

HAP Housing - Evening

Peter Gagliardi: I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our sponsors, particularly the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation, our gold sponsor for this year's event, and our silver sponsors, First Niagara Bank, MassHousing, Bank of America, Merrill Lynch, Peoples Bank and TD Bank. And please take note of our many bronze sponsors, supporters and friends who are listed in the program book. I trust that you've also seen their names scrolling on the screen as well. Without their support we would not be able to present this program.

I also want to just take a moment to thank the team at HAP Housing that has been actively planning for today's event for several months. And this has been in-between little bumps in the road, tornados, micro bursts, hurricanes, earthquakes and that little snow storm we had a few days back. We have with us some members of the panel that spoke at this afternoon's symposium. Joining us here tonight we have Jeffrey Fuhrer, Executive Vice President and Senior Policy Advisor for the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. Our guest speaker tonight was also part of the panel. That's Mayor Allen Joines of Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

We also had David Dixon, a principal at the firm of Goody Clancy based in Boston. I believe he may have had to go on to a community meeting given that that's their job these days, and we were also graced by a visit from Jerry Hayes, co-chair of Rebuilding Springfield. And he had another engagement this evening as well. We took some lessons from this afternoon's symposium, and I just want to share some of this because it came spontaneously from the panelists and from the people asking questions and I think there's some things that we want to remember.

One thing that seemed to stand out clearly as important is a common shared vision and a commitment to act upon it. We have an opportunity in front of us to develop that vision as an outcome of the planning process launched by the Rebuild Springfield initiative. Collaborative leadership was another important issue to being truly resurgent, and we have, I think, in our case begun to develop that as well -- greater interaction among people and a leadership that is increasingly diverse. Perhaps our biggest step in that regard was the change in our city council, and we now have a city council that looks in all its diversity like the city.

Those cities who've gone this path before us also were more successful when they created an entity to oversee the implementation of the plans that were made, and we have an entity to carry through the implementation of our plans to achieve our goals and our vision, and that is Develop Springfield, in partnership with the Springfield Redevelopment Authority, a very important step forward. I think one thing that we also

know in the background of all of this is that we have a lot of excellent initiatives underway in Springfield and in the region.

We have the State Street Corridor, we have the South End Initiative, we have the Old Hill and Six Corners Neighborhood Revitalization efforts. We have Cherish Every Child and Reading Success by Fourth Grade. We have the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant for the Springfield/Hartford Knowledge Corridor. I know down south they call it the Hartford/Springfield Knowledge Corridor -- but whatever. And we have the Pioneer Valley Plan for Progress, and we have a number of efforts focusing on employment and training. Those are all important pieces that together set the stage.

One of the things that Mayor Joines described this afternoon was getting to what he calls "seeing the guillotine". I refer to it as their guillotine moment, realizing that the path that they were on had an undesirable ending if something didn't change. And we wondered this afternoon, was the tornado our guillotine moment, the thing that told us uh-oh, we have really got to get together behind an effort to achieve what all of us would like to see achieved.

We have here, too, a mayor who stepped up to the leadership role and we need, all of us, to create the synergies behind that leadership. There's some converging trends going on here. We've got Rebuild Springfield in the planning process which is new, an outgrowth of the tornado. But in the background there's a larger movement that's nationwide towards smart growth, thinking about reducing the amount of petroleum that we use, the amount of carbon dioxide we put into the air. And one of the things we heard tonight was the best thing somebody can do if they want to reduce their carbon footprint is move into the city, park the car and walk. We need a walkable city if we want to help save the planet.

Greening our communities is important. Greening is a theme that's a subtheme of some of the Rebuild Springfield effort, and Springfield has been in the lead on pursuing a green, energy efficient future. And then there's another movement that we heard about, a return back to the cities, the people who are coming up aren't looking to move to Suburbia anymore. They're looking to live in livable cities. But we have to provide that livable city to attract the people who are looking for one. And that's part of it.

