The Inner Loop East Transformation, Recreating Community in Downtown Rochester

Erik Frisch, Manager of Special Projects, City of Rochester

Bret Garwood, CEO, Home Leasing Development

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ABSTRACT

In this session you will learn about the Inner Loop East Transformation Project in the heart of the City of Rochester, where a sunken section of expressway has been converted to an at-grade “complete street” and seven development parcels. This type of revitalization is relevant to many Upstate NY cities and offers great opportunities to developers and powerful outcomes for area residents. As part of this sustainable redevelopment in Rochester, Home Leasing is building four mixed-income residential buildings that take community needs into account, integrate with new walking and bike paths, bolster environmental stewardship, and further the overall project’s goal of improved livability and the creation of a downtown where everyone can live. The City of Rochester will cover the planning, infrastructure and economic development efforts of the Inner Loop East Transformation Project. Home Leasing will cover the implementation and financing of its sustainable community-minded developments.

BIOGRAPHY

Erik Frisch is Manager of Special Projects for the City of Rochester’s Department of Environmental Services / Bureau of Architecture and Engineering. He currently has responsibility for overseeing coordination of the ROC the Riverway initiative, a bold plan to transform Rochester’s urban waterfront along the Genesee River. Prior to becoming Manager of Special Projects in 2018, Frisch served as the City’s Transportation Specialist for more than 11 years, where he managed the City’s transportation planning, traffic calming, and traffic control functions. He has played a key role in many major City initiatives in recent years, including the Inner Loop East Transformation Project, Bicycle Master Plan implementation, bikeshare system development, Midtown Rising, and Downtown Two-Way Traffic Conversion. Erik served as a
Program Manager with the Genesee Transportation Council for nearly six years prior to beginning work with the City in 2007.

Chris Straile has been a practicing green building consultant for 8+ years. Chris specializes in on-site verification of high-performance programs, including whole building blower door testing. Chris consults with architects and developers on energy efficient design strategies and performs verification of energy performance for new construction and renovations for programs such as Passive House (PHIUS), ENERGY STAR® and LEED® for Homes. He holds a BS in Biology from SUNY Cortland, with experience working with the Syracuse Center of Excellence as a Home Energy Technical Advisor.

Bret Garwood joined Home Leasing in 2017. He serves as Chief Executive Officer for Home Leasing and Home Leasing Construction. Bret provides executive leadership and oversees the day-to-day operations of the company. Before Home Leasing, Bret served as Senior Vice President for Multifamily Programs for New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR). He oversaw the development and implementation of affordable housing finance and development programs, including Tax Exempt Bonds, 4% and 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), State Low Income Housing Credit (SLIHC), and capital grant and loan sources. While at HCR, Multifamily Programs financed 272 projects with more than 39,000 total housing units. These developments generated a total investment of $15.7 billion in urban, suburban and rural communities, and utilized $6.2 billion of tax exempt and taxable bonds, annual allocations of $296 million of LIHTCs and SLIHCs, and $636 million of capital grants and loans.

Bret served as Director of Business and Housing Development for the City of Rochester from 2007-2013. He directed the planning and implementation of the City’s economic development, housing and real estate functions under a mission to enhance Rochester through real estate development, neighborhood revitalization, business attraction, housing production and rehabilitation, and workforce development. Prior to that position, he worked with the Housing Council in community development, research and program development. He also served as Executive Officer of the Ithaca Board of REALTORS, Director of Housing Services for Tompkins Community Action in Ithaca, and as a private consultant.

Bret holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Architecture from Lehigh University and a Master of Science in City and Regional Planning from Cornell University. He is a member of the New York State Association for Affordable Housing, and a recipient of the New York State Association for Affordable Housing (NYSAFAH) 2015 Advocate of the Year award and the 2012 Rochester Business Journal Forty under 40 Award.