

HUDSON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



Board Meeting Minutes

July 27, 2021

12:00 PM

1 North Front Street, Hudson, NY 12534

PRESENT:

Bob Rasner
Nick Haddad
Paul Barrett
Phil Forman
Mayor Kamal Johnson
Susan Knauss
Seth Rogovoy
Steve Dunn
Martha Lane
Chris Jones
Kristan Keck
Pete Schram
John Friedman
Paul Colarusso

ABSENT:

Susan Knauss
Tom DePietro

STAFF:

Branda Maholtz

- I. Call Meeting to Order: Call Meeting to Order at 12:00 PM. Robert Rasner's opening remarks: The Hudson Development Corporation is a non-private, non-profit Local Development Corporation established to sustain, promote, and attract projects that improve economic opportunities for businesses and residents, create jobs, and enhance the economic quality of life in the City of Hudson. That does not sound like what we've been doing for the last couple of years. Let's take a look back and then forward. "How do we get out of this mess?" I was thinking almost two years ago

when you asked me to chair this group. Could we survive? And then along came the pandemic. Survival has not been easy. It would have been easier to, as they say, “throw in the towel.” The phrase, by the way, “throw in the towel” derives from boxing. When a boxer is suffering a beating and his corner wants to stop the fight, they literally throw a towel into the ring to indicate the concession of the fight. Throwing in the towel is to give up, to avoid further punishment and embarrassment when facing defeat. I cycling the competitor simply pulls off the road but in the reported results it says DNF, did not finish. No one wants that, it says, “I gave up.” “Where are you going?” the Mad Hatter asked Alice. “I do not know,” replied Alice. “Then how will you know when you get there?” asked the Mad hatter. Apparently, Alice did not have a plan. Let’s be sure that we have a plan as we start on the next leg of our journey. Let’s be sure DNF does not appear after our names. Strategic planning is the process of documenting and establishing a direction for an organization. BU assessing both where you are and where you’re going. The strategic plan gives a place to record your mission, vision, and values, as well as long-term goals and the action plan you’ll use to reach them. A well-written strategic plan can play a pivotal role in an organization’s growth and success because it tells all of us, and our community how to best respond to opportunities and challenges. The plan will not be a summary of how to spend our money, but a plan to leverage and grow that investment to the best advantage of the community we serve. The HDC, if managed well, should never find itself again in the precarious financial position it has weathered over the past two years. We, each of you, and many that have served here prior to now, thought the tough work of surviving was worthwhile, that we had work to do for our community. For that spirit, for that love of Hudson. I commend you individually and collectively as a team. In the coming weeks, we will gather to write a plan for our, for Hudson’s future. We are presently seeking a facilitator with experience to assist us as we develop that strategic plan. We will need your best

thoughts and ideas. Dream big. Nothing is a bad idea, small groups of volunteers can accomplish great things. But then, the very fact that we are gathered here today is a celebration of our future, and that speaks to that accomplishment. Thank you, each and every one of you. Thank you.

- II. Minutes: June Meeting-- Paul MOTIONS to Accept June Meeting Minutes. Chris Seconds. Martha notes one typo that Branda will fix. ALL IN FAVOR. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION PASSED.
- III. Finance: Phil Forman
 - a. Monthly Finance Report—Branda reports on the basic expenses, the police memorial, and new router purchase. Nick MOTIONS to Accept June financials. Paul SECONDS. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION PASSED.
- IV. Old Business
 - a. Mt. Merino update: Paul Barrett, still delayed but we have a date set to close this soon. Steve asks about the buyer for this property wanting to do an environmental study, and the property was sold as is, so this is not an issue. This has already been relayed to the buyer.
 - b. Disposition of Montgomery Street Property: Updates, Contract to be reviewed by the executive committee to report back to the board. We plan to be able to sit down with the buyer and have the contract negotiated and ready to go prior to ABO making any approval on the August 29th, 2021 deadline. We anticipate having a special meeting to explain the terms of the contract. Steve asks about the 90-day wait period and if the board assumes that we are approved for negotiated sale if we hear nothing. Branda confirms that this is how ABO normally operates. There has been no feedback or question from ABO to date. Bob clarifies that the executive committee will negotiate the contract with the buyer and then present to the entire board in the future. Steve wants to ensure that the board has enough time to review the contract

before it is signed. Martha asks if it would be beneficial to have the board sign confidentiality agreements.

- c. Conrail Row West—Paul Barrett reports that HDC is pursuing opportunities to utilize the 14.4 acres known as the Conrail Row West parcel for aquaculture or aquafarming educational use. This effort is envisioned as a “learning science through the lens of the Hudson River waterways and offer students the opportunity to put their skills to work on the large-scale restoration efforts.”
- d. Strategic Plan for the Future of HDC- Bob reports that we have been starting to think about this in the last few meetings. Now that it appears we will be financially stable, we need to think through what’s the best possible use of our resources. Consider how the money is invested and protected. How do we leverage it? Bob feels we will be more attractive for funding matching, grants applications. Bob tells the board to expect committee formation for programming like for workforce development, small business assistance. The board will be ‘multiplied’ by bringing knowledge and expertise from community volunteers, and there could be a line for new board members to get involved.

V. New Business

- a. Strategic Planning Retreat: This is not something that happens easy, we will need some sessions for the board to sit down and start to hammer out some of these things. He would like this to be led by an independent person who has experience in strategic planning. We have someone who is to submit a proposal and intend to start doing this early in the fall. A calendar will be distributed for you to help figure out what time you have to commit. We would like to have some initial projects that we can do quickly and successful—it will help our confidence and the community’s confidence in HDC as a capable non-profit. Look towards early September. Kristan feels that it’s important to do a

needs assessment so that we aren't replicating or doing work that is already in progress. There is a chance that we could partner with other groups to help their programming succeed.

- b. Updates from City: Bob met with the Mayor and had a great conversation about making sure that our ex-officio members are engaged with the board. Mayor Johnson gladly took the opportunity to report to the board about the city's updates: Mayor Johnson states that he will report on item's that are related to HDC: Tonight there is "Hudson Connects" meeting event that is working to help with DRI projects and community input about how we want our street to look and design in a safe and user friendly way. This is from 6-8 at Hudson Hall. There is a task force forced formed for a new wellness hub for detox center. There will 20 bed center and a host of mental health services. This has been funded in part by A. Colarusso and Sons. There has been an increase in homelessness in the area and we want to assist these people in the best way possible. Kamal states that the first meeting was yesterday, and they hope to make ground at the location off of Rt. 66 in Greenport. This is county-wide initiative. This is co-hosted by the Greenberger center. HCDPA has been working on the anti-displacement grant with Michelle Trullo to assist local families that were having difficulty finding secure housing.

VI. Public Comment:

VII. Adjournment: Paul MOTIONS to adjourn at 12:36 PM. PHIL SECONDS. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION PASSED.