

Hudson Development Corporation Annual Meeting
March 23, 2021

Board Activities and Accomplishments for 2020:

Administration:

- The board welcomed the following new or returning Board Members: Christine Jones, Paul Colarusso, and Pete Schram.
- The board had been operating without an Executive Director since Sheena Salvino's departure. The board promoted Branda Maholtz to Executive Director after 6 years of employment as the executive assistant. Through her continued communication with Empire State Development as part of partnership maintenance, she has been appointed to two Economic Development task forces (Business Development and Placemaking Development).
- After 5 years of Victor's Churchill's services for the yearly audit, HDC changed to Matt VanDerbeck at UHY, LLP. The process has been streamlined and efficient.
- Updated accounting software to QuickBooks Online
- Replaced outdated desktop computer with new laptop.
- Commenced By-laws revision.

Pandemic Community Engagement and Activities:

Twenty-twenty was an unprecedented year with a pandemic shutdown threatening the livelihood of local business, entrepreneurs, the creative community, and the well-being of residents. The board of HDC quickly developed and implemented a proactive plan to engage various economic segments/demographics of the community to actively strategize, support, and assist. Members of the board volunteered many hours serving these committee groups and working with the public.

Three emergency task forces were formed:

1. Business- Successfully encouraged local landlords to ease rent during the shut-down. HDC utilized its list of contacts from our established newsletter list serv to provide weekly information to residents and business owners with links for resources and information from NY State, local news, and available funding opportunities available.
2. Hospitality- Met with lodging and restaurant businesses to devise a system of protocols for cleanliness in tandem with NY State requirements. HDC also developed a city-wide survey to gauge consumer sentiment in regard to business operating safety protocols, expected spending habits or changes both during the shut-down and post-shut down

economic activity. Over 200 survey responses were gathered and shared with partners to help understand ways forward for economic recovery.

3. Arts- Created the Hudson Emergency Arts Fund to award one-time stipends to local members of the creative economy to help to sustain their livelihoods during the Covid. Appeal for donations exceeded \$17000 and Awards were dispersed in \$500 increments totaling over \$16000. The program was covered by statewide news outlets with much acclaim as it was styled after the Works Progress Administration (WPA), a New Deal agency established in the wake of the Great Depression, employed musicians, artists, writers, dancers, choreographers, photographers, actors, and directors in large arts, drama, media, performance, and literacy projects. People like John Steinbeck, Alice Neel, Jackson Pollock, Arthur Miller, Elia Kazan, and Ralph Ellison received such WPA grants years before they became household names.

During these task force meetings there was a lot of brainstorming, including initial ideas for Shared Streets (making Warren Street a safe pedestrian street during the lockdown to ensure safety, distance, and allow for businesses to have more space on the streets. An active member of the group and community member worked with local students to build planters that served as safety barriers.

In each task force, HDC was able to bring together the community and provide a virtual space for collaboration, sometimes hosting a meeting of over 100 interested residents. HDC was able to reaffirm its working relationship with the Empire State Development, Columbia Economic Development Corp., Hudson Opera House, The Hudson Business Coalition, the City of Hudson and Department of Public Works and Police and Fire, and Future Hudson to name just a few.

Community and Fiscal Sponsorship:

HDC continued its longstanding commitment to the community of Hudson by acting as the fiscal sponsor for the City of Hudson's Police Department with a grant contribution from the Hudson River Bank and Trust Foundation. This is the second iteration of the grant award to be used for the purchase of safety equipment for HPD, specifically for Body Cameras.

HDC also voted to continue to be a fiscal sponsor for the Hudson Police Department in their plans to erect a memorial sitting area by the new police station on Union Street. This will be a memorial sitting area with a flagpole, as well as a beautification project that makes the appearance of the building more appealing.

HDC sponsored the purchase of half of the Holiday lights for the City of Hudson's decorations in 2020.

Other Fiscal Happenings:

- HDC set a goal to dispose of smaller properties held on the asset list. Given restrictions for the pandemic, this was a slow process.
- HDC successfully sold Mill Street property through sealed bid in December 2020.
- Work continues to dispose of a landlocked parcel on Mt. Merino in 2021.

- HDC developed a “brief description” of the Montgomery Street parcels to start engagement with potential developers.