

## **Onondaga Lake: Back to the Future**

I have lived alongside Onondaga Lake in the Town of Geddes since I was born. Driving on Route 690 as it nears the waters' edge, I glance out at the vacant land that long ago was bustling with activity. My vision for the future of Onondaga Lake reflects back to this Resort Era.

With the present expansion project of Destiny USA at Carousel Mall, developers hope to draw attention of tourists from near and far. In addition, I propose attractions on the west shore based on historical facilities. As the Onondaga Lake waters become clean and inviting, beachfront properties will be at a premium. Here, beautiful, luxurious hotels would line the shore. Quaint shops and restaurants intersperse with the resorts. Pubs and bars loaded with memorabilia summon the travelers as well as local crowds. A public beach area would offer swimming and water sports, as well as picnicking and camping. Ice skating satisfies the cold weather enthusiasts, along with a cross-country ski trail or two. An updated version of the classic White City amusement site would be a modern-day water park. This popular attraction would run a replica of the "Shoot-the-Chutes" and other theme rides. Sailboats and yachts anchored at the rebuilt Syracuse Yacht Club could travel Onondaga Lake through Long Branch and up the Seneca River to points beyond. A grand club house for members to dine and gather for social events would be built over the lake on supports. Every Saturday night fireworks light up the sky over the open vernada surrounding the club dotted with umbrella-covered tables. Boathouses provide winter storage and seasonal protection from bad weather. Nearby, a public pier offers daytime fishing and music and dancing on summer evenings. Dinner cruises can be seen traversing the waters. Building up the east shore would include

renovating the marina, as well as the Saint Marie Mission. The museums please visitors with education and demonstrations of times past. Additional piers on this shore provide access for fishing. Connecting railways throughout this area and the Transportation Center allow trouble-free passage of folks to each stop. Horse-drawn carriages present an alternate transport mode for the leisurely-minded. The adjacent New York State Fair continues its growth and popularity as vacationers combine the event with travel plans.

Appreciating what nature has given us is a privilege and responsibility. Plans and projections to transform nothing into something can make dreams come true. The golden age of Onondaga Lake will shine again.