



**THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE
NEW YORK**

PUBLIC HEARING

*6:00 PM PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING
PROPOSED LOCAL LAW ENTITLED "THE 2014 ZONING
MAP AMENDMENT PROVIDING FOR A NEW WATERFRONT
TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (WTOD) OF THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE"*

Wednesday, October 22, 2014 6:00 p.m.

City Hall

Chairman Mallory called the meeting to order at 6: 00 p.m.

Jeffrey Pyle- wanted to show full support for the rezoning effort for the waterfront. Has a dinner tour boat that operates out of Waryas Park. During the past three years has received phone calls from tour operators, and individuals that are coming from across the country that come to the boat and ask what else they can do within walking distance of either the train station or the boat. Stated that right now he has very few answers to give to them and they really aren't too interested in going across the town to reach something else. So, that is an immediate concern for both the business and the community because it is a very small city. What does happen in one ward does affect another ward. I can tell you as a Mariner that travels around the world, have been to hundreds of ports, and can tell you first hand that if the community turns their back to the waterfront inevitably they fall down, and fall behind. If they embrace the waterfront they nearly always succeed and continue on in a forward path and that's what he would like to see the city do. Although it might not be a perfect plan, it certainly is a great beginning.

Anthony LaRocca 57 Meyer Avenue (Zoning Board of Appeals) Came on behalf of Chairman Rhode, who could not make the meeting, and extends his apologies. Here to give a statement of Mr. Rhode, and the consensus of the board. In large part zoning and property development plays a large part in the revitalization of American neighborhoods, including our own downtown waterfront district. It is a fundamental goal of the zoning board of appeals to improve the quality of life for the citizens of the City of Poughkeepsie. In a historical sense, zoning regulations were established in American cities to effect how land could be used with the health and safety of their citizens in mind. The Zoning Board of Appeals sits as a body committed to the success of well planned development. The Common Council's intentions to streamline the development review process for proposals that are consistent with the Waterfront Re-development strategy is

an example of well planned development. The purpose of the WTOD is to encourage a pedestrian friendly, urban mix of public, recreational, residential, and commercial use within the Waterfront District. This amendment does just that. After reviewing the proposal to amend Local Law Chapter XIX, Article III, the consensus of the Zoning Board of Appeals recommends that the Common Council pass this amendment. The Zoning Board of Appeals applauds the council's insight that is dedicated to the protection of our most valuable resources, people and property.

Naomi Brooks 56 Dutchess Avenue stated that she has attended the two public meetings where the public was asked to participate in what would happen at the waterfront, our vision for both the waterfront and the park. She stated that she is happy to say that most people said that they do not want the size of the park reduced, and that they listened in this plan. That any building that would happen take place on what is currently the parking area and parking would be moved somewhere else. Thinks that having those extra buildings that are near the park, the ones that are on North Water Street and the train station would help to draw more people to the area and use the park and the waterfront. It would make it a little more lively, and it would make it safer. Urges you to pass this plan.

Kathy Velie 74 North Water Street stated that she urges all councilmembers to vote against this Local Law. For years we have been going around in circles getting grants from everyone and their brother, telling us what's wrong with our city and how to fix it, and accomplishing nothing. We don't need our waterfront developed with housing, stores, restaurants, or fancy transportation. Your obligation is to the residents who have been holding the city together since the first urban renewal project which was thrown down our throats in the 60's. Smart growth development is about taking care of your own, and using what is already built and available for reuse. Smart growth transportation is about enhancing access to transportation. To improve the tax base in this city, just get our original Main Street up and running with real stores and jobs as the residents have been asking for years. Not blind opposition to progress, but opposition to blind progress. We are not looking for outsiders to help our community grow, we like being small town America. If people destroy something replaceable made by mankind then they are called vandals, if they destroy something made by god they are called developers.

Darrett Roberts 148 Franklin Street like the woman who previously spoke, he is against the project and the development of the waterfront. For many years I used to live on 185 Union Street, and used to always go down to see the river flow, and walk along the waterfront, and do not wish to see it taken away by a corporation that is going to redevelop it against the wishes of the people. He believes that people should have rights to the waterfront, and should not have to worry about someone taking it over. And also people are going to get evicted for no good reason, just to help a developer take over a very valuable thing for us, and the children, and the future children. Very much against it, and wholeheartedly support anyone who does not want this resolution passed, and pray that the city council does the same. Thank you very much.

