



City of Buffalo

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAYOR MASIELLO ANNOUNCES ANTI-FLIPPING TASK FORCE FORMATION

Assemblyman Sam Hoyt and State Senator William Stachowski to serve as Co-Chairs

Buffalo, New York- Today, Mayor Anthony M. Masiello announced the formation of a anti-flipping task force to combat the growing problem of flipping in the City of Buffalo. The announcement was made at 41 Loepere Street, the vacant building was flipped over the internet and now is ready for demolition. City officials eager to address unethical and illegal real estate transactions and lending practices in Buffalo visited Baltimore, Maryland earlier this year to meet with city officials and special interest groups to discuss efforts how they dealt with the serious problem in their city. Led by Timothy E. Wanamaker, Executive Director of the Office of Strategic Planning for the City of Buffalo, a City of Buffalo housing team and Assemblyman Sam Hoyt, city officials met with the Community Law Center and the Director of Homeownership in Baltimore. Mayor Masiello called the trip valuable and information. He said the Buffalo task force will gather data on the activity in our neighborhoods as their first course of action.

"Buffalo, New York has recently experienced an increase in a practice known as real estate flipping. Perpetrators of flipping schemes and mortgage scams prey upon unknowing and vulnerable first-time homebuyers. Under this practice, individuals purchase property and then quickly resell it to another buyer at a higher price. Most often, the buyer relies on the seller for all the arrangements. This task force has been charged to deal with this problem and work towards solutions," said Masiello.

"The City of Buffalo takes the problem of house flipping and predatory lending very seriously. Our focus will be strategic and comprehensive," said Timothy E. Wanamaker, Executive Director, Office of Strategic Planning.

Co-chairs of the Mayor's Anti-Flipping Task Force are, State Senator William T. Stachowski and Assemblyman Sam Hoyt.

"Flipping is an issue we need to examine, but I would hope the task force will also look at the other schemes used by these flim-flam men, including "papering", inflated appraisals, and mortgage foreclosures. We know what they've been doing. We just need to find an effective way to put them out of business," said State Senator William T. Stachowski.

"This task force has been created to address a serious problem in Buffalo that has contributed, and continues to contribute to the destruction of the City's great neighborhoods. We will examine every angle of the problem, including the role played by eBay and other on-line auction sites. We will look at existing state and local laws that can be used to combat unethical real estate practices, and also assess the need for new state and local laws," said Assemblyman Sam Hoyt.

Coordinator of the Task Force is Attorney Kathleen Lynch, of the Western New York Law Center.