I think a big theme here -- I think we say well so and so should do this and so and so should do that -- that is not the question we should be asking. And the question I heard today was -- what can we do? What can I do to help with the resurgence of Springfield as a central city that's essential to the resurgence of our entire region? It's incumbent upon all of us, the businesses, the nonprofit organizations, the community institutions, the stakeholders throughout the metro region, our citizens, to come together and to commit to

a broad shared vision for the future of our largest city in the metro region that it drives and to make our respective decisions going forward in concert with that vision and the plan to rebuild Springfield. I think that's what we learned this afternoon. I think we know that that's what we need to focus on, so this is really about what all of us do going forward.

As many of you know, a contingent from Springfield visited Winston-Salem, North Carolina last November as part of the City to City initiative. We were impressed with that region's efforts to bring their cities, and we also visited Greensboro, back to economic vibrancy. We spoke with many people, the mayor, city staff, the chamber of commerce, the local community development corporation, business leaders, the arts community. And in each instance we heard the same thing. There was a shared vision and everyone seemed to be making their business decisions in concert with that shared vision. Those of us who visited Winston-Salem agreed that we should bring Mayor Joines to Springfield to share his city's inspiring story.

We firmly believe that we should all shamelessly borrow good ideas wherever we find them, and Mayor Joines and his fellow Winston-Salem citizens seem more than willing to share. As you'll note in your program, Mayor Joines has focused on rebuilding the economy in Winston-Salem and in unifying the community. He is described as a passionate advocate and an innovative force for the revisioning and resurgence of his community. It's my great pleasure to introduce to you Mayor Allen Joines from Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the city of the arts and innovation.

Mayor Joines: Thank you. Good afternoon -- excuse me, good evening. Wonderful to be in this beautiful city of Springfield and we were honored to host a group last year. I'm sorry that you've had so many crises, mayor, since they visited. I hope it wasn't bad luck coming down to Winston-Salem there. I've been just so impressed in the short time I've been here to see the vigorous effort that's underway with the resurgent Springfield initiative and also the rebuilt Springfield effort, and I know that it's a terrible tragedy you had with the tornado, and I know that Mayor Sarno, you were out there in the trenches every day helping them get a hold of that crisis, and I heard a lot of great things.

Also certainly, congratulations to the Mayor on his reelection. With the margin of victory maybe it's a coronation instead of an election there, but congratulations on that. That's wonderful. My role here tonight is just to share with you a brief sketch on what we've tried in Winston-Salem. Not coming here to say that we're the expert because we have had failures, and we've still got a long ways to go in our rebuilding efforts, but Peter got it exactly right. We had about two steps up that platform to the guillotine when we became focused on what we needed to do.

I described this afternoon that our journey could be described as a jeans to genes journey; that is jeans, j-e-a-n-s, where we used to make blue jeans, to genes, g-e-n-e-s, where now we're making body parts in our research park. We had to totally reinvent ourselves because our economy, an old manufacturing-based economy of tobacco, textiles and furniture; you know what happened to those industries, they're mature or they've off-shored those jobs. So we had to figure out a way to keep our economy going, to rebuild that economy. As a matter of fact, about 25 years ago 37 percent of our jobs were in manufacturing. Today less than 14 percent are in that sector.

We've seen dramatic job losses during that period of time. As a matter of fact, during that period when I was actually on the staff side of the city -- I was economic development director -- I don't know if I just wanted to enjoy the pain or what, but I kept a little list of all the job losses that were announced. And we had about 10,000 over a period of 18 months, which is very tough. Then we had a lot of slow job loss going along with that -- like RJR Tobacco went from 16,000 employees to just under 4,000 now. So it was time for us to get focused. We had no choice but to get focused. And as I said we had that first foot up the ramp.