Don Minichino 110 Mill Street (Director of Business Attraction for Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation) you look up and down the Hudson River you see one thing in common, waterfronts, and connectivity. Over time the Poughkeepsie

waterfront has seen a number of proposals, plans, strategies, etc, but none as connected as this one. This strategy preserves the waterfront parkland and proposes to accentuate the parks, and make them more accessible. It will be a catalyst for business growth and job creation throughout surrounding neighborhoods from the Main Street corridor to the walkway district in Little Italy. The proposed bandstand, event lawn and gardens will compliment the retail, mix-use and hospitality spaces, providing visitors with limitless possibilities throughout the enlarged waterfront district. And local residents with employment in restaurants and hospitality which are the most exciting fields in the world. The strategy also provides for continues greenway trail along the waterfront, creating a more attractive environment for pedestrian activity, from the southern waterfront all the way to Marist College. Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation firmly believes this waterfront redevelopment strategy promotes sustainable job growth through smart development, and continues Poughkeepsie on the right track to success. I encourage your support of this comprehensive connective strategy, to best highlight the many features of the waterfront and ensure the vitality of this great city for generations to come.

Jim Nelson 5 Seaman Road came to support based on the need for economic development, which he thinks can be accomplished consistent with the preservation of the Local Law that the city adopted several years ago. He lives in the city, and has a law office in the City of Poughkeepsie, the people at the firm are still in the city, spending money every day. Really want to see the city succeed. He also sits on the WAC and the Dutchess County Planning Board, neither of which he is here to speak for tonight. On the economic development side, it is very clear that the city needs revenue. Baseline zoning like this will provide a foundation for the development that the city needs to fund projects, not just projects, but basic community service, public safety, and waste matters relating to public works. As far as the preservation of the LWRP principles, and has looking at the zoning, and has spoken to a couple of planners about it, and is comfortable that this is something that the city should move ahead with so that it can promote economic development and at the same time preserve the waterfront. Want to echo what Mr. Minichino said, and that is that there is the concept of connectivity here. The idea of walking up Main Street, the Walkway, Little Italy, up and down the river along the walkway, those are wonderful things, and if we can do that then it would make the economic engine spin.

Harvey Flad 115 Academy Street (Member of WAC) as a member of WAC, has considered the many aspects of the plan and will continuing to review the plan at the next WAC meeting on this upcoming Tuesday. We invite all of the public to come to the public hearing. Is interested in hearing what others will be saying both tonight and Tuesday night. At this point has a fairly neutral position on this, has a few concerns relevant to the LWRP, which is what WAC will be dealing with. One of them is the issue of access, what is the access for whom, who are the different users. That is unclear and is an important part of the LWRP. For example, teenagers are certainly one of the users, and the current WTOD concept plan has removed the skate park and thinks that is unfortunate. Also for children, they are users, what has happened to the swings and the whale sculpture, and various things of that nature. The third user that he sees that has been left out is the motorized boat users. Apparently the free public boat ramp, which has

been one of the most important things on the waterfront, and this is a LWRP necessary issue. The second issue is how does access to the waterfront work? What happens to parking for automobiles, and what is happening on the interior. It seems as if there is a north-south road. And for what purpose is the north-south road? If it goes all the way to the Children's Museum we are going to have an awful lot of traffic there and that's where children are playing. Will it stop at the Ice House, is it just there for a driveway, and is it for the delivery uses only? How do you work the road? There are many examples of this in England where you have rising bolsters and other kinds of things. The last piece is a questions about phasing. When will this take place, the different pieces of it, G1 and G2, the MTA Marketing to the developers, the connections to Kaal Rock and Shadows, or all the way north to Dutton. Where do these pieces fit in the overall plan?

Holly Whalberg 35 Garfield Place stated that she likes a lot of the things about the plan that she calls "New Waryas". She has a few concerns, but truly many of the design features of "Old Waryas" are corrected in this plan. What may be harder for some city residents to accept is that "New Waryas" is not really a city park anymore. It is a destination park, a regional park, designed to assist with what the consultants call "capture of tourist dollars". This designation comes at an incredible price tag of \$11 to \$17 million dollars with a tenfold increase in park maintenance costs. She finds it hard to watch older and more historic parks decay and deteriorate while Waryas receives so much attention. She hopes that the City Council can bring more of a balance to park allocations. As for commercial development, she suggests that the council bring consultants back into the picture to help residents visualize what a 78,000 square foot three to five story retail and restaurant development, a 120 room, 36,000 square foot hotel, an 18,000 square foot concession building and public market building would look like. She's concerned about the intensity of that level of community development. She states that she needs more information. She's concerned this creating two Poughkeepsie's: "Nice Poughkeepsie" where visitors come to shop and dine and the "Other Poughkeepsie" where people actually live. She supports any attempt to end economic segregation by mixing affordable and market rate housing.

