

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to present my point of view on the subject of where to locate our passenger rail station here in Buffalo, NY.

The logic of choosing the site of the once mighty New York Central Terminal building makes as much sense today as it did in 1925, when after decades of debate the east side location was chosen because of one reason. And that reason was geography.

That location was the only place in the city of Buffalo, where trains moving in either direction could move freely and continue connecting passenger service with NYC and Chicago, as well as all points-in-between. The city's location, in-between the shores of two Great Lakes, the density of the downtown corridor, and the industrial areas of our region, quite honestly do not allow for a train to move efficiently in such a manner. In order to directly service downtown, the trains coming in from the east or the west would basically get stuck and have to back out while performing an intricate three point turn (which is both time consuming and dangerous). This is why the major railroads at the turn of the Century didn't even include Buffalo, NY as a stop on their passenger rail lines.

The arguments and the decision were made nearly 100 years ago. Geographically speaking, nothing has changed since then. In fact, passenger trains still pass by the Terminal on a daily basis. The other locations being considered simply do not have the same capability. They are not feasible, they are not affordable, they are not logical.

However, it's not simply the logic of this site that makes this location the best choice as a transportation hub. It is the connection of this building to the public that needs to be considered as well.

Since its birth, the former New York Central Terminal, has acted as a gathering spot for the people of Buffalo and WNY. From War Bond Drives to Xmas tree lightings the terminal has provided a grand environment for amassing crowds to collectively share and celebrate. That collective spirit is still evidenced today with huge crowds showing up for everything from volunteer cleanups to ethnic heritage celebrations like Dyngus Day and Oktoberfest.

For many people in WNY, and now, as our population has shifted, indeed throughout the nation, The Central Terminal holds an emotional connection that is forever ingrained in their psyche. Due to the fact that, after a long and arduous journey from a distant land, the Central

Terminal was their first entry into life here in our fair city as they searched for the American dream and a better life for their children and future generations.

This was for so many people their entry point to the Queen City.

It is a memorial to millions of people as a place of reunion with family and loved ones. Or sadly the place where many saw their fathers or grandfathers for the very last time, before they were shipped off to a bloody conflict somewhere in the world where they sacrificed their lives in order that their descendants may live in Freedom.

This is why, the volunteers of the Central Terminal Restoration Corporation and thousands of citizens have labored for the last fifteen years to preserve and protect this magnificent art deco masterpiece. This is why, in just a few short weeks the all aboard ct social media campaign has generated thousands of petition signatures, and individuals who have shown up for pep rallies and meetings, willing to help in the endeavor. Their hope, that one day the funding of such a massive project would materialize. And the preservation of the building would not only stop it's demise, but spark a reawakening (of not only the building, through its originally intended use), but to spur further development in the surrounding neighborhoods as we continue our cities reawakening and renaissance.

The reinvention of the Central Terminal as a regional passenger rail station is not just the logical answer to our areas transportation needs, it is the next step in continuing our cities revitalization by resurrecting a once mighty but now forgotten neighborhood, while efficiently answering our current and future transportation needs as well.

Over the generations many decisions were made that regrettably altered our cities infrastructure that can never be taken back. The choice to sever some of our grandest neighborhoods by plowing through them with a high speed expressway for instance. The demolition of magnificent structures like Shelton Square, only to be replaced with cold barren, and now vacuous office towers and empty malls. To this day, the razing of the Frank Lloyd Wright, Larkin Administration building, is lamented by students of architecture throughout the world. This committee has the opportunity to make a decision that will affect our community for generations to come. One hundred years from now let our descendants say that we made the right decision

Thank you ladies and gentlemen for your time, thank you for your consideration, and thank you for your decision. We pray that you make the right one.