Interview with Christiana Foglio

Berkhout: We are appreciative to you for the extra funding you got for us.

Listokin: Absolutely.

Foglio: I know we got Ron Berman right?

Berkhout: Right.

Foglio: Did you get anybody else yet?

Berkhout: Keating possibly.

Foglio: Oh good. Okay. I talked to Steve Jones. I went to go meet with him the other day.

Berkhout: Oh good. You know he teaches for us?

Foglio: Oh no. I didn't know that.

Berkhout: Yeah. He teaches for us. He's taught at our undergraduate public health program.

Listokin: You've been a real important supporter of this. So, you know, we appreciate that.

Berkhout: So I was just explaining, everything has been great about this building except the HVAC system, which now is off again because four of the condensers are leaking and one is being replaced, and apparently the residents of the Heldrich complain about the noise on the roof of the (inaudible) side because of the fans. So Rutgers had to ...

Foglio: It's a city.

Berkhout: . . . spend money for remediation. I know.

Foglio: Like people complaining about, you know, the car noise or you know city noise in New York. Well...

Berkhout: So it's been a little warm the past couple of days in here. But they tell us in two weeks it will be cool again.

Listokin: Hopefully it's fixed by the time the students come in.

Berkhout: Right.

Foglio: Yeah. When does school start?

Berkhout: The Tuesday before Labor Day this time.

Foglio: Oh wow.

Berkhout: Whatever that is. September first I guess.

Foglio: Early, huh?

Berkhout: Yeah, right. That's fine. We don't need to go into all of the detail. Okay. Thank you.

Listokin: So, let me thank you. We're delighted we have this opportunity to look back.

Foglio: Yeah.

Listokin: We often don't do that. You know, we're talking to people who, you know, made this happen. I guess we've had what about eight interviews roughly so far?

Berkhout: Yeah. Right.

Foglio: Well that's cool.

Listokin: You know it's a chain of "A" recommends "B", etc. And we sent you the e-mail...

Foglio: Yeah, I looked it over.

Listokin: It’s straightforward – so we could just start. But actually what I'm finding, you know, this is getting modified as we go along. The first thing is can you tell us something about yourself, because you know, where people came into this, you know. So maybe you could give us a little background on.

Foglio: Do you know how I came to this?

Berkhout: A little bit.

Foglio: A little bit, okay.

Listokin: But we need it on here . . .

Foglio: So, I got introduced to the idea of New Brunswick redevelopment through a colloquium at Douglas College when I was a junior, and at that point there were three panelists, one was John Lynch as the mayor. Another was Paul Abdala, who had been the president of DEVCO, and I believe the third was John Heldrich. And it was a very, very heated conversation with mostly Douglass students who were speaking out about safety issues with the city. Where was the city going? And at that point in my life I was an economics major and ...

Listokin: And that was roughly when?

Foglio: Do I have to tell that? That was probably 82, 83. And I started to ask some questions, and I was handed a note after the colloquium that Mayor Lynch would like to speak to me after the colloquium, and he pulled me aside, and he had gotten a little, uh, . . . I don't know how many people have mentioned his personality in the process . . . but a little passionate with his answers, and I thought, oh this guy is going to really yell at me for kind for putting him on the spot. And he said, I thought your . . . although I got aggravated . . . I thought your questions were good. I'm looking for an intern, and I'm looking for somebody that thinks differently. Come to my office on Monday. So I went to his office on Monday. I had no idea what urban planning was. I was, you know, going off to school in London. I was going to be an arbitrager. I had no interest in this. And he started to talk to me and tell me what his vision was for the city, and how he needed somebody to think about the city the way you would think about economics in a model instead of what he was hearing, which was more architects and planners. And he said there's something called economic development, which at that point was really not, you know, a track or something that people identified with. And he said you need to go talk to some people over at the planning school, which I did. I believe I may have met with David and I met with a couple of other people, and I sat through like an orientation that they would do for new students. And I know it sounds like a cliche, but like, you know, the bells went off. And I said, oh this is really interesting. I could get my arms around it, and to my parents dismay told them that I would not be following these other grandiose paths and I had decided to be an urban planner, which my father said, you will work for government the rest of your life, with disdain. And I said, okay. So the only the way to get my parents to pay for graduate school was to agree that I would do a law degree at the same time, because they didn't believe in urban planning as a career, and it was one of the first years that Rutgers was offering the JD law program so I kind of signed up for that, but after the first semester . . . you didn't really go into that program until the second semester in graduate school . . . and by the second semester there was no way I was going to be a lawyer. So kind of just stayed on this track, and that's how I got introduced to the whole area . . .

Berkhout: And you didn't go to London?

Foglio: I went for just a summer, and I didn't spend the whole year. There were a lot of negotiations with parents back then.

Berkhout: Right, right.

Listokin: And then just to continue the . . . just for the record.

Foglio: Okay. So what happened at that point is that I began to work for Mayor Lynch while I'm in graduate school. I get placed in the planning department. So I was living and learning kind of while the city was really going through major transitions. It couldn't have been a better laboratory for me.

Listokin: Was that before Glenn Paterson was there?

Foglio: Oh yeah.

Listokin: So who was director then? Do you recall?

Foglio: It was Nero, Frank Nero was the director. Paul Abdala was the president of DEVCO, and I would work part-time for them, and go to school. And the most interesting thing was really being part of two camps, because there was still a very anti-administration feeling against the city administration within some of the ranks of the faculty, and that was germane. I remember going through these questions. That was germane to the de-designation of Hiram Market as a historic area, and so kind of walking that fine line of being in, but not of, both sides of the argument. I mean, I think for me it was wonderful, because I could listen to both sides. I wasn't really, you know, a full-time employee so I didn't have to stand there and grease the city's position, and understand why people were having issues. So, you know, it was a pretty interesting time for me, you know, professionally. I then became the official city planner for the city about a year after I graduated. I went to the state for about an eight-month position at DCA, and that was prior to New Brunswick having an Office of Economic Development. They had, you know, they had started to go down that road, but it really hadn't been structured. It was more a planning office. It still was doing mostly approvals, not master planning in the way that we know, and once it was really kind of solidified, they asked me to come back and there was a job. So, I came back, and then a few years later became the President of the New Brunswick

Development Corporation.

Berkhout: And that would have been in the later eighties?

Foglio: Yeah. It was the late eighties early nineties. And I graduated from here in 1986. So, but I think probably my interview is going to be different than most people because I was still a student, you know, through some of the more interesting times. And so, I was here and there, which was fun.

Listokin: So, you at DEVCO, just to take us . . .

Foglio: Oh, DEVCO. So I finished DEVCO. I became the head of the New Jersey Mortgage Finance Agency. Really, probably, because of David. I kind of had a passion for housing, and saw housing as a vehicle for economic development so I went to the housing agency, and then after that started up Community Investment Strategies, which is an affordable housing developer in New Jersey, and have been doing that for the last 18 years.

Listokin: Okay. Well thank you for that background. And actually, if we could just start, you know, with our little cue, I can imagine the reasons why, but if I can get your perspective on what were the motivations for redevelopment, and maybe if you can think about it from the different players. You know, I guess, J&J and Rutgers, and so forth.

