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By Mark Sommer

### **Historical trust leader calls city full of gems says architecture doesn't get any better**

The leader of a national preservation group lavished praise on Buffalo's architecture and revitalization efforts Tuesday in Kleinhans Music Hall's Mary Seaton Room.

Richard Moe, president of the Washington, D.C.-based National Trust for Historic Preservation, told the gathering of more than 400 that "Buffalo is poised for a resurgence," after spending a whirlwind day touring the H.H. Richardson Complex, Martin House Complex, Nash Museum House and City Hall.

"In my line of work it doesn't get any better than this," Moe said. "To come here and in one day see the best of Upjohn, Sullivan, Richardson, Wright, Saarinen and Olmsted — nowhere else, nowhere else in the United States, with the possible exception of Chicago, do you see the rich array of 19th and 20th century architecture that you have here in Buffalo."

Moe invited the Martin House Complex to become a partner site of the National Trust, which would provide an ongoing marketing relationship.

"We like to affiliate ourselves with museum sites of the highest quality and significance," Moe said.

"I have never seen anything on the scale that Wright has done, and I have never seen anything on the scale with this quality that has been restored," Moe said. "This is a restoration that is not just worthy of Buffalo, but has national significance."

Moe also heaped praise on the Nash House for being "superbly" interpreted and displayed with original artifacts in the former home of the Rev. Jesse Nash.

"I've never seen anything quite like it. People really like an authentic experience, and that is an authentic experience," Moe said.

The National Trust president was also encouraged by the loft conversions occurring downtown. "If you get people living downtown, other [good] things will follow. It's a great revitalization strategy."

Moe, who has been president of the private nonprofit organization since 1993, spoke in prepared remarks of how preservation- based economic revitalization enhances quality of life and boosts heritage tourism, the fastest growing segment of the industry.

His visit comes as Buffalo competes with Philadelphia and Hartford to host the organization's annual National Preservation Conference in Fall 2011. The winner is to be announced this fall.

Ed Healy, spokesman for the Buffalo Niagara Convention & Visitors Bureau, said hosting the National Trust convention would be a great opportunity to expose Buffalo's architectural jewels to "an influential group of opinion makers" while enhancing the local economy.

"Given the investments we've made in our architectural heritage, it's a chance for Buffalo to step out on a national stage and say we've arrived," Healy said.

Healy said the conference would bring several thousand attendees who could expect to add \$2 million to \$3 million to the local economy.

The Buffalo Preservation Board also gave out its 2007 awards to those responsible for restoring The Church; Granite Works; Jesse Nash House; Pierce Building; and Darwin Martin House.

Mayor Byron W. Brown said he was impressed by the turnout for Moe, in which people paid \$47 and were served dinner and treated to music by the Colored Musicians Club.

"To have 400 people who care about preservation, and the wonderful architecture that Buffalo has, is very helpful to further putting our city on the map," Brown said.

The event was sponsored by the Convention Bureau, Preservation Board, Baird Foundation and several nonprofit preservation organizations.