

Press Statement, Oct. 7, 1987

Recently there has been much speculation as to the future of Burlington's Waterfront. Today I'd like to share my thoughts on this issue and suggest some future directions of the Sanders Administration concerning Burlington's Waterfront.

Six years ago, we made a commitment to the people of Burlington that we would do everything in our power to make certain that Burlington's Waterfront would be developed in a way that could be enjoyed by all of our citizens, and not just the wealthy. We have kept faith with that promise.

At the present moment, I am pleased to report that improvements to the Bike Path in the New North End and the downtown area are 90% complete. Construction of the "missing link" in the South End will start this fall and will be completed in the spring of 1988. All of us in Burlington are proud of that accomplishment because the Bike Path offers us an opportunity to enjoy our beautiful Waterfront in an open and environmentally sound way.

Last year, the City acquired the Mobil Beach from the Mobil Oil Corporation as a generous gift and I'm happy to say that that beach has been cleaned up and construction of a new bathhouse is under way, at a cost of over \$200,000.

Perkins Pier has seen a major expansion of its park space because of the removal of oil tanks and is now used much more frequently by people than ever before. More improvements at Perkins Pier, including a new kids' playground, will be built by next spring.

Shore protection at Leddy Park has been completed and the access road there has been improved.

Very importantly, and very excitingly, the new Community Boathouse at the foot of College street will be operational next summer. In two weeks, the barge that the city acquired in Galveston, Texas, will be en route to Burlington. This facility will be a year-round attraction where people will be able to rent boats at reasonable rates, and in the wintertime will be a hospitality site for skaters, cross country skiers and sunset-watchers. The Community Boathouse in itself is a major step forward in opening up the beauty of our Waterfront to all of our people.

The city of Burlington, in cooperation with project Renaissance, is proceeding with plans for creative, people-oriented uses of the old Moran Generating Station. The Moran Plant, in the past when it was an electrical generating facility, was a source of pollution and problems for people in the Old North End. Within several years, it is my expectation that the Moran building will be a wonderful public building which, in a variety of ways, will be enjoyed by Burlingtonians, Vermonters and visitors to our Waterfront.

Planning is currently underway for an extended Bike Path loop which will eventually encircle the entire City.

Lastly, we're planning for a significant expansion of the municipal marina at Perkins Pier.

In short, more public use development is taking place at the present time on Burlington's Waterfront than at any time in the

city's history. In fact, we're on the verge of creating one of the most spectacular and people-oriented Waterfronts in the entire country. The people of Burlington have a vision that our Waterfront will be one in which on a Sunday afternoon or on a Thursday evening, in the not-too-distant future, thousands of people from all walks of life, regardless of their income, will be able to enjoy the extraordinary resource that is Lake Champlain. Clearly, more work has to be done, but it is undeniable that real progress is being made. This City is proud of that progress.

When we speak about a people-oriented Waterfront, we must also speak about a rational zoning process which makes certain that the development which takes place on Burlington's Waterfront will be consistent with the needs of all of our people. Property on the Waterfront cannot and must never be used for development which has no other purpose than to make huge profits for the owners of that property. While there may be honest disagreement among citizens about what constitutes the best use of that property, there can be no doubt, as the recent decision of Judge Martin regarding the Public Trust doctrine indicates, that the filled lands can be used for any purpose other than public "public purposes." In December of 1986, after years of effort, the City of Burlington finally passed Waterfront zoning which in my view, and in the view of every member of the Board of Aldermen--Progressive, Republican and Democrat--represents the needs of people in our City. In my view, that zoning, which will prevent unacceptable and undesirable Waterfront development, has the support of the vast majority of our citizens.

Recently, it has been reported that the Central Vermont Railroad has suggested that the City's zoning is confiscatory and that they are giving thought toward a legal challenge of that zoning. The city of Burlington is not interested in further litigation regarding the Waterfront, but I do want to say that we will not be intimidated by the railroad or anyone else on this issue. It is our strong view that the Zoning passed by the Board of Aldermen is legal, is not confiscatory, and in fact, can and will allow for the balanced development that virtually every Burlingtonian wants to see. The people of Burlington want a significant amount of open space, park space, and public use on the Waterfront. They also want private development that can be enjoyed by the general public. The government of the City of Burlington intends to represent that vision and fulfill that vision. We will be delighted to work with the Central Vermont Railroad in any reasonable way to make that vision a reality.