Foglio: When I arrived on the scene, really, I think the redevelopment kind of efforts, it was really clear that there were very specific agendas. You know I'm going to speak really frankly, and I hope that that's fine. Very clear agendas. I used to say that Johnson & Johnson's view of redevelopment was to stand from the executive lunch room and look out the window, and the border of New Brunswick was only as far as you could see. So, they would only really be concerned about investment that was in that immediate vicinity. Because they would take board members, look at what we're doing in the city. I was in those meetings. I would hear that. You had the city at that point was really struggling with the town/gown relationship. It was a real issue. I mean it's an amazing that's it not issue, completely not an issue anymore, but it was huge. Because what was happening was in critical neighborhoods, very, very stable neighborhoods, mostly around main campus Rutgers, the housing was getting priced out of the region of middle income people, and the investor-driven market by packing it with students was just, you know, phenomenal. And so when people would talk about gentrification in other cities what was really the gentrifying kind of factor in New Brunswick was not the yuppie movement of the mid and late eighties, it was the pressure on the value of turning a single family home into multi-units. And so you had a real clash between the city administration and it felt like an anti-university movement, but it really wasn't. It was trying to preserve the stock. And I remember at that point something like 70 percent of the housing stock in New Brunswick was held as a rental, and I think it was clear that the mayor then understood that unless he took a very strong stance – and some of it went over the top, I don't know if David remembers, but you know, there was a movement to create a code violation for unrelated people living together, which was seen as an anti-student movement, which got challenged in court. There were pretty tough code people who would go in at 2 o'clock in the morning and throw kids out for overcrowding. And so the relationship between the university and the city was really rough, and on the university side was pressure, because downtown wasn't safe. There was the, I used to say, the Cone Zone was like the ice cream parlor that you could go and get beer, drugs, or ice cream whatever, you know, you wanted, and it was . . . you didn't go by the train station late at night. And George Street – the whole linkage between the Douglass campus and downtown was, you know, was nonexistent. You really did feel like you were not part of the university because of that very difficult stretch, which, you know, even after all of this, I think, still isn't as strong as it could have been. So that's what I saw.

Listokin: So those town/gown frictions -- can you tie that back into like the redevelopment? Okay so we had that going.

Foglio: So the first charge really, I mean, in my period was to look at ways where we took a step back and said, okay, you know, in the late eighties we were in a down cycle from the real estate market. We were not seeing a tremendous amount of other than institutional development. So the idea was to step back and say, okay, this is who we have. We have Johnson & Johnson, we have the hospital, and we have the university. How does the city say this is who we are? How we do we use it in our best case? So, really, the first, kind of charge from me was to try and do the first downtown student housing, which the university was very against. Joe Whiteside was the treasurer. The arguments at that point were, “we own all this land in Piscataway. Why would we embark on anything in downtown? It's not safe. You know parents don't want students to live there.” We said, “well, you know, join with us and we'll go out to the private sector,” because the private sector, like today, were dying for any projects. So the hospital needed parking desperately. We wanted the university to do housing. So we kind of blended the two and came up with an agreement to do the Easton Avenue project. The issue there was the university was very slow to really commit to any kind of financial support, and ...

Listokin: Because just being conservative?

Foglio: Conservative. Yeah, yeah. Just conservative.

Berkhout: That was the days when I was in the Provost’s Office and worked with John Salapatas. I don't know if you remember him?

Foglio: Yeah, I do.

Berkhout: He was ... Kenneth I think liked it, but John was always.

Foglio: The changing factor – and when I was reading your questions that I think made New Brunswick unique and why it got done was that Lynch held up the Rutgers budget in the senate until we got the commitment for the housing.

Berkhout: Really, wow.

Foglio: And to be able to have that kind of power. I know people say this dual office holding is a bad thing for New Jersey. Most cities in New Jersey when I've looked at them, and since I live in one that doesn't have the benefit of that kind of power, it's really a trade with the state house in what urban New Jersey gets, and without that dual role, I'm not sure a lot of what we see would have actually happened.

Berkhout: That's interesting.

Foglio: The other big item when I was here was the move of the Rutgers bookstore to downtown, and I think I was on the other side of that argument, because I think I was a Douglass student when it first started, and had to switch my argument when I got hired. But I think that that was probably the turning point in the town/gown kind of . . .

Berkhout: So whose initiative was that?

Foglio: That was really Lynch's initiative directly with Bloustein. And you know I think that . . .

Listokin: So these things were heavily driven by the city and the university was brought along?

Foglio: Right. And I think the other interesting thing in what would get redeveloped? I was privy very early to these – every six months there was a meeting, and it would be Bloustein, at that time it was Dick Sellers at J&J, and it was Lynch. And they would lay out a course for the next six months, and they would look at who could deliver what. And at that point, we had a Republican president.

Listokin: And this was coming together under DEVCO or NBT? Or just more coming together by themselves?

Foglio: Yeah, coming together themselves. And then they would each have a . . . like you know a key person, but the interesting thing it wasn't the key people that met. They actually came to the table, and committed to what piece of that next leg that everybody could agree upon. So I wasn't at the table, but you could ask maybe predecessors of mine. One of those big items was the extension of Route 18, and J&J – you know, Lynch said “I can't move the city forward unless we do something about Route 18.” J&J had the power to get Washington funding, and enlisted all of their lobbyists for the purpose of getting highway dollars for the extension of Route 18.

Berkhout: Now why was that so important? Because it came into New Brunswick, but it didn't go beyond.

Foglio: It didn't go beyond, and it was a . . . it was just, you know, it was a mess. And if you think traffic is bad now, back then you couldn't get anywhere. So I think people understood that unless you could move people in and out of the city, we were never going to attract any major . . . we weren't even going to see expansion of Johnson & Johnson. In fact the J&J world headquarters, the key point was unless there was extension of Route 18, the world headquarters was going to move out to the Jamesburg kind of area. So it was very critical. And those negotiations, you know, set a tone that's very . . . that I haven't seen in . . . you know, and I've seen other kinds of processes try to start . . . but key decision makers that actually had an ability to put, you know, either their money or their efforts behind three things. They would pick three things that they wanted to accomplish in six months. I would just get the list of what I had to accomplish out of that. And they would . . . and the bookstore, I know, for Bloustein was, you know, very unpopular, but he committed that that would happen, and it was the anchor tendon in order for the Ferren Deck to get done. So it was . . . I think that, you know, those early kind of projects were really a negotiation session between what then were the three critical players. I think now you'd really have a fourth in that the hospital would be part of that negotiation.

Berkhout: It's interesting that this morning we heard, we met with Roy Epps this morning, and we heard ...

Foglio: Oh interesting.

Berkhout: . . . about the bookstore as well, and he said it was so important to get it on the other side of the trestle, but now the bookstore is going into this Gateway building, and that's viewed as even better because it's going to be part of, you know, the whole transit hub.

Listokin: But it's a different world now. Some of your perspectives on J&J in this big mix?

Foglio: I don't think they deserve any of the kudos that they get for New Brunswick's revitalization. I think they built the world headquarters, and that was great, but in terms of being this, you know, corporate giant that did everything that they could to support, I don't see it. There were many times that we called on them to make things a little bit easier for us. It was still viewed as “is this the best decision for J&J first?” There were many initiatives that, being at DEVCO, that I wanted to do in the neighborhoods, which I still think, you know, -- one of your questions is “what didn't go right in the neighborhoods?” – I still believe were neglected, and, basically, could never garner any kind of support for true neighborhood revitalization because it wasn't visible when you came to J&J, and it wasn't easily . . . it wasn't glitzy enough. It wasn't big enough. So I think when you look at other cities and some of the housing initiatives that stabilize neighborhoods, New Brunswick, is still far behind a lot of places when it had the resources to really be, you know, leading that charge. The only thing that in terms of like not a glitzy investment as part of the redevelopment that I have to credit Lynch on is very early on he spent a tremendous of CDBG money on infrastructure. When I was at the city there was still combined water and sewer system. The upgrades to then allow development had to occur, and he took a lot of heat because it was under the street. Nobody could see that investment, and he kept trying to explain to people, if I don't do this it will never come. And you know that was a great lesson. And I always remember that because then as new projects came they weren't saddled with this aging infrastructure that could not handle the kind of vision and development that, you know, he had and the people around here have.

Listokin: The hospital in all this, and I realize, you know, then it was Middlesex General, but with ...

Foglio: You know during my tenure they were just coming into their own. We were starting to do the master planning for the hospital campus. We had changed all the zoning. We had done the development plans to acquire a lot of property. I would think going back most of the major redevelopment projects were done through eminent domain, which, you know now, is such a bad word to talk about, but probably would never have gotten off the ground without . . . I would say, 60 percent of the properties were acquired through eminent domain for most of the big projects.

Thera: For the hospital?

Foglio: For the hospital in particular.

Listokin: And the county? Where was the county in all this?

