

Columbia-Greene Democratic Socialists of America



DSA
Democratic Socialists of America

Thomas DePietro, President
Hudson New York Common Council
councilpres@cityofhudson.org

Wednesday, May 6th, 2020

Regarding: *proposed development of mixed-income housing at 75 North 7th Street*

Dear President DePietro:

The Columbia-Greene branch of the Democratic Socialists of America strongly supports the proposed construction of affordable housing for 75 North 7th Street. In the hope of a positive assessment of the project's PILOT agreement, the project, at least as described, will provide much-needed housing for those of lower income and of lesser opportunity in our community. It is an important step toward the City's Strategic Housing Action Plan to make all of Hudson a place for all of Hudson's citizens to reside regardless of income.

Though we support the project, we do so knowing that the project, like those done by other localities, are but actions done as stop-gap measures upon the inability of the profit-driven market to meet basic needs. That inability is worsened by the unwillingness of federal and state bodies to recognize and address the chronic and obvious crisis in affordable housing, just as they similarly have failed with the affordability crises in health care and in education. What are basic, non-negotiable human needs like housing, health care and education are, sadly, arenas for the enrichment of a few. The proposed development, though laudable in its goal, is far less than what truly is needed.

There is no reason why New York State or the federal government cannot enact a program to build high-quality affordable housing for all beyond funding by New York State's Home and Community Renewal Agency. Yet, it is left for entities like the Galvan Foundation to initiate such a project, and to do so under an agreement where the feasibility of funding the project, in that entity's estimation, is dependent upon its making payments instead of paying local taxes as does everyone else. That's the present woeful state of affairs for the interests of the working class: it takes a special, conditional dispensation of this economic system to attempt to meet their needs. Political leadership is needed that will prioritize the needs of the financially precarious majority, not the profit margins of an economically comfortable minority. In that absence, there are but those like the Galvan Foundation, well-meaning though they may be.

Besides expressing our support for the 75 North 7th Street project, we respectfully ask the Common Council to consider other, additional means of providing secure, affordable housing to the residents of Hudson; merely to plan the construction of cheaper rental properties shows little imagination. True leadership means looking beyond tired forms already in use to solve endemic social problems of long standing. As a modest, not-too-uncommon example, please consider the development of affordable cooperative residences, where those who reside in them, rather than use their monthly incomes to pay rent, have their monthly payments contribute to a common equity in the places where they lay their heads. If it's good enough for those with financial means, it should be good enough for the rest of us.

Respectfully submitted,
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