March 13, 2010

RE: LWRP

Dear Hudson,

What a city we are! We have a growing business community that has invested tremendous time and money in Hudson’s future. We have wonderful cultural assets like the Hudson Opera House, TSL, and a soon to open world class nightclub. We have many very fine restaurants. We have a rich architectural history. We have the new Waterfront Park and Proprietor’s Hill, both with sweeping views across the Hudson River to the Catskills. And most importantly, we have wonderful people who are passionate about our city and its future.

So why aren’t we more successful? Because we make decisions without the benefit of a long-term vision for Hudson.

Let’s consider the current Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan for a minute. This plan promotes mixed use industrial development along the river. It permits heavy truck traffic through the South Bay. It compromises our greatest asset – the waterfront. If accepted, it will become a roadblock to future smart development on the river and throughout our City.

The current LWRP is a good example of what Hudson needs to avoid. It will have a negative impact on our future and is not being considered in the context of a larger vision plan.

The reality is that Hudson has all the assets to become a tourism destination for the 50 million people within 5 hours of our city. Let’s invite them in, welcome them, send them home happy and tell them to send their friends. We need to encourage revenue that comes from their tourism dollars. Tourism creates jobs, brings tax revenues, improves property values, and attracts new businesses and capital, which in turn creates more new jobs, brings in more taxes...Let’s examine and then model our plan on other cities that have been successful like Baltimore, Boston and Savannah whose revitalization plans centered around smart, waterfront redevelopment.

We have the chance to make Hudson the place that other river towns and cities aspire to be. How? The plan is to P-L-A-N and to start working collectively for a future that benefits the entire community. We can devise a plan that takes advantage of our city’s unique design and enhances and preserves our waterfront; creates access to and along the waterfront for everyone; fosters a strong sense of place that takes advantage of our rich waterfront heritage; preserves
natural beauty, and the critical environmental areas that characterize our riverfront community. In short, let's make development decisions that are predictable, fair, and ensure that our waterfront is the centerpiece of our future.

We can begin by stopping the LWRP.

There are many ideas for Hudson; what are yours? Have you shared them with your Ward Alderperson, Don Moore our Common Council President, Mayor Scalera, Dave Colby of the Chamber of Commerce, and others? I encourage you to do so.

Ted Gramkow
Hudson