Foglio: The county was critical in the development of, well – buying the State

Theater was, you know, a really key piece to solidifying the Livingston Avenue part. Other things that the county would do were, you know, they still were a pretty minor player when I was there. They had not had the resources. The Improvement Authority was just created. I had started as a charter member of the Improvement Authority. They had really not ventured into, you know, high finance at that point. They were just doing more local.

Listokin: Now you started to mention some key projects that moved along the process. So the Ferren Deck . . .

Foglio: The Ferren Deck . . .

Listokin: . . . with the bookstore. I guess moving, having some Rutgers campus housing in the city.

Foglio: The Golden Triangle.

Listokin: The Hyatt, you know?

Foglio: The Hyatt. I mean, you know, I arrived when the Hyatt was already developed, and I would say this is where J&J did step to the plate in that it made it a priority for all Johnson & Johnson subsidiaries to use the Hyatt for overnight stays for training. And the Hyatt would never have made it, but for that, and they also had brought all the bankers together that they had relationships with, and the bonds for that development were parceled and purchased by all those banks, and so that would not have been a financeable project. New Brunswick also was, I think, number one on a per capita basis for UDAGs. And the Hyatt was a UDAG, and the UDAGs were really driven into New Brunswick from the J&J lobbying point of view. Because that was during a Republican administration and they were so wired that they could get the attention. So for a small city, it got an enormous amount of federal support.

Listokin: Right. It's either one or two on a per capita basis.

Foglio: You would know better than me. Back then we would just say we were one.

Listokin: Because when you think about it the Hyatt was a $6 million UDAG when $6 million was a lot of money.

Foglio: A lot of money.

Berkhout: Now what about the Hiram District?

Foglio: So the Hiram District, you know, I arrived when, you know, Professor Holcomb was still wearing the button with whatever, and that was really a horrible time for me, because I was in both camps, and probably sympathized more with the historic restoration, and I think Lynch got the short end of the stick, because he was really not against it. It was J&J, and there was a lot of pressure from the . . . there is an agreement, this would be interesting if you're talking to J&J people, there is was an agreement with I.M. Pei. If you remember the beautiful mural on the . . . the Haas, yes. There was an agreement that that building had to be taken down in the I.M. Pei agreement or he would never show the J&J building as part of his portfolio.

Berkhout: Why is that? Because it was sticking out?

Listokin: It blocked the view.

Foglio: Because it was supposed to be on a campus. And, God forbid, you have this, you know, this little . . .

Listokin: So that was driven by Pei to get, to get ...

Foglio: It was driven by Pei.

Listokin: To get rid of that building.

Foglio: To get rid of that building, and so . . . that was the agenda of Johnson & Johnson, and the people at Johnson & Johnson, I can tell you, because basically I reported to them when I was at DEVCO, believed in a clean desk mentality. So they also believed that that looked messy. Hiram Market looked messy, and so what was really driving the Hiram Market kind of being excluded was J&J really kind of holding the purse strings and saying “we're really not investing here unless you do something about that.” And so all of the lobbyists and consultants for that dedesignation was really at the cost of Johnson & Johnson. Not at the city. And I think Lynch was in somewhat of a catch 22 saying, “I got to keep them here. I got to keep them happy. If I'm going to move this forward, this is what I'm going to sacrifice.” And you know what's sad is that the voices for the Hiram Market were really the academics. There was no, I mean, in order to keep a politician vested you need constituent voices, and there were none. I think still I am amazed at the lack of constituent voice through the entire process. I mean Roy Epps was one, but you did not have, you know, outcry. You had students and you had faculty, but you didn't ...

Berkhout: Faculty who didn't even live there, although Tony Nelessen apparently had a studio . . .

Foglio: Tony lived there and some others lived there, but not you didn't have an indigenous group saying “This has been so critical to our city, how could you let it go?” You didn't have that. You didn't have that.

Listokin: Do you think that's even more broadly applicable, you know . . .

Foglio: It’s across the board.

Listokin: With the whole redevelopment process.

Foglio: I think you didn't have anybody holding any accountability to any of the players, and that would include myself. I mean, you had very few engaged groups. You had Roy Epps, and you had David Harris. And ...

Berkhout: Who viewed themselves as individuals or representatives of larger numbers? Or?

Foglio: I think they viewed themselves as representing the African American community, but they represented a very small pocket, and you had a growing Latino base that was not represented at all, and to be honest with you, everybody had their own agendas at that point. You know Roy Epps sat on the NBT board. You know David starts to go into some of the institutions at later dates. So how independent that voice really was in the process is questionable in my opinion. You didn't, the strongest voices heard probably for accountability at that point were students, which everybody disregarded because they didn't vote.

Listokin: And if you had a conjecture, because this was a time when many of the places there were neighborhood groups protesting x, y, and z, so it seems to be a very low profile, if at all, in New Brunswick. If you have reasons why it was not there?

Foglio: I think what would have been the real vocal neighborhoods had really lost a lot of that neighborhood fabric because of that turnover from homeownership to investors. I think a lot of people made a lot of money selling their single family homes and moved to East Brunswick or North Brunswick. And you started to really not have really defined strong neighborhoods. You know I lived in the Hungarian neighborhood for a long time. Not really engaged. Not engaged. It's amazing to me the lack of real community-based organizations. And still.

Listokin: Someone suggested to me that the fact, let's say, you had some illegal immigrants. They just wanted to keep a low profile.

Foglio: I would think that that's for . . . I think especially the Latino community during that period that was definite. Absolutely. The African American population here has always been a very quiet kind of presence. It's almost they were almost overshadowed by the student population, and really never . . . I don't think had a voice in anything.

Listokin: So we've spoken about again some key projects, you know, the bookstore, the first university housing, the Hyatt, any others you think were very, were really key redevelopment projects that really gave the effort a foundation?

Foglio: Well I think the, you know, getting the first phase of River Watch up finally, which was incredibly difficult.

Listokin: If you could talk about that.

Foglio: That was the first market rate housing; you know unsubsidized market rate housing built in the city in 20 years.

Berkhout: That's where the in the Hiram . . .

Foglio: That was the Frog and the Peach . . .

Berkhout: Oh there. Okay.

Foglio: Around the Frog and the Peach is the first . . . there were only I think 32 units was the first phase.

Berkhout: Right. That's when you came to the Dean's Council and tried to get . . .

Foglio: Tried to get everybody to buy it. I didn't do so well. Now we all should.

Listokin: We should have listened. Right.

Berkhout: Don Krueckeberg bought one though. I don't know if you ever took Don for a course.

Foglio: Oh I had Don. But I didn’t know . . .

Listokin: So the challenge there was that you weren't doing unsubsidized rental, I mean, can you talk a little bit about that?

Foglio: We were doing home ownership. Everybody thought we were crazy. We were given a tax abatement back then. We did a pseudo tax increment financing where the city basically paid for all the infrastructure for the homes . . .

Listokin: These are now the townhouses on Hiram.

Foglio: Townhouses on Hiram. And used a pilot payment-in-lieu to pay off that investment in infrastructure. Nobody thought anyone in their wildest imagination would buy you know a $200,000 home in downtown New Brunswick. A lot of marketing studies talking about, you know, it's really going to be an older population that's selling a big home. Probably has a house down at the shore. Comes to New Brunswick. They're working. They're affiliated with the university or the hospital. And you were two blocks from Memorial Homes, which was my pet project, and basically everyone believed that there was no way that that project would get off the ground unless you could tear Memorial Homes down. So for probably 50 percent of my time here we were working on strategies to tear the public housing down.

Listokin: Which was also part of the larger national effort though.

Foglio: Right. At that time, I remember, Jack Kemp was the Secretary, actually came to New Brunswick. We did a tour. Basically what we had laid out very early on became . . . was very similar to what the Hope VI Project became at HUD, which was, you know, completely repositioning and redeveloping and giving people the right to come back downtown. But trying to get those high-rises down – everybody saw that as the real impediment you know. First was Route 18. I think the second one that everybody was worried about was Memorial Homes sitting, you know, in the midst of trying to redevelop the central business district.