There have been a lot of plans prepared over the years. Some of them sitting on the shelf getting dust; some have been implemented to a certain extent, and although there had been reasonable success in their implementation, we felt like there was a lack of cooperation, a lack of collaboration, a lack of a clear vision of where the community needed to be going. And we were still losing jobs. It was at that point in 1999 roughly that a number of our CEO's, head of Wachovia, now Wells Fargo, Reynolds Tobacco, Haines Brands, BB&T, our two large medical centers and several others came together, community leaders, to look at our economy.

And they said we've got to do something. We've got to take a demonstrative step to stop this downward spiral of our economy. Otherwise it's going to continue in that direction. Well, to give us some help and to work with a group of citizens that came together and other leaders, we brought in the Mackenzie Consulting Group and we spent almost 12 to 14 months working on analyzing our economy, looking at best practices, looking at what our strengths, obviously our weaknesses, looking at those threats to us and the opportunities, the traditional SWOT analysis that you all have done in your business before.

Based on the work of that task force and the consultant, we came up with a plan to rebuild the city, rebuild the city's economy. And we created the Winston-Salem Alliance which is a nonprofit development corporation, and I was hired to head that initially. And we focused on an implementation strategy that came from that with a very measurable agenda because I said today there's a Chinese saying that a vision without action is just a

daydream. Well, on the other hand, action without vision is a nightmare. So we didn't want either one of those to happen.

So we continued to work on that. Our primary thrust was to create jobs within seven sectors that we identified, basically knowledge based industries including financial services, design, medical, bio-medical, advance manufacturing, logistics and travel and tourism which is an important part of our makeup there. We also knew that we had to rebuild our center city because in order to attract the young professionals or professionals in general to these knowledge based companies we had to have a vibrant, active center city with an urban entertainment center with living opportunities, recreational opportunities and so on.

We as the Alliance and my role as the mayor somewhat acted as an umbrella group to help to try to bring collaboration to the various economic development entities that are in the city to add some cooperation. For instance, we just recently merged two of our economic development agencies in with the Alliance so we have a completely aligned strategy and completely aligned fund raising effort there as well. I told a group this afternoon of one example where we had in Winston-Salem probably half a dozen groups that were working to help small businesses and entrepreneurship. Some were -- a number were over in Greensboro.

So we came together, Greensboro and Winston-Salem, and we said to this group of individuals and organizations, if you all will come together with a strategic plan working together unified, we'll make available a million dollars a year to help your entrepreneurship development programs. It was amazing how quickly they came together to make things happen. But it's been very successful. The Triad Entrepreneurial Initiative has produced a lot of great potential high growth companies that will pay dividends for us over the years there.

We also are working hard to foster regional cooperation, and this staff with the entrepreneurial initiative built a firm relationship with Greensboro, and we've continued that on today as we billed ourselves as a region of about 1.5 million population rather than just a city of Winston-Salem or a city of Greensboro or a city of Highpoint. So we're positioning ourselves in that way. We also knew that it takes money to make these things happen, and mayor, in my city our budget is pretty tight. I suspect yours is pretty tight as well. So we turned to the private sector to try to come up with some dollars to help close deals, to help make projects happen.

And we created the Millennium Fund. We got contributions from some of our large corporations. Wachovia, for instance, gave us 10 million dollars, and we had some of our local foundations, individuals, other smaller companies, and we created a fund of about 44

million dollars, and we've now spent over 50 million dollars because we positioned that fund -- some of the projects we created as investments -- that we got some of the money back and will continue to get some funds returned to that.

We've worked hard since 2000 to carry out this plan and we felt like we were making pretty decent progress, but we decided let's bring back an independent look at our city. Are we really doing the things that we need to be doing to keep ourselves going? So we brought Mackenzie back in. We did a quick comparison of our metro area with 108 other metro areas around the country. We found we were keeping pace, so the thing was working okay. But what concerned many of us was the fact that we saw 17 other metro areas growing at twice the rate that we are.

