



As the Inclusion Manager representing USA Rowing Association, we strongly support the efforts of the Cleveland Rowing Foundation (CRF) to build a community rowing center on the Commodore's Club site. The CRF boathouse will beautify and increase public access to the riverfront as well as provide rowing and other non-motorize water activities throughout Greater Cleveland.

I support CRF's new community boathouse for several reasons:

- USRowing will be launching America Rows a nationwide inclusion and diversity initiative aimed at increasing awareness of rowing and introducing the sport of rowing to a diverse group of Americans specifically the traditionally underserved urban youth who otherwise would not have the opportunity to participate in rowing. CRF has a similar community outreach mission and by purchasing land and building a new boathouse they will be able to help Cleveland become a pilot city for America Rows
- The very presence of a new boathouse on the Commodore's Club site will improve the investment climate possibly spurring residential and office buildings. Cities like Pittsburgh, Washington, D.C and Oklahoma City have learned that riverfront revitalization and water activities, i.e. rowing, kayaking and dragonboating can attract new business and visitors to its shorelines.
- The city of Anacostia in Washington D.C. has found a substantial economic benefit from people purchasing fuel, buying food, and even from newcomers to the city who rent or purchase housing in the surrounding communities because of the water activity around the boathouse.

Finally, the Community Rowing Foundation (CRF) and the affiliate organizations of CRF are true friends of the sustainability of the Cuyahoga River and the surrounding environment. CRF are committed stewards to the Cuyahoga. The new boathouse will provide free public access to the river and with the new access studies have shown that more people will began to recognize the importance of protecting our waterways.

Community Rowing Inc as an organization is a model for all rowing community outreach and that's why I support the organization's effort to purchase land and build a community boat center.

Sincerely

Richard T. Butler