Listokin: If we could go back for a moment with Hiram, I guess there the decision was deliberately made to have homeownership, and was that reflecting the thinking of the time that homeownership was more stable?

Foglio: Right. This was Lynch's mantra, and in the process of developing the Hiram Market there were many commercial developers, because the commercial market came back before the for-sales market came back in the late eighties and early nineties, and we had numerous people who wanted to come in and build office buildings, and basically would have taken us out for everything that we had acquired the property for. And everybody, you know, Lynch really holding everybody's feet to the fire and said we started down this path. We want this to be homeownership. We need people vested here. We have to stay to this. And I think, you know, to his credit many other politicians would have said, anything would be better than just having vacant land sit there. He was definitely of the mindset that, “No, I'd rather see vacant land there until we can get the right piece,” and that's a hard thing for a politician to do.

Listokin: And actually, it was later that the first market rental went, and that . . .

Foglio: Yes. It was after my tenure.

Listokin: And then, if I understand correctly, was rented up very quickly.

Foglio: Very quickly.

Listokin: Because the market was getting stronger?

Foglio: The market had just changed, and I think New Brunswick timing wise was just very lucky – to be hitting it all at the right time.

Berkhout: Was there also an issue then about schools? That they weren't trying to pitch to families . . .

Foglio: We weren't pitching. We weren't even trying to fix schools. It was way beyond the agenda.

Berkhout: Right, right.

Foglio: And I think that goes to underscore the kind of mentality of what the redevelopment was about. It wasn't about people living here. It was about who you were going to get live here, which is very different than some of the other cities that I've been part of their redevelopment. I mean I don't think a Newark could get away with that agenda.

Listokin: And part reflecting what we were speaking about a little while ago. The nature of the population, and that . . . all right, so any other, like, major projects that you think were the lynchpins?

Foglio: This one. I think this one was critical.

Listokin: Can you talk about that a little?

Foglio: Well, as I said there was a strategy to say “okay what . . . you know what benefits can we gain from having the university and having the hospital, and how can that become part of the baseline for the redevelopment strategy,” and having the . . . this was the site of the Mason Gross School. The university knew that it had outgrown this base. It was horrible space. It was an old Arnold Constable, you know, it was an old department store. At the same time, David's office was in a trailer. I remember visiting you. And . . .

Berkhout: It's still there. Modular building.

Foglio: Yes. It was a trailer in technical terms. I'm a planner. And we were trying to figure and, you know, again the once every sixth month negotiations was a commitment not to have the planning school built in Piscataway, and again, Joe Whiteside saying “This is crazy. We have land. This could be much cheaper for us.” And just constant, you know, negotiations until the university said “Okay.” I think we were kind of . . . everybody kind of looked at us a little cross eyed that we were going to mix the planners and the Mason Gross school. I remember the conversations; we thought it would be perfect. We thought having specifically the art students here because they would come and go at all times. This was another hot spot of not the greatest activity. So we said this will be another great spot to have 24-hour kind of kids, you know. And then we said, look we have some of the best minds in urban planning and we have them in a suburb. This doesn't make any sense for the university. Their kids should see the laboratory that they're working in. You know, this doesn't make any sense, and I think with Norm being at the center and having that kind of presence and personality, and David was part of those conversations, I think, you know, people said this makes some sense, and there I would have to tip my hat to the university making probably more of a commitment than they thought they would ever make to New Brunswick when they committed to do this building.

Listokin: And I guess there was layering of subsidies?

Foglio: Well, we went, there was at that point, there was a . . . there was economic recovery program at the state. Again, this is where that role as a state senator . . . the man's name was Bob Hewie. I'll never forget the meeting . . . we went in pitched this program. There was state funding available. In fact the first meeting I ever met Chris Paladino. Chris Paladino was at the state when we were pitching the recovery funds for this project.

Berkhout: I see. I see.

Foglio: And we laid out, you know, our position and when the senate president was sitting in the room and this is the guy that can make or break, you know, your programs and your career, you have a different way of listening to the pitch. So, we rolled it out, I think that we, you know, the one thing is that we never went with half-baked ideas. We were really good at -- by the time we got to ask someone for something, just because of the understanding – you you know having him lead it and understand what the state would need to hear, we would go prepared. We had done our research. We had had the plans. We would invest before getting there, and we got – I can’t remember the number off the top of my head, but I would say it was like $10 million.

Listokin: And there was also Port Authority money.

Berkhout: Jim Hughes says nobody has coming for training yet for Port Authority. We were supposed to train Port Authority workers or something.

Foglio: Right. The amounts I think, whether people like John Lynch or didn't like John Lynch, there as part of this study in particular, the role of the amount of money he was able to bring home is immeasurable. People just don't understand that – I now live in Trenton, and have a husband trying to move the city forward, not having that access, and not having people have that access, you can see how you get stopped. You could have great projects. You could be selling it just as good as New Brunswick, but the relationships he had at that point in time in the legislature, and on both sides of the aisle, because it wasn't, you know, the Democrats controlled everything. It was probably, you know, one of the critical pieces.

Listokin: So this was state monies for infrastructure, housing and economic development? I guess ...

Foglio: . . . it’s building and ...

Listokin: Going down the list of various state entities.

Foglio: Whether it was the Rutgers budget, you know. Like Rutgers is going to commit here, and they need X, then he became, you know, he was the guy who drove that budget through the legislature.

Listokin: I remember speaking to – whatever the name – maybe Senator Lynch and, you know, speaking of the payment in lieu of taxes, which New Brunswick used, and was a pioneer. Can you talk about some, and it's role in the redevelopment?

Foglio: All of the time. Sure. There was no project that wasn't done with a Fox Lance tax abatement, and basically it's a percentage of, you know, your – under that scenario, it was a percentage of the construction cost that's paid annually, and, you know, it really, I think, made us ten times more marketable for private investment than any of our counterparts. And I would go around the state and talk about different projects, and how much we had collected on taxes, and we would hear, “Oh you're crazy. You could have gotten three times that amount,” and we would say, “Yeah, we wouldn't have gotten anything because they wouldn't have come.” But every project here was done with a Fox Lance tax abatement, and, you know, I have to give the people credit that were on the city council at the time. You know, we were presenting it, but we had incredible support from the council who agreed, “Yes, you know, we understand that this is in some instances a break to the developer or a break to the eventual tenant, but we can see beyond tomorrow.” I think that was one thing that when I was writing my notes, you had a lot of people around the table that have longer visions than what I see in a lot of cities today. They were willing to say, “It's going to take ten years. We're going to be here in ten years. We're going to be able to see the benefits,” and I think that that longer range kind of view, I mean, it really took twenty years when you really look at it, but at least they were willing to understand that it was going to take a while until the benefits would come back downtown. We used to say with the UDAGs, “Yes, they're going into the central business district,” but I remember when the first UDAG payments were coming back. We were doing a senior center in the neighborhood. I mean, Lynch’s commitment was, “You may not be in this first round, but we're going to get to it.”

Listokin: Is that right that the UDAG repayment goes to the city, which then could be used for any purpose?

Foglio: Anything. Yeah, that was the greatest thing. Obama should bring back UDAGs.

Listokin: So you really got a double benefit.

Foglio: So a lot of like new firehouses and senior centers and I think more could have been done, but at least there were priorities for the neighborhoods that got done.

Listokin: All right. So if you were to give a grade to the outcome, the redevelopment, I think this is a fair or answerable question, but . . .

Foglio: Well I think that it succeeded on a variety of levels, and I think it fell short in a couple of areas. I think that, you know, in terms of redeveloping a central business district, I think it had a good plan. I think it was balanced. I think that it valued . . .

Listokin: But balanced in what way?

Foglio: Between, you know, a university setting, a private entity. Now when you look at it, a residential component, a walkable city. I'm sure you remember that at one point they were thinking about closing down George Street and . . .

Listokin: There was the pedestrian . . .

