

Yuko telling state leaders, 'Yes, we can'

State Rep. Kenny Yuko, D-7, is the man Euclid has been looking for. A man who holds state office and who really believes that lakefront development in this city is a necessity.

For the past four years it seems the city, in its search of funding, has been able to get state and national leaders to pick up their phones and listen to pleas for money. But, unfortunately, that's all they have done.

"I was born and raised in Euclid (born in 1950 and raised on Tracy Avenue)," said the ever-upbeat Yuko. "I want to make sure my city gets what it needs so that it can reach its potential."

Everyone from Mayor Bill Cervinik, to Councilman at-large Frederick Lisy, to Council President Ed Gudenas has praised Yuko for instigating visits to the city by Gov. Ted Strickland's Chief of Staff John Haseley and Lt. Gov. Lee Fisher.

Recounting his first meeting about the project with Haseley, Yuko said, "I told him, 'It's very easy to say we can't fit it into our budget, but that's not an acceptable answer any more. The only acceptable answer is, 'Yes we can.'"

Yuko thinks the state will have to supply \$3 million or less to Euclid to make the project happen. That project will include a marina, breakwall, boardwalk, retail shops, a restaurant and public parking. It is a project that has been discussed in Euclid in a serious way the past 18 years, and more than 40 as something to think about.

When Doug Price and the K&D Group stepped forward six years ago as developers, it was a godsend as the thought was always that a private developer's money was needed. K&D bought up high-rises to the east and west of East 242nd Street, the street that has become the centerpiece of the project.

"We have to think positive and work together," Yuko said. "The state leaders saw that Euclid is working together now, and they liked what they saw."

"We owe (this project) to the people," Yuko said. "You have my pledge that it's going to happen."