So we zeroed in on seven of those. I called the mayors in those cities and asked if they would spend some time with our consultant, which they did. We found they were doing basically the same things that we are, strong recruitment, strong retention, strong small business development, technology development. But what set them apart, differentiated them, was the fact that they had identified a single economic driver, that they had been ruthless, as some of them said, in supporting, promoting, that high job growth. Most everybody in their cities could articulate what that driver was, and so there was complete buy in.

So we began looking at what could be a driver for us that could create about 30,000 new jobs over the next 10 to 15 years over and above the organic growth that we were going to get anyway. And we vetted about 15 potential drivers by asking three questions. One, is it feasible? Is it something that we could really pull off in Winston-Salem? Secondly, is it unique? Is it something that we could get started and then not have it stolen by someone in another part of the state or another part of the country? And thirdly, is it impactful enough? Does it have the potential to create the 30,000 or so jobs that we need to get into that high performing metro area?

So we vetted 15 potential ones, and we ended up on sort of a bio-tech conglomeration but with a focus on regenerative medicine. I talked a little bit about that today, that we have the largest center for regenerative medicine in the United States, and basically Dr. Tony Atala who runs that program has been able to grow 20 different tissue types and you may have read about him. He's been on Oprah and 60 Minutes and things of that nature, but he has successfully grown bladders and re-implanted them in humans. He's grown heart valves, and he's grown kidneys that have been re-implanted in rabbits and so on. So it's going to be a great opportunity there for mankind certainly from a health standpoint.

But we did some deep dives on the possibility of what businesses would come out of that. We believed that there's opportunity to create about 6 to 7 thousand jobs from companies that will spin off. There's already been one that started called Tengion that's actually growing bladders in a factory. I went to visit and I said how long does it take to grow a bladder? He said well it takes about four weeks. So the idea is if you have some disease of the bladder you come in, you get the DNA out, you get a new one grown and re-installed I guess in a period of about two months, and so it's amazing.

But 7,000 jobs directly from that and for every one bio-tech job there's a rule of thumb of about 2-1/2 to 3-1/2 multiplier jobs. So if you take an average of that, about 3 times 7 is 21,000 plus the 7,000 you're getting close to that 30,000 we need. So we're pushing hard on that. But we've tried to bring our citizens and our business community and our nonprofit sector in with us on this vision. We've articulated that, we've met with countless groups, with our community development corporations, with our neighborhoods, and I think what you'll see hopefully in Winston-Salem is that folks have bought into that vision of a city of arts and innovation.

I told the group this afternoon that one of my favorite African proverbs is that with enough spider webs coming together you can tie down a lion. So we had to get all of our spider webs together to tie down that lion of rebuilding the economy. We had to get the public sector involved, the private sector, the nonprofits, the churches even, to get involved there. So it's come together and we're making decent progress in that regard. It also certainly required that we remain focused, focused on that vision, not chasing every new, you know, trend that came along. We also had to discipline -- had to have the discipline to make the investments in the infrastructure necessary to make it work that supported the vision, and we had to stay committed to the underlying premise for the vision.

Now I'll be the first to point out and the gentlemen from the newspaper will know that our newspaper has been the first -- not the first to point out that some of them haven't worked. It hasn't been always a bed of roses. We had a very controversial baseball stadium, downtown baseball stadium project, that got into a little trouble with kind of a perfect storm of cost overruns and the economy hitting badly and as mayor about the longest six months of my life trying to figure out how to get it back on track there, but thank goodness we got it done, and the attendance has been overwhelming. They paid all their bills and everything is going well.

We're working on another project right now that's a great example of what collaboration is. We created corridors. We have about 11 bridges, highway bridges that have to be replaced on our freeway going right through downtown Winston-Salem. It's not going to be fun. I'm not sure I want to be mayor when all that work is going on, but we decided instead of just replacing them as bridges we want to do them as works of art and

to kind of create an icon, front door, for our city of the arts. And so that's been a wonderful collaborative project. We've got over 1,000 community citizens working on that with a wonderful leadership group. We got an NEA grant that's helped us do the planning and so we're now working with the Department of Transportation to move that forward.