Foglio: A pedestrian mall, right. So I think all of those things that we knew were like really bad urban planning, you know, the central business district, I think, a lot of things went right. I still think that when you look at the retail corridor, the retail corridor represents what I call the invisible New Brunswick, and if you come on Saturday afternoon you see the other New Brunswick. If you come at Saturday at 7 o'clock, you see what everybody thinks is New Brunswick. You see the East Brunswick, North Brunswick, everybody coming to the theater, but you don't see the family shopping at Pay Less or the lower level stores along the corridor, and I think that invisible population is -- one of the downfalls of New Brunswick is that there hasn't been an empowering in the neighborhoods. There hasn't been a lot of investment. The other big gripe I have is that it seems that at this point in the redevelopment decisions are made on the basis of what's good to get the project done as opposed to how does it fit in the puzzle. And I'll give you an example. I think New Brunswick has maxed out on restaurants. It appears that whenever you build a new building you have to put in a new restaurant, but then you know that you're going to lose one or two of your current restaurant base. And so now, it's driven by a project as opposed to what's happening the in the entire downtown.

Berkhout: I see. Yeah.

Listokin: You were talking earlier about, you know, the focus on the CBD and less on the neighborhoods. Any further thoughts in that regard?

Foglio: I think that . . .

Listokin: And I guess rehabbing the stock there. Just give us your . . .

Foglio: It was very, I mean, we did, lease-purchase housing was our major neighborhood initiative. We built 200 houses through the lease purchase program. I think that that was an incredibly successful model. It kind of petered out once interest rates started to fall because it was done in the double digit interest rate climate. We had police and fireman buying units. I remember getting a lot of flack because why were police and fire given priority? Because we wanted police and fireman to live in the city, and we were fine about saying that. But there wasn't, I think, DEVCO lost some commitment to neighborhoods along the way. Maybe the projects downtown just got so large and so consuming that there wasn't, you know, we did that housing. We rehabbed units. We did 10 units on Oxford Street, which is off of

Somerset. I lived in one of those, and so there were big projects, but you also had a commitment to do X number of other projects. I think as they became sexier and bigger and you really don't have anybody, I think, at DEVCO at this point that even does any of that kind of community planning. You have smaller pockets of smaller like affordable developer types or non-profits that have been trying to you know do that along. Like Buster Soaries with the Hampton Club, and that Route 27 corridor, but really, I still think that the major gateways to New Brunswick those neighborhood gateways really don't look that much different than they did 20 years ago. So you can see, like you know when you've entered where the investment occurred. I think you could probably even you know draw a circle around it, and I think that's a problem for the city. On 27 that entry is still a pretty, you know, nothing kind of corridor.

Berkhout: You mean coming from the south.

Foglio: French Street. French Street. Coming from Somerset.

Berkhout: Because that's the New Brunswick High School, I guess.

Foglio: Well that's, yeah I would say that that's probably the best thing. The big fight with the hospital was they turned their back on French Street, and so that, I think, set the tone for, what was going to occur as you, you know, came up that corridor.

Listokin: They turned their back and that barren corridor.

Foglio: It was a barren corridor. It used to, you know really drive me crazy.

Berkhout: With the parking decks and all that.

Foglio: Well, I think, as the Cancer Institute got developed at least there was some openness to the two streets on both sides, but the main – the first development was just a very solid brick wall. No penetrations, and as they were talking about – I think this is another great lesson that New Brunswick has – there was a lot of pressure at that point when the hospital was being developed to allow for pedestrian bridges. And we fought very hard between the parking decks and the pedestrian bridges, and I think we were pretty successful by eliminating that.

Listokin: That's what the hospital originally wanted the pedestrian bridges so you wanted to have to step . . .

Foglio: Touch the street. You wouldn't have to touch the street, and that was being pushed, you know, by the J&J mentality. Other things that are kind of like stories from the kitchen kind of stuff, is one of the, I think if you ask Lynch today, one of the biggest disappointments for him would be that we worked really hard to get the UDAG for the Golden Triangle and all during that process it was not made aware to the city that J&J was going to take a master lease from DKM, and the issue there was as part of the employment with J&J is a subsidized cafeteria, and if you have workers at the Golden Triangle, which is 200,000 square feet, if they put that subsidized cafeteria, we were not going to get the real bang and benefit of the kinds of employment that that would bring. And that was a really very bad time when it was announced that they were going to master lease it.

Listokin: So their building had to subsidize a cafeteria.

Foglio: Yes it did, and still does. And there many restaurants that, in fact, Panico opened the Raritan River based on the completion of Golden Triangle. So many people were watching, you know, the Golden Triangle happening. At the train station we're going to get Merrill Lynch, we're going to get all these big spending kind of companies and employees, and to find out that it was Johnson & Johnson at the end of the day, really kind of that was a sad day at city hall. The other big bone of contention between J&J and the city was they would have signs all along the pathways at J&J, which would say, you know, “If you want an attendant to walk you to your car, you know, press this button,” or something like that. And so there was a constant, we had to constantly battle the perception that we were not safe because Johnson & Johnson was reinforcing it with their employees. “Don't stay here after dark, you know.” And that I think was harder to overcome than some of the other issues that the city had, which was just kind of breaking down that, you know, J&J people did not step foot in the city after 6 o'clock. So it was almost what Trenton feels with Trenton, you know city or state workers. It was, you know, not easy.

Listokin: Actually I've heard two takes on the little vest pocket park by Old Man Rafferty's. You know, one is, “This is a wonderful resource.” Two, “But it is this locked up resource.”

Foglio: Have you interviewed John Heldrich? It was John Heldrich that locked it. He didn't want to get up in the morning and walk by and see homeless people sleeping there. So it was locked.

Berkhout: Well he was the one who said it was a great idea, and that he was responsible for it. But we didn't talk about the locked or unlocked.

Listokin: That's what I was saying, “On the one hand, on the other.” Well, these were some of the hind sights. Transferability? You know that . . .

Foglio: I looked at that, because I think about this a lot. You know, it's four square miles. It has a major university. It has a Fortune 100 company, and it has a major medical center. I think that that is hard to find.

Berkhout: And the county, the fact that the county is here?

Foglio: And a county seat, too. I mean you can add that, but I think the critical is a higher, you know, higher education presence, a major hospital, and a Fortune 100. Very few people, very few cities can claim to host that. I always look at, since I'm living, and I think it's like the *Tale of Two Cities* kind of, with the New Brunswick process, and then I move to Trenton where – when I moved to New Brunswick you couldn't get a cup of coffee on Saturday morning. Now I wouldn't try to get a cup of coffee on Saturday morning. And, you know, why could New Brunswick happen and why can't Trenton happen? And, you know, there is no major college. Their major hospital has just been granted the ability to move out of the city. These are the things that if you had a personality or powerhouse like a Lynch for a Trenton that could have stopped Capital from leaving, and say, “No, you're going to invest in downtown, and we're going to throw all this money at you to do it,” there's a chance that I think a Trenton could turn around. The only city that I think that has the ability to do this is Camden. I think that Camden with Cooper and what you're seeing Cooper do and because of the players that are around Cooper that can get the attention of the state, I think that Camden – although coming from a much harder position than where New Brunswick picked itself up – probably is the one place that I think politically has the muscle in the state, and also has the presence of Rutgers, has a major hospital system, and has Campbell Soup – not the extent of J&J – but probably is the only place that I think has, you know, maybe Newark, but I think Camden.

Listokin: It's better for the location in Camden. You know, you're looking at Philadelphia and...

Foglio: And you're not really competing with all those other Gold Coast, like Newark has to compete with all those other, you know, Jersey City and the like. So I think it is. I think there are lessons to be learned. I always – I’ve been asked the question before, and I think about -- learn from where New Brunswick made mistakes, because you can't recreate all the positives and benefits that New Brunswick had. But, you know, I think with the amount of investment that's occurred to still have Remsen Avenue be Remsen Avenue, and Feaster Park be

Feaster Park. I think, you know, there's another twenty years of work to do.

Listokin: How about, you know, having a DEVCO and New Brunswick Tomorrow, so if one's is doing, you know, bricks and mortar and doing ...

