

HUDSON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



SPECIAL Board Meeting Minutes

September 8, 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
Susan Knauss

ABSENT:

Tom DePietro

STAFF:

Branda Maholtz

- I. Call Meeting to Order: Robert Rasner calls meeting to order at 12:00 PM. President Rasner Comments: We just passed Labor Day, it might be interesting to reflect on that briefly. Years ago a woman witnessed the “shirt waist fire,” Frances Perkins. She went on to make major contributions to American workers. She served as the first woman in a presidential cabinet as an aide for FDR said, “There is always a large horizon...There is much to be done. It is up to you to contribute some small part to a

program of human betterment for all time.” We are here, HDC has this capability and with the proceeds of this sale. Our buyer

II. Real Estate:

- a. Mt. Merino Update: Paul Barrett—Paul has sent out an email to the entire board to inform them that this sale closed for the price of 90K, to Appleton Lane who is a neighbor.
- b. Disposition of Montgomery Street Property: Executive Session: Updates, Contract—Bob reminds the board that this is a pending sale, if we get into an detail we need to move to an executive session. If any information is leaked it could jeopardize the sale so we need to be sure.
- c. Paul MOTIONS to advise Bob to sign the purchase sale agreement/ contract for sale. Susan SECONDS. There is board discussion about the process to date. There is a rider which is amenable. We had very few and very small changes needed. Seth asks about the timing of the sale, Kristal states that we have an “on and about closing date,” within 10 days of court approval. Susan comments that if you buy a house next to a state road, and there is a bunch of noise, you don’t get to put up a noise wall but if the state expands the road, you can have a noise wall since you didn’t know about it before. Her question is about the flooding in the flood plain. As this is an as is sale, since the city of Hudson and the county, and the state has no responsibility for creating a barrier, etc. since. Seth MOTIONS to move into EXECUTIVE SESSION. ALL IN FAVOR. The board goes into executive session at 12:20 PM. At 12:26, board returns from executive session.

The MOTION on the table stands. ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIES. Bob rasner states that there will be 5 acres back on the tax rolls, the community should be satisfied. The buyer will develop their plans and then present to the city’s planning board and zoning as applicable. He advises the city and it’s appropriate boards in their careful consideration of the proposed projects that they should not draw out the approval for years, they should make good decisions quickly, not as we are currently seeing in other projects. We count on the city to make this move forward.

- III. Conservation Advisory Council- Arbor Day: Fiscal Sponsorship: Susan Knauss MOTIONS to become fiscal Sponsor for CAC for Arbor Day/ CAC and also would like

for the board to develop policy for fiscal sponsorship moving forward. Chris Seconds.
ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION PASSED.

Executive Director Report, Branda C. Maholtz: “I wanted to take a few minutes on this important day for HDC, to thank the members of the board for all of their dedication and volunteer work over the last year and a half to help our organization get to this point. There was a lot to do, a lot that got in the way (thanks Covid!), but we achieved some major accomplishments that many might have said just a few years ago were impossible. I appreciate the faith and trust that you and especially our Executive Members have placed in me as your Director, and I look forward to working with our community, our businesses, and our partners like CEDC, The Business Coalition, the Chamber, the Hudson Hall and of course, The City of Hudson-Mayor, Tom- Thank you.

As we begin to make plans for our immediate future and beyond, we will surely be faced with challenges and many more big decisions. There are a lot of large and concurrent projects happening in Hudson that will have great impact on our economy—from the Galvan Housing Projects and PILOTS, Universal Basic Income Programs, The Pocketbook Factory, Multiple breweries, and Downtown Revitalization Projects under construction (like the one just outside this meeting right now), to much more long-term decisions like whether Colarusso can expand the haul road and get gravel trucks of our streets to save our aging infrastructure.

There is a lot to consider and many of these decisions have not been easy for the community, our tax-payers, and especially not for our municipal boards and committees. HDC’s own considerations and conversations that led to the sale of Kaz were also not an easy journey. As a champion of Hudson that wants to see progress, there’s one thing I and HDC know for sure—**THE ONLY THING YOU CAN COUNT ON IS CHANGE.**

Sometimes it’s slow, sometimes it happens quickly, and you aren’t sure why it’s happening. But Hudson has this uncanny ability to succeed despite all the negative outcry and vitriol, despite the dialectical opinions that always seem to rear their head in the face of change. The people that are in this room, along with all the other elected officials, and business owners—we need to be a part of whatever change is going to happen, and we all need to be ready to lead.

I say this all the time, but Hudson is 2.3 square miles. We’re a small city with big city issues to tackle. We all need to work together and make decisions for the future of this city and sometimes that does mean putting personal agendas aside. If we can’t learn to do this, if we can’t compromise, we have created nothing but an “us versus them” situation over and over again. This stalls any progress or potential forward movement.

2.3 square miles--That’s not a lot of land. But it also means that we’re literally limited in our resources. We don’t have a ton to work with... so we have to work well with what we have.

Not only do our city limits keep Hudson from physical expansion, it also means that our labor pool can be limited. Our housing opportunities are limited. Our city services are constantly

stretched, even in a non-pandemic year. Yet, our taxes are high. Our expectations are high (and ever climbing).

I think, that Hudson can achieve a healthy balance here. We have a robust tourism economy, we have a creative economy that is unsurpassed, we have industry, history, and recreation. But our good fortune may not continue if we don't figure out how to work—at least a little bit—together. Nothing will get done, nothing will progress if we just keep arguing past each other.

The haul road may be an example here. You blur your eyes a little bit and you can see two clear sides: one that seems to always be attacking, and one that's always defending. The extremes are louder, but the point here is that conversation—which opens the door for compromise—is always already hard from these extreme positions. And look where we're at with the haul road—a whole lot a nothing since 2017. We, too, are frustrated by it...

Again, we're limited here in Hudson. Hudson *is* a city of limits. But there are benefits to limits. It forces us to be creative, to use what we have, waste nothing, practice restraint, to be more intentional. Some of you know, I do a little bit of painting on the side... so I can tell you with some experience that painting with 5 colors is much easier than painting with 256.

But we must do better at understanding our limits as a town—both businesses and as a community—and how we can address them together, collectively, in a balanced way. It's the function of our city government to manage all this and set our town up for future success. And HDC has always been here to help, and we will work with you all to continue to do so.

And now, with this deal behind us and some resources to back us, HDC is more positioned to help than ever. No, we won't be handing out money anytime soon. But we will be asking questions, listening, and expecting your involvement and honesty to drive to develop or support anything and everything—from programming to grants to more small business support—that encourages a high quality of life that's economically healthy for our town.

I hope that this board, today with our big decision, feels both proud and humbled—that you feel like you've been a part of something major for Hudson-- but more so —you've been a part of the START of something. And as we start planning, as we start thinking about what this board can do for the community, perhaps we need to get back to our roots, we need to start listening. We need to start asking questions and continue to making progress in a balanced way. I urge our board to start thinking about what they want to have happen. In the meantime, I plan to start pulling together the newest iteration of the business climate survey which will be more inclusive and aim collect data points for our economy as it is now and how we want to direct it for the future. It will take a lot of work, but if we don't have reliable data and facts, we can't make sound decisions together. Congratulations to the Hudson Development Corporation, to our partners and supporters. Thank you.”

IV. Public Comment

V. Adjournment: Chris MOTIONS 12:41 PM to adjourn. Paul SECONDS. ALL IN FAVOR.
MOTION PASSED.