Just last week we rolled out something we called a vibrancy study. We were interested in really the energy level in Winston-Salem, what was going on there. Basically asking the question, what is there to do in Winston-Salem now compared to 2006? Here's a few comparisons. In our downtown area in 2006 we had 50 dinner restaurants. Today we have 81. There were 15 kind of retail establishments right in the core. Today there's 76. There were 20 galleries and museums; today there are 32. There were seven festivals in 2006; today there are 22.

But here's -- the number that got me was that in 2006 there were 670 events through the year. This past year there were over 2,500. So it's really created a vibrancy that we were looking for there. But it's really more than just numbers. To me it's an insight where our city is at. It says that our downtown now is an area that people not only work but they live, they come to play, to eat, to enjoy and to spend leisure time. As a matter of fact our local newspaper, the *Winston-Salem Journal*, ran an editorial two weeks ago that said, "We're near the top for good reason." And it started off by saying, "There's little doubt if you're in Winston-Salem you're in the right place." So I don't necessarily always agree with our newspaper, but I certainly agreed with them there. I thought they did a good job.

We've had some wonderful accolades recently. *CNN Money* and *Where to Retire* magazine listed us as one of the top 25 places in the country to retire. And that's good news because what it means is that we're offering those things that retirees want, but it also -- most of the things that we're offering in that regard also appeal to these young professionals. They both want reasonable cost of living, they want good restaurants, they want a variety of arts and cultural amenities, housing that accommodates their lifestyle and their price range, they want a safe environment where they can stroll, ride bikes and have opportunities to ride their bikes, they want to be able to gather at sidewalk cafes and brainstorm or, you know, share experiences.

So we're working hard on that. *Bloomberg Business Week* ranked us number 10 on the list of most fun and affordable cities. That's a nice combination, fun and affordable, so we're happy to see that. We're named as one of the 50 best cities in America by *Business Week* and so on. So we've been working hard on our downtown to make sure it's providing that core area for us that keeps the energy level for our city. If you look at our downtown area, for instance, our Class A office vacancy downtown is about 4.9 percent

compared to almost 11 percent across the rest of the city. So we're seeing good growth there.

We've made good progress; we've got a long ways to go. I was asked to say what are those things that we're still working on, still concerned about in Winston-Salem. And you're always concerned about your large companies. We're the headquarters of BB&T Bank, the 9th largest bank in the country. I wake up every morning kind of worried, you know, somebody's got a target on them, and I call Kelly King regularly, the CEO of that bank, and tell him how much I love him, you know, and can I take you to lunch or something. But we're always concerned about that.

Our tax base is growing reasonably well but it's still not fast enough to keep the level of service up the way we want to do, and we've been fortunate; we've had to do a lot of cutbacks. We're at a point now we need to get that tax rate growing a little faster. We are concerned about our urban sprawl. I said today North Carolinians love their cars. And so we've been seeing a sprawling out. We've been trying to work on getting more dense urban development and improving our mass transit system that makes that possible.

We're also concerned about the slowing of Federal research dollars because we've got so much of our economy tied to this research that's going on in the research park and other institutions in our city that we're a little bit concerned about that. It's been projected that Winston-Salem will have an increase of population of about 120,000 people over the next 20 years or so. North Carolina is going to get about 3 million, so we're concerned about how our infrastructure is able to handle that, and we are just currently underway in updating our long range strategic plan to hopefully be able to accommodate those folks with the jobs that they want plus the infrastructure and keeping the quality of life in place that we can have.

Just last night I kicked off an event in Winston-Salem called the Six Days of November, so over the next six days, obviously, we'll have something over 200 events with the arts and tied to small things in restaurants up to larger craft shows to ballets and things of that nature, so we're trying to keep a balance in all that going. So I'm happy to be here just to share a couple of thoughts about what we've tried to do in Winston-Salem, what we're continuing to do, and I would just say that, you know, I don't have a prescription for what you need to do. I'm sure the mayor's got his vision and is moving forward with that.