Foglio: I'll tell you, I think that was terrific, and I know that the – in this age everything is this transparency and that, we could not have done what we did at DEVCO with community members at the table. With transparency, and talking about what the strategy and what properties we were going to buy, and – it would never have happened. It was an eight-member board. They made the deals. They were the banks. Everybody was at the table and then everybody left the room. They didn't put it out there in the paper. There weren't any political agendas in terms of somebody running against somebody else. Most of the people that served on DEVCO did not live in the city. And so was it being a bit of like, you know, up on high and directing down? It was, but the people had the resources to direct investment and get it done. Now the larger community group? They hold hands and make everybody feel good, and everybody still felt like they were part of the process; I thought that that was a terrific way of doing it, because it wasn't just the eight people driving it you still felt like there was a voice. In my opinion, New Brunswick Tomorrow as the cover.

Listokin: New Brunswick Tomorrow?

Foglio: New Brunswick Tomorrow was the cover. It was the cover for the process.

Listokin: Do you think the annual survey was a very useful thing? Or just kind of . . .

Foglio: I thought it was interesting. I think the thing that reminds me . . . was always in my head about that survey is I remember reading the results. People would say "Are you happy with the safety in New Brunswick?" " No!" "Do you think your neighborhood safe?" " Yes!" You know. So I was always really – and no matter what neighborhood that survey came out of, you always got the same answer. So I liked reading them. I thought it was especially for someone at that point having made presentations publicly, I could read where people's heads were at. I would know what the key issues were, and so we could prepare ourselves better, and so I think from that point, that was a great tool to have.

Listokin: And you found that useful as someone involved in some of these line entities on what to do? You found the survey useful?

Foglio: I thought the survey was helpful. I thought it gave a pretty good – it just prepared you for the next battle a little bit better. And I have to say that's how I feel some of the processes were battles. I mean it wasn't just an easy road. The other major player that I think cities need are parking authorities. The parking authority played tremendous – you know, was critical in this process, because the older decks in New Brunswick, their debt had basically been paid off, and so as New Brunswick becomes a destination and the rates can go up, the Parking Authority starts to make a whole lot of money. So as the Parking Authority makes a whole lot of money and it does debt for the new deck, they get to amortize that over all of these decks that they had, and so it became financially viable to build these new decks for new projects where in another city if they weren't sitting on, you know, 2,000 parking spaces as part of their inventory, we would never have been able to carry the debt of the new projects. So the Parking Authority, although the quiet participant in this process, was probably more critical of the newer projects.

Listokin: Because it could reduce the infrastructure costs that a project developer would have to . . .

Foglio: Because you know that structured parking is what kills you.

Listokin: I don't know if this is a fair question, but I guess one take on New Brunswick, it’s, well, it’s urban renewal directed by the power structure, you know. Another take is the city has really been transformed, and you have this compliment of DEVCO, New Brunswick Tomorrow, public private partnerships, all these nice buzz words. Between, and it's probably a shade of gray, but between scenario one, which is just urban renewal directed by a power structure, and B, you have all these nifty things that came together – what is your perspective?

Foglio: I think that you had that, you know, prior to my involvement, you had some really very bright people at the table, and you also – not to come back to Lynch – you had somebody who was directing redevelopment law at the state level based upon what we were facing in New Brunswick, and so, yeah, probably if you said, “You know, was there this concentration of power?” Absolutely. I think it definitely was ninety percent in that realm, but what was coming out of it allowed for, I think, longevity of the newest players at the table to maybe open the process a little more. So I think you're right, I think in the first ten years of New Brunswick's redevelopment is was a small amount of people with a tremendous amount of power that directed everything that was going to happen, but as they started to direct it they left in place, I think, the ability for other people to pick up the ball, and then it could become a more open process. You know, I think, you know, what Chris does every day is very different than what I had to do. I mean . . .

Berkhout: Why is that?

Foglio: Why is that?

Berkhout: Yeah.

Foglio: Because we, I remember going up and down the streets of Princeton with, you know, we will give you free rent in the – not the Ferren Deck -- -- what's it called?

Berkhout: Kilmer Square?

Foglio: Kilmer Square. We will give you – because Devco owned it – was a partner in Kilmer Square. Devco owned it – “We will give you free rent if you will open in Kilmer Square.” I remember having meetings with the Gap and saying, “We will give you the space (that now Starbucks is in) free for five years,” and being told “That wouldn't matter because we could still make three times that much if we open in a mall.” And so, you know, we were still trying to get people to believe you could do urban retail or that you could open a restaurant, and you could get people to come into the city, so, you know, once you have a baseline of people believing then your sales tactics or even your horizons are a lot broader. So, you know, I'm kind of envious of Chris at this point because he gets to dream even bigger, you know, and – but I would say that it was, it was, a very top controlled process. There was no community planning at all.

Listokin: And actually in terms of the change atmosphere when you look at the residential developers, I mean these were many like Matrix were classic, you know, suburban developers who then began to see there was a market in urban.

Foglio: Yeah. I think that they drank the Koolaid. New Brunswick had started to prove themselves, and, you know, I think it's pretty cool. Like, when I drive here to say “Oh, that really happened.” I think I have one of the original plans for the waterfront development district, which shows mid-rise, high-rise buildings. And I remember, unveiling it – you probably to the meeting, and people looking like – what are they smoking today? You know, this is never going to happen in downtown New Brunswick, and you drive through, and I get the plan out, and I'm like, “Wow, you know, I mean it wasn't right on, but it was close, you know?”

But, you know, the zoning changed so that then – you know, when Matrix came in, there was no parking requirement in downtown. There were no height restrictions in downtown. I mean, we did everything to say, "Just get us density," and I remember that we used to tease each other and say "When there is a parking problem at 7 o'clock at night on a Friday, we've done our job well," and so, you know . . .

Listokin: Watch what you wish for.

Foglio: What you wish for, right? So, as I drive around on a Friday looking for a parking space. But, you know, you could find a parking space for free. When I used to come, when Stage Left first opened, we used to park, you know, right on the side of the George Street Playhouse, and—parking, we didn't worry about parking, you know? So, yeah.

Listokin: It's also been suggested that one reason people are coming are the residential developers, because of nimbyism, it was so hard to get any approvals in the suburbs? And here you could come to New Brunwick and get . . .

Foglio: And get it done like that? I mean Matrix, you know, was doing active adult, golf course, kind of stuff, and that wasn't really having a nimby backlash. I think they came because the New Brunswick market in terms of what people were paying in rent was just – and still in my opinion – just a really good financial structure. You could get a tax abatement. You would get the Parking Authority to help you on the parking, and then when you looked at what your rate of return was on those investments, you had to be crazy not to be trying to do something in New Brunswick. So I think it's a combination. I don't think that they were driven in by smart growth principles or any of that. I don't think that that's the case.

Listokin: In terms of where we can go for further, you know, resources, I guess first on printed materials. Anything you would have that we can look at?

Foglio: Oh sure. I'll look through some of my old stuff and see what's interesting. I think that I might have some – do you have like some of the old plans and things like that?

Listokin: Well we've been going – it would be nice if I could see some of your old stuff. We've gone to the New Brunswick library, which has a bunch of stuff. We've gone to the university archives, which have a bunch of stuff, but it's always hit and miss.

Berkhout: John Lynch has a bunch of – not John Lynch, John Heldrich has a bunch of stuff. I'm sure John Lynch may too, but . . .

Foglio: Are you going to interview him?

Listokin: We, we

Berkhout: We're trying to.

Listokin: We'd like to, and actually

Foglio: I mean it's a rough time in his life, but I think this is important to him.

Listokin: Actually, we left a card with the current mayor who is in touch, so we would very much, you know, want to talk to him, which would be very important.

Berkhout: Are you in touch with him?

Foglio: No, but you know I really think that he was really critical in this, but . . .

Berkhout: Do you think he was more critical than John Heldrich?

Foglio: Absolutely.

Berkhout: Really?

Foglio: Absolutely. No doubt about it.

Berkhout: Who, now somebody else was mayor when J&J brought in American City Corporation and all that. I forget who – that was Pat Sheehan.

