

CRT News

CRT Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, October 19, 2011

12:00-1:00 pm

“Why the Proposed Fare Increase?”

with

Tom George, NFTA

Director of Surface Transportation

Mr. George oversees Metro Bus and Rail, including public transit operations, administration, and financial planning. His professional career spans twenty years in transportation work.

Citizens for Regional Transit meets at:

617 Main Street, Market Arcade Building, Buffalo



Meeting space available courtesy Preservation Buffalo-Niagara

CRT meetings are free and open to the public

Transit and Historic Architecture--a Perfect Fit

The National Trust conference on historic architecture is a unique opportunity to celebrate Buffalo’s enduring heritage. Built a century ago, our downtown still contains buildings representing a wide variety of styles and usage, and should be treasured by all of WNY.

But please notice the facades and street orientation of Buffalo’s great buildings in downtown, as we participate in tours and discussions. These buildings abutted the sidewalks and had grand entrances for a reason-- to invite pedestrians inside.

As we go, let us compare the historic built environment with the one we inhabit daily.

Do we sit in traffic in order to rush from large box to larger box through concrete mazes?

Or do we stroll through interesting streets and linger at inviting spaces?

The difference?

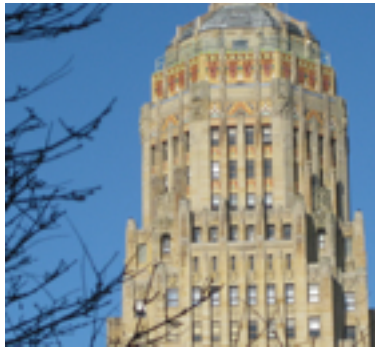
They had streetcars.

Let the conference begin.

ADVOCACY ALERT!!

Commuter benefit at risk...

In December 2010, Congress extended the **transit benefit pre-tax** cap increase from \$120 per month to \$230 per month, for one year, matching the amount allowed for parking expenses. Without immediate Congressional action the transit portion of the commuter benefit will be reduced nearly in half at the end of 2011, effectively creating a tax increase for the over 2.7 million public transit and vanpool commuters that currently use this benefit. To take action, see www.commuterbenefitsworkforus.com/



National Preservation Conference Hosted by Buffalo, Oct 15-22

Conferees for the National Preservation conference (aka National Trust for Historic Preservation) will be arriving soon. This attention for Buffalo's built environment has spurred general cleanup and improvements for numerous landmarks and buildings.

Bring a friend, hop on Metro Rail to downtown, and take a look!

Remember, great buildings accompany great transit...

World on Your Plate

Daemen College

Register at
worldonyourplate.org

Fri., Oct. 14 7-9:30 pm
film: "The Economics of
Happiness"

Sat., Oct 15
Keynote Speaker:
Judy Wicks

Workshops offered
include:
10:30 am
Gladys Gifford,
"Just Transportation:
to Eat or to Drive?"

For the scoop on events open to the public during the National Preservation Conference, see:

<http://www.preservationbuffaloniagara.org/news/pbn-news/article:10-06-2011-public-guide-for-preservation-week-activity/>

Local Transit Issues Fester...

by Gladys Gifford

At the Sept. 21 meeting of CRT, we heard from Buffalo's Stephen Stepniak, Commissioner of Public Works, and Peter Merlo, City Engineer concerning the **Cars on Main Street** project. A respectful discussion was shared, and mutual concerns voiced about the elimination of the Theater Station. However, no assurances were offered, but talks will continue. Will a lawsuit be necessary?

Meanwhile, the NFTA is wrestling with their proposed 2012-2013 budget and forecast a \$15 million deficit. To close that gap, **fare increases are suggested**. The Board of Commissioners will be discussing that proposal at a special meeting called for Oct. 13.

This budget gap is largely the result of NYS budget choices made over recent years. Passenger fares produce only one fourth of NFTA revenues. Historically, NYS provides operating assistance to the NFTA, amounting to a third of its revenues-- but that assistance has not increased under Gov. Cuomo, while expenses continue to rise. Hence, the fares paid by transit riders are directly linked to the NYS budget. Now is the time to get involved!

Cars Sharing Main Street : Another Vision

by Lynn Magdol



I've just returned from a visit to Northern Europe, mostly in the cities of Helsinki , Finland , and Copenhagen , Denmark .

In both of these cities, multiple means of transportation coexist beautifully. Electric trams have their own dedicated tracks and the streets are wide enough for multiple lanes of automobiles and delivery trucks. There are vehicle-free walking streets that are vibrant centers for retail shopping, eating, and drinking. Bike racks are everywhere and cyclists do not have to battle traffic, as they have their own lanes too. Many of the bike lanes also include pedestrian lanes, separated from the sidewalks and the roads, both visually and by slight changes in elevation. What a difference!

As the costs of using an automobile increase, financial and environmental and health-related, we should be looking to cities in other countries for new possibilities.

Citizens for Regional Transit invites You---

Mission: CRT seeks to improve bus transit and to expand rail transit for all of Western New York through citizen involvement and education.



Join us!

Membership dues are fully tax-deductible!

corporate \$150.

household \$35.

individual \$25.

student \$5.

Membership payable by check or via PayPal.

Send check to:

Citizens Regional Transit

c/o John K. Howell, treasurer

289 Ashford Avenue

Tonawanda, NY 14150-8563

Save the Date
City Unveils
Future Development Plan

When:
October 29, 2011

Where:
**Erie Community College,
 City Campus
 121 Ellicott Street, Buffalo, NY**

What:
**Formal presentation:
 9 am, 10:30 am and 1pm**

Open House: 9:30 am to 3:00 pm



Calendar

Oct. 14-15, 2011

World on Your Plate conference, Daemen College, Amherst (p. 2).

Oct. 18-22, 2011

National Preservation Conference, various sites in and around Buffalo (p. 2)

Oct. 19, 2011, 12-1 pm

CRT monthly meeting, 617 Main St., Buffalo (p. 1)

Oct. 23, 2011, 3:30-5 pm

VOICE-Buffalo public meeting, including transit advocacy Westminster Presbyterian Church, Buffalo

Oct. 29, 2011, 9:00 am

Buffalo Green Code presentation, ECC City Campus, Buffalo (p. 4)

Nov. 2, 2011, 9:30 am

Planning Coordinating Committee of GBNRTC, Erie Co Public Works Dept., 95 Franklin St, Buffalo

Nov. 16, 2011, 12-1 pm

CRT monthly meeting, 617 Main St., Buffalo

Citizens Regional Transit Corporation
617 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14203

return service requested