



Mayor's Anti-Flipping Task Force



Anthony Masiello, Mayor
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Assemblymember Sam Hoyt, Co-Chair

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ANTI-FLIPPING TASK FORCE WILL HAVE PRESENCE AT CITY "IN-REM" SALE

Buyers of foreclosed properties will be scrutinized by Task Force members

Next week the city of Buffalo will be conducting its annual tax foreclosure sale of properties struck to the city as a result of unfulfilled property tax obligations. Hundreds of homes and commercial buildings will be on the auction block, available to the highest bidder.

However, this year there will be a few more interested parties at the sale. Members of the Mayor's Anti-Flipping Task Force will be in the crowd monitoring the sale, watching for unscrupulous buyers who may be buying homes for the purpose of "flipping" them to unsuspecting out of town buyers.

Property flipping is the practice of purchasing a home and rapidly reselling it at an inflated price to an unschooled buyer. Many times, fraudulent documentation and misleading loan agreements are used to trick the buyer into thinking that the property is worth more than its actual value and that the mortgage terms are reasonable.

In order to determine the extent of the problem and identify possible solutions, the Anti-Flipping Task Force (AFTF) was organized. Headed up by Co-Chairs Senator Bill Stachowski and Assemblyman Sam Hoyt, and Task Force Coordinator Kathleen Lynch of the WNY Law Center, the Task Force and its members have been meeting on a regular basis to discuss ways to prevent property "flipping" and how to best pursue those who prey on Buffalo's poorest neighborhoods looking for run down, dilapidated houses. Many of the properties available at the "in rem" sale are located on the city's east and west sides.

"Unfortunately, there is evidence that properties used in "flipping" scams are purchased through the city's "in rem" sale" Senator Stachowski explained. "These houses can be bought for as little as \$500, and with a limited amount of resources, sold to an out of state buyer for thousands of dollars. Once the new purchaser realizes their new property is worthless, it either sits in disrepair or is "flipped" to another potential owner."

Assemblyman Hoyt said that "Task Force members, who are familiar with the usual suspects and their methods of operation, will be at the sale watching for irregular purchases, or purchases made on behalf of known "flippers". If you're interested in buying any of these homes or commercial buildings, you should have the resources and manpower to rehab the property and bring it up to code, because we will not stand for any sale to a slumlord or irresponsible party."

The city's "in rem" sale will take place Monday, October 24 at the Buffalo Convention Center and run until Wednesday, October 26.

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