Foglio: That was Pat Sheehan.

Listokin: Pat Sheehan.

Berkhout: Whom we're also interviewing. But why do you – why do you say that? I mean the very beginning story that, I guess, John has given to us is that in the mid-sixties or so, LBJ convened a meeting of the major CEOs, and he was concerned about unemployment in cities, and wanted corporations to help do something about it, and John Heldrich was given this task by Richard Sellers, and that sort of led to his looking at the Hartford situation, and bringing in American Cities Corporation and Leo Molinaro who is . . .

Foglio: Yeah, that was on my list to see Leo Molinaro.

Berkhout: And so, you know, other people we've talked to said, "Oh he was such a key leader in this," and didn't talk as much about Lynch. Now, would you say, I mean Lynch, I guess didn't initiate it, but he carried it perhaps much further?

Foglio: I think that Lynch loved Leo Molinaro. I think what you would find the difference is he implemented. He said, "Okay I believe in this, and then how do I now implement it?"

Berkhout: Okay.

Foglio: And that's why I think he was critical. I have all respect for John Heldrich. John Heldrich is probably the consummate planner, not the implementer. And so he can convene people, and he could get them excited about a process, but actually getting it done is a completely different kind of personality, and so I think, you know, maybe I'm a little partial. Maybe it's – because I'm an implementer type personality? Probably they both deserve equal amounts in terms of being able to bring the right players and get a process that then you could hand it to somebody who could implement, but I don't believe that the university would have stepped up to the plate in the way they did. I don't believe that, you know, I just happened to be lucky and be the fly on the wall. I didn't have anything to offer them. I think, my education, was just to sit there, like my mother would say, you know "Sit there and be quiet, and, you know, be seen and not heard," you know? And I just would. And I would watch this dynamic. I mean it would be a screaming match between Lynch and Bloustein and Sellers and, then at the end they would end up laughing, but I think the most critical one was when, I'll never forget, it was at a room at the Hyatt. I was DEVCO president. He wanted the commitment of the university to do the student housing. We still had not gotten there. The woman had brought in a tray of baked goods and coffee and it was off to the side, and I remember he picked up, I didn't know whether he was going to throw it. I was a nervous wreck. And he started to slam the coffee cups in everyone's face. "And we're not leaving here until I have a commitment from this university." I mean it was a passionate investment. It was not ...

Berkhout: And Heldrich didn't?

Foglio: He wasn't even in the room.

Berkhout: Yeah. Right.

Foglio: But kept, I think, in his defense kept J&J committed to the process because along this way a lot of people changed at J&J, and there was a lot of short-term memories of "Well, there was a commitment to do this, and you're meeting with – are you meeting with Bob Gamgourt by any chance at J&J?

Berkhout: No.

Listokin: No.

Foglio: Robert Gamgourt was the head of real estate who was brought in, and I would say that he began what I would call the second guard. You know, the old guard had moved on. He had to deal with Heldrich sitting in the office, you know, down on George Street, but he was now saddled with all people saying "Why are we committing all this money? Well why are we involved in New Brunswick?" And I would deal with him because he was on my board, and we would have to answer very difficult questions. I was called before the executive committee of J&J a few times, and all questioning, you know, "Why are we here? Why are we doing it?" The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation – New Brunswick is spelled out – somebody did tell you this, right – that New Brunswick is the only, like, non-health care related investment that the foundation is allowed to make? At one point, the foundation said "No more money, you know. I thought I was going to be the last president of DEVCO, and they were just going to say "Shut out the lights." (I'm sorry I have two Blackberries and I don't know where it is). So I would give Heldrich credit that whenever possible he tried to hold J&J accountable to their commitment. So I think in fairness maybe I spoke to soon in saying he . . .

Listokin: Oh I guess wearing my urban planning professor hat, I mean there's no question that John Lynch was talking about infill and redevelopment and the mechanisms we use today when it just wasn't done.

Foglio: I know.

Berkhout: So Bob Gamgourt is he still around, do you know?

Foglio: You know Chris Paladino may have. He sat a while on the board. He may have retired, but I believe that he still lives in the vicinity, and then, I can see him, but I can't think of his name. The other chairman of Johnson & Johnson, Campbell, are you meeting with him?

Berkhout: Campbell? We're meeting with him next week in fact, but Jim Burke and Richard Sellers, I guess, are not in a condition to be able to talk to them.

Foglio: When Rich Sellers was still, I remember I was all of like 25 at the time.

When he would walk in the office, he has this – do you remember him? Had this big mane of gray hair. He must have been like 6'6 or 6'7 and he would walk in, and I would say, this is what God looks like, you know. And he would make me, you know, I would just start to shake. I would just start to shake.

Listokin: A J&J mould.

Foglio: Right. There is a J&J mould. And they would all call me—and I've never been called this in my life – but they would all call me Chrissie, so "Chrissie, what do you have on the agenda today?" And I would be like, I couldn't even talk, you know? I would just try to like, I would get all nervous and everything, but he would walk in, and he just commanded, you know, you would just sit up straight.

Berkhout: So he was still the head of J&J in the early eighties?

Foglio: Um-hmm.

Berkhout: Okay.

Foglio: I think it was only . . .

Berkhout: And Burke was after him?

Foglio: I was, I was, you know, I hadn't arrived in any kind of powerful role or leadership role, I was just this little thing that would run around and get the maps and color them the pretty colors and make everybody understand what we were doing, but I would get to sit in on these meetings and I would – not that you asked me, but I have to share my very famous New Brunswick story. I become DEVCO president, you're not allowed to write this down. I become president of DEVCO, and Lynch calls me to Trenton for a meeting, and it's my first board meeting with DEVCO and all the J&J boys, they were very big on being on time, and that you couldn't have a messy desk. And in the eighties, as you remember, women used to wear, you know, man tailored suits, with the little bow around. So go to Trenton, and of course I'm coming back on Route 1 and I'm late. And I'm rushing to get to DEVCO offices, and I get into the office and I had a beautiful office. My office was here and doors opened and I had a conference table and they're all sitting around the conference table waiting for me. And as I step in, there are no chairs. So I go outside and there is a secretary's chair with wheels, and I'm going to roll it in, and there was a large threshold and it was wood. And I said, I don't want to make a lot of noise by rolling this over. I'm going to pick it up. And I like pick it up, and I walk into the DEVCO board meeting. The chair was broken, and the bottom falls out between my legs, and I have to throw the chair into the room. And then I proceed to fall on it and get cut, and blah, blah, blah, and it wasn't Dick Sellers, it was another guy, another J&J big guy, stood up and said, “Well Chrissie, we've heard of crashing meetings, but you've brought it to a new level.” And all I could think of is, like, is my skirt over my head at this point? You know, I don't even want to move, you know? And that was my first DEVCO board meeting.

Listokin: It was all planned. It was all planned.

Foglio: I thought I was going to die, but I got over it.

Berkhout: So Chris Paladino became head of DEVCO when you left? Was there anybody in between?

Foglio: They put a consultant in. J&J put a consultant in when I left, and then Chris took it shortly thereafter

Listokin: I think Steve O'Connor who is almost finishing his doctorate by the way, hopefully in a month, he was head of NBT for a while?

Foglio: Um-hmm.

Berkhout: Before Jeffrey Vega.

Foglio: Right. But you're talking to ...

Berkhout: Ted Hargrove.

Foglio: Ted Hargrove. Right. He is critical.

Berkhout: And who, was there anybody between him and Steve O'Connor?

Foglio: Not that I can remember. I mean, you know, Ted played a critical role because he had to be the face to the process. I think he gets very little credit for the role that he had to play. He had to make it look like it was transparent in a process that wasn't. And he was the one that sat with David Harris. And he was the one that had Roy Epps on the board, and, you know, so very mild mannered, really good guy that just, you know, carried the torch and did what needed to get done, and never, you know, and really enabled all the other players to do what they needed to do, and he gave it, he gave it cover and credibility, because he was a good person. So I give him a lot of credit.