Jeff Anzevino Scenic Hudson 1 Civic Center Plaza stated that Scenic Hudson strongly supports and feels that the proposed WTOD zoning changes and plan is critical so that there is a balance between waterfront development and Waryas Park. Based upon feedback from residents and city officials, the proposed plan would increase the amount of parkland available for public use and improve the parks so that they can actually serve city residents and visitors better. The proposed zoning will also restrict the size and location of buildings to preserve the views of the waterfront. New investments will help create jobs

John Mylod Beechwood Avenue stated that proposal is very complex and raises many issues. He feels that this plan has not been very well thought out and that Water St. will not be expanded but it is the main focus of the plan. Water St. is already busy and cannot take care of that kind of demand. He also feels that there has not been any consideration for the Dutton project and how that will affect traffic on Water St. He believes that the focus should be more on the transit part of the plan and include the center of the city

rather than one small part of the waterfront. This is something he is worried about. He would like to have another public hearing when additional information is provided.

Kip Bleakley O'Neil Applewood Circle stated that Poughkeepsie is at the point where we need to take care of our greatest asset – the waterfront. She is impressed by the work put in by Scenic Hudson, Walkway Over the Hudson and others on this plan. She feels that this vote is the most important vote the Council members will ever take. She urges the Council to support it.

Mae Parker-Harris 16 Allen Place states that the Council's constituents didn't elect them to give Poughkeepsie to developers who will make choices about how the City looks. They'll make deals and won't end up paying taxes – taxes that the residents will have to absorb. She feels that the public hearing is just to satisfy the City's legal obligation and that decisions have already been made. She urges the Council to not approve this. She states now that there is growth and developers are interested in Poughkeepsie, that the Council shouldn't jump on the bandwagon. She wants the Council to include the needs of the residents and have Waryas park stay as it is.

Lou Strippoli Mill Street stated that he supports the WTOD project. He wants the Council and developers to take into consideration the City as a whole. He feels the plan is needed in order to increase the economic base of Poughkeepsie. He wants to address three issues:

1. Safety Concerns: suggests a police substation in order to make visitors and residents feel safe.
2. Parking: parking situation must be addressed. Without adequate parking, this proposed plan will fail.
3. Development: he believes that more private money than developer money needs to be invested into the project. He also feels that the growth needs to be “graceful and gradual”. Doing it all at once isn't necessary.

Marta Knapp 10 South Clinton Street strongly stated that she is against the WTOD. She feels that city developers are stealing parkland from the residents. There seems to be less and less waterfront as parkland.

Shelia Blanding 978 Bridge Street stated that she is opposed to the project. She stated that developers never talked to local residents of the area about the project to get their feedback. She thinks that developers need to focus first on what needs to be fixed right now within the City – places of historic value, for example.

Kevin Kihlmire 1 Water Street stated that he sees a lot of good things from the proposed plan. He sees that there will be more parkland and barely any parking lots. He wants to know who is going to develop the park and where is the money going to come from?

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Nancy Cozean 115 Hooker Avenue stated that she thinks the proposed plan is a wonderful idea that will help to expand the greenway that is essential to Poughkeepsie's growth. She feels that some of the issues regarding parking need to be addressed. She asks the Council to think about the proposed development plan on many different levels.

Tron Melton Morgan Avenue does not believe that this plan is for everyone. He believes that the gentrification of lower income families will occur should this pass. He stated that people in RIP are already being displaced in anticipation of this proposal passing. He states that landlord's are evicting tenants of RIP with the expectation of higher rents when this passes. He also describes the result of such a development as "ethnic cleansing". He states that unless the Council can guarantee a mixed community down by the waterfront, many residents will not support it.

Tom O'Neil 17 Lookerman Avenue stated that he is a lifelong resident and former Council Member and current President of the Planning Board. He has been a part of many of the programs mentioned tonight. Many of those plans failed because of political and social will. This proposal provides the Council with a unique opportunity to turn the tables of time. It is an opportunity to put Poughkeepsie back on the path of progress. The plan, of course, does need some tweaking – i.e. parking – but anyone involved in the day to day business with the waterfront, knows that there is a commitment to keep the waterfront open to everyone. Urges the Council to seize the moment, do their due diligence and continue to have Public Hearings in order to develop the waterfront.

Seth Decrocia 7 Reservoir Street stated that he likes the look of the plan and that development will push Poughkeepsie in the right direction. He believes it is a good thing and that the zoning change will most likely go through. He is concerned, however, about after it goes through and the story that will be told about its passage. He wants outsiders to see that this came about on the grass roots level. He believes that support from the grass roots level creates an atmosphere where people want to come here to raise their families and start businesses here.

Dated: November 21, 2014

I hereby certify that this a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Public Hearing held on Wednesday, October 22, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deanne L. Flynn
City Chamberlain