But I would probably just say this. We've been successful in ways because we did have a clear vision of what we're trying to do. We articulated that and continue to articulate that on every occasion. We sought and obtained broad buy-in to that vision so that anyone from a taxi driver on up can kind of know what we're trying to do with our city. And we've had the discipline to stay committed to the vision. We've had the commitment

to invest in the infrastructure to make it happen. And we've been just diligent in that regard. Victor Hugo said that all the armies in the world can't stop an idea whose time has come. And clearly it looks like you in Springfield are developing the ideas that no one can stop. Thank you for letting me be with you tonight.

Peter Gagliardi: Mayor Joines would be happy to take some questions and I know there are people with questions this afternoon that might not have got them answered, and he seemed to be the favorite for everybody's questions on the panel today. So there are microphones, one right here, one over here. If you'd like to come up to the microphone and ask a question, please feel free to do. We've only got a limited amount of time available but we can spend a bit of time taking a few questions. Who's got one?

Female Voice: I was lucky enough to visit Winston-Salem last year with the city to city. I'm so -- we were so blown over by everybody was on message in Winston-Salem. It didn't make any difference who we visited, the Chamber, economic development, the arts organizations. How did you do that?

Mayor Joines: Put something in the Kool-Aid.

Female Voice: [laughter] I believe it. Share the Kool-Aid.

Mayor Joines: Yeah, it was just a process. I mean there was a huge buy-in with the initial plan with that, and then you kind of start with a core group of believers and certainly the mayor knows, you speak constantly. I had a thousand and three hundred events last year, so I mentioned the vision a little bit every time and as does the Chamber president and others so just a slow kind of metamorphosis of people buying in. So I'm glad to hear that.

Female Voice: Over how many years?

Mayor Joines: Oh well probably since -- really since 2000 when we started the plan, and then we tweaked it a bit in 2008 when we kind of ramped it up a little bit with the new driver piece of it.

Female Voice: You talked a little bit this afternoon about the regional aspect of how important it was that there was regional representation in what you were doing. And I'm just curious in the early phases of that whether you faced any kind of push and pull on that. I'm not sure that in Springfield we would find that everybody here thinks that it should be all out effort about Springfield instead of the region. So I'm just curious about your take on that.

Mayor Joines: Yeah absolutely. Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Highpoint, we have a very friendly rivalry on recruiting companies to our city, but we also work collaboratively as well. And we see positioning ourselves as a metro area of 1.5 million sort of gets attention to people that we couldn't get otherwise. We were in the midst of a big recruitment of a Dell manufacturing facility and really between Greensboro and Winston-Salem. Greensboro folks came over

and met with us the day before the proposal was to be submitted. We kind of shared what we were going to put on the table and actually we were actually able to pull 3 million dollars off the table in terms of the offer there because of this kind of cooperation.

I have a sort of gentleman's agreement with the major of Greensboro that if there's a company there or a company in Winston that's trying to play us off against each other we won't get involved in that, and we check with each other before we start putting together packages for companies like that. We have a very strong -- it's called Piedmont Triad Partnership, sort of a regional organization that we all work together on in positioning that the region as a player in economic development.

Male Voice: My name is Frank Slegers, professor at U of Mass. I have a question. You had named an economic driver in Winston-Salem and that this economic driver created a lot of jobs. What specifically were the sectors that invested? What were the kind of jobs this firm created and what were the strategies to get them in?

Mayor Joines: That's a good point. I mean we're building on seven sectors. This driver though is bio-tech and it's regenerative medicine, and I've had some concerns expressed to me. They said mayor, I don't have a PhD, I don't have even a Master's degree. How is this going to create jobs for our community and broad base? Interestingly enough, the bio-tech industry, over half of the jobs created in the bio-tech industry are held by individuals with a high school degree or a two-year technical degree. So we're able to provide a broad array of jobs within the bio-tech industry there. So it's in the early stages of getting underway, but we can say clearly that there will be job opportunities for most everyone in our community.