Listokin: Any other thoughts or ...

Foglio: Who didn't we get to? Well we said Leo.

Berkhout: Leo, we had an appointment with him..

Foglio: How old is he these days?

Berkhout: I know, he lives in a retirement community in Philadelphia.

Foglio: Well that's good they're close by.

Berkhout: And his wife was ill so we'll . . .

Listokin: We'll find out. We'll find out.

Berkhout: And we're going to interview Henry Cobb, I.M. Pei is not doing interviews anymore, but his partner, I guess, Henry did a lot of the New Brunswick related work.

Foglio: Um Becker, Becker. That was a person that J&J, Don, Don Becker.

Berkhout: Okay, and what did he do?

Foglio: He um, okay, so what happens is Heldrich retires. You know they have that mandatory retirement and they go to like the old age office at

Berkhout: Across the street.

Foglio: And . . .

Berkhout: For anyone involved in community service. If they don't do service they don't get an office there.

Foglio: And Don Becker becomes the John Heldrich inside J&J.

Berkhout: Okay. So he was like Corporate Relations or something?

Foglio: He was corporate, and I guess he served for a little while as Chair of DEVCO. He kept Riverwatch, the first phase, alive. He was rough, but believed in it, and was one of those corporate guys – a soldier of Heldrich to constantly make sure that this process was being preserved so I don't know if he's around at all, but he was a really good guy, and, I'm sure you're interviewing Tony and Holcomb, and all those guys?

Berkhout: Well we have Tony.

Foglio: How about Beauregard? He gave me such a hard time when I was here.

Listokin: Well he would collaborate with Holcomb.

Berkhout: He's where? At Columbia now?

Listokin: At Columbia yeah. He heads their program.

Foglio: Yeah, I know, I saw that. Yeah, he gave me an "F" in something because he said it was a memo that said, you know, pretend you're the city planner for New Brunswick and there's going to be a heliport, and blah, blah, blah, and so I write this report because I could go in and I pull the file and I read the heliport file. He says, “Well you didn't do any of this.” I said “You didn't tell me I had to pretend I was somebody else, I went and read the report and I did it.” Yeah, he really didn't like the administration. So, but . . .

Listokin: That sentiment is, in part, what I mentioned earlier.

Foglio: So you having fun doing this?

Listokin: Oh, absolutely. I mean first of all, you know, I've been around a long time.

Foglio: Yeah, you've been doing it. You lived it.

Listokin: And I've observed from my window. You know, think about, boy, if you had the brains -- you have to bring . . .

Foglio: So are you going to interview him?

Berkhout: I guess we could. He thinks they should interview me, just because I knew John and I was a neighbor of a Ralph Voorhees and . . .

C. Floglio: Oh really? Yeah.

Listokin: My only connection is that I've been fortunate in having some wonderful students who have then proceeded apace to do great things.

Berkhout: But we interviewed John Heldrich. We did interview Ralph who kept apologizing that his memory isn't what it used to be. We interviewed Andy Baglivo. Eric Krebs was interesting.

Foglio: Oh.

Listokin: That was fascinating. That was fascinating.

Berkhout: Yeah. Eric was great. He went all the way back to the 1960s and his 74-seat theater and . . .

Foglio: In the old supermarket.

Listokin: That's right. With some incredible actors who then . . .

Berkhout: With Al Pacino who came in and directed.

Listokin: Al Pacino, yeah.

Berkhout: Yeah. That was interesting, and how in 1986 or 1987, he said one of his board members, and the new George Street Playhouse building on Livingston Avenue, one of his board members met him at the base of the steps and he was hoping to be open a season with some experimental play on AIDS, which back then they said wasn't, you know, very popular, and one of his board members said, “You know, we’d really like to have nice, commonly known plays, and we don't need any of this experimental stuff,” and he said “It's time to go.” So that . . .

Foglio: Oh that must have been terrific.

Listokin: Well you are free to see all of this. You know, we have the audio and the video.

Foglio: How about Rick Khan, Crossroads?

Berkhout: That's a good idea. I don't know where he is now.

Foglio: He comes back every once in a while to do some stuff here.

Listokin: Because . . .

Foglio: It would be interesting because of the old Crossroads Theater, and that coming down, and . . .

Berkhout: Well we heard a lot about that from Eric, but, yeah.

Listokin: Because when you think of what are the new anchors in an urban area, you know, health is clearly big in a lot of places, art, and restaurants. I mean that becomes – it’s your new anchor store almost.

Berkhout: Right.

Foglio: Yeah, I think that would be good.

Listokin: And just think how long it took before New Brunswick had some national chains in the retail. I mean it was what, maybe ten years ago, it was . . .

Foglio: Ten years ago right. It was the first chain. How long has Starbucks been in? About ten, twelve years maybe?

Berkhout: Right.

Foglio: It's still hurting.

Listokin: You know, you have Radio Shack and GNC, but until recently . . .

Berkhout: Dunkin Donuts.

Foglio: And then the other interesting thing is the number of people who control the real estate on George Street. There was only, like, three people, three families, that controlled a lot of the – I mean, what was happening was they weren't willing to cut deals, and that's when DEVCO started – at one point DEVCO was the largest taxpayer in the central business district for that purpose.

Berkhout: I see.

Foglio: Was because you couldn't cut deals. They just wouldn't cut deals. So you still had like, you remember, like the tobacco head shops.

Listokin: So what you had – you had to use eminent domain – you had to eminent domain.

Berkhout: Right.

Foglio: You had the head shops and that kind of stuff, and then you had the zoned out residents over Commercial and I guess they rezoned it back in, and so those people would remember those things.

Berkhout: Right. We also interviewed Kenneth Wheeler, and he talked about . . .

Foglio: Oh, okay.

Berkhout: About the former bank building that he wanted to get Rutgers to buy for visiting faculty, because he said it had beautiful marble fireplaces, and he said Marv Greenberg was always so cheap, and he wouldn't put any money into things so.

Foglio: Yeah.

Listokin: Given the university's process, he never could come to a decision.

Berkhout: Yeah. He said it would take him to twenty years to make a decision.

Listokin: To come to no decision.

Foglio: Maybe that's why he kept saying "Was this budget approved. We're not moving until we have it completed." I was thinking about Alvin Rockoff. I know he's really sick.

Berkhout: He's not well. No.

Foglio: But that's, that's another name. Whether you can get an interview, he could probably talk about, I mean because that was John Lynch's go-to guy at the university.

Berkhout: Oh really? He was on the Board of Governors then?

Foglio: He was chair of the Board of Governors then, and then went over to . . .

Listokin: Can we ever get you to teach a class here?

Foglio: Sure, sure. Love to.

Listokin: Maybe we could co-teach a class?

Foglio: That would be fun.

Berkhout: In housing?

Listokin: Or . . . we could use New Brunswick, between these tapes and other stuff.

Foglio: I ‘d love it. And you know ...

Berkhout: Michael is teaching a class for us.

Foglio: I know. He told me. Yeah. So I am trying to get him to write a check too, you know, it just takes a little longer, you know. But I have, let's see, I have four . . . four graduates from the program that work for me.

Berkhout: Oh is that right?

Foglio: Uh-huh. And one that just finished last year.

Berkhout: Who was that?

Foglio: Leanna Shaffer. I don't know if you know you had her? But it's a lot of fun, you know, to have them . . . they'll go to some of the housing stuff, “And my professor said,” “Well, tell your professor he doesn't know what he's talking about.

Berkhout: That's funny.

Foglio: Well thank you for inviting me to give my two cents.

Listokin: It's our pleasure.

Foglio: I'm going to actually meet Fred and Susan now, since I came up. They teach here too right? Don't do they do studios?

Berkhout: Yes. They do a studio, that's right.

Listokin: I'll send you something we did on for the Meadowlands Commission on affordable housing. I mean not like there's anything there that you wouldn't know. I think we have twenty national case studies and twenty or twenty-five New Jersey, and just basically showing the layers of subsidy. You know you can do it, but you just got to package it,

Foglio: It's an interesting time.

[end of recording]