffalo

This is coming to you slightly out of phase because I have been off on an adventure and I wanted to wait to share it with you. It was my good fortune to attend the National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference in Buffalo from the 19th through the 22nd. This is the first time in years that this conference has been held in New York State and the very first time outside the Metropolitan New York area. Complimentary New York State Scholarships which provided a free registration were offered by the Preservation League of New York State with the intent to bring New York preservationists together for networking, sharing and learning. More than one hundred New Yorkers from all over the state applied and I was pleased to be one of the recipients.

Organizers had hoped for 2000 people, but more than 2500 attended from across the United States, Canada and Europe. They were treated to one of the best organized events in which I have ever participated. During the very last break out session I learned a new (to me) term – ‘opportunity cost’, that is, what you give up to take an advantage of an opportunity. For example, the Daly household has just acquired a 13 week old Corgi puppy. Before taking that step, we had a discussion as to how adding Stubby to the family would impact what we could or could not do, how his presence would complicate life. Another example: the opportunity cost of going to the conference was being out of the office and the resulting work load that would be waiting upon my return. We chose to get the dog and I chose to go to the conference. Why? Because after consideration the gain outweighed the opportunity cost. My frame of reference for the 2 ½ days in Buffalo was ‘How could this be useful to our residents and property owners?’ I am still playing catch up on that pile of messages in my mailbox, but a list of leads to pursue and information to be shared comes next. You will be among the first to know when I have things sorted out.

Side bars: 1) It was good to see Ora Rothfuss, Wayne County Planning Department, and County Historian Peter Evans at the conference. It was good, too, to know that the Erie Canal, its communities and industries were a featured topic. 2) Frugality and ‘greenness’ were themes of the conference or ‘they don’t build them like that anymore’ were repeated themes. In these economic times, re-use of existing well built buildings makes more sense than abandonment or demolition and new construction whenever possible.

So, the adventure is over. Next year they meet in Spokane and that’s too far to drive.