Male Voice: Are there other investments like in green infrastructure or that were enhanced by this driver?

Mayor Joines: You say green?

Male Voice: Yes, green infrastructure like...

Mayor Joines: Absolutely. The research park that we're developing is I think the only or one of the few research parks in the country that is LEED certified, so there's been a lot of revitalization in there. It's from tearing down of old buildings, and we're recycled the use of those old buildings, and all the buildings that are being built in there are LEED certified. I told this afternoon we're developing this huge storm water system, a 16 billion dollar project, that will serve not only the research park but about 600 acres around it.

Instead of just making a storm water detention pond we're making a very nice lake with walking trails around it and amenities that will, you know, make it much more sustainable. We're converting a rail line that goes through the park into a walking/bike trail

that will tie into another trail system that goes around another lake, so we're trying to be as green and sustainable as possible. Thank you.

Female Voice: You were talking about job training and employees. Can you talk a little bit about the work you've done to educate your workers?

Mayor Joines: Well it certainly starts with the public school system, and this afternoon we had a question about that. We've not been proud of the dropout rate in our city. We had -- I think it was about a 32 percent dropout rate of our high school students, and working with the Chamber and others we developed some initiatives trying to get our high school seniors to stay in school and provided some training to principals and assistant principals in terms of motivation and that sort of thing.

And we've seen just recently the numbers came out that our dropout rate has dropped to 25 percent, still high, but it's good progress in starting to address that. In terms of re-training which has been really necessary because of the tobacco workers, the textile workers, we're had a very strong technical community college in our city, has almost 10,000 students in there, but they're been an integral part of rebuilding the economy. As a matter of fact, in the recruitment of Caterpillar, they started looking at 15 different sites in different states.

It came down to between us, Spartanburg, South Carolina, and Montgomery, Alabama, intense competition. We all put money on the table, but I think the tie breaker was the fact that Forsyth Tech Community College could offer great training to their potential workers in welding and metal working, and that was the turning point. So the community college goes right with us in every aspect. They're going to actually put a small branch within the research park. Logistics is one of those areas that we're rebuilding on that created a whole logistics program and set up a separate campus over near the airport. So they've been a clear player with us and an important player for us.

Peter Gagliardi: I think we can take one more question.

Mayor Joines: All right, one more.

Male Voice: Mayor Joines, could you tell us a little about how housing fits into your agenda in supporting the economic development plan?

Mayor Joines: Absolutely. Certainly providing safe, affordable housing is essential to any city. Individuals who are living in good housing, their kids do better in school, there's less crime in the neighborhood. So we've had, I guess, a series of five-year plans to provide affordable and safe housing throughout the community using our Community Development Block Grants as well as some private funds to help make available dollars for renovation, home ownership, multi-family development, things of that nature.

So our city council is very committed to the housing development in making sure it works. We've also been working hard to kind of constrain our growth and keep it a little more dense, so we've changed some of our building codes and some of our zoning codes to allow the zero lot lines and the cluster development that will help us get more density but provide good quality housing. Thank you very much.

Peter Gagliardi: Thank you, Mayor Joines. It's certainly been a pleasure having you visit us. As a token of our appreciation we have a small gift for you, and it's a blown glass paperweight, handcrafted by western Massachusetts artist Josh Simpson. It's part of his inhabited planet series, and I think very appropriate for the kind of conversation we're having. So on behalf of everyone here and my City to City colleagues I thank you for both hosting us last year and for accepting our invitation to speak here in Springfield tonight.

Mayor Joines: Thank you very much.

Peter Gagliardi: I have to say, Mr. Mayor, your insight based upon a wealth of experience helps to guide and inspire us. And I do hope that you won't mind if we borrow liberally from your playbook, although as I said to you on that phone call I don't think we're going into the body part business.