

**April 24, 2024**

A Special Meeting of the Common Council was held at City Hall, 520 Warren Street as well as remotely via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at 6:00 PM, with President Thomas DePietro presiding.

Upon roll call there were present: Councilmembers Belton, Morris, Purnhagen, Roberts, Rony (virtual), Volo and President DePietro.

Absent: Councilmembers Daskaloudi, Merante, Mizan, and Sarowar.

(Pursuant to the city's Videoconferencing Policy, Councilmember Rony said "I am currently driving, on my way to City Hall, just ran late because of work")

The clerk announced there was a quorum present for the meeting as required by Section C12-13 of the City Charter.

On motion of **Councilmember Morris**, seconded by **Councilmember Purnhagen**, the following Call of the Meeting was ordered received and placed on file:

April 17, 2024

Tracy S. Delaney  
City Clerk  
City Hall  
Hudson, NY

Dear City Clerk:

As provided by Section C12-4 of the City Charter, I hereby call a Special Meeting of the Common Council to be held at City Hall, 520 Warren Street as well as remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at 6:00 PM**. The purpose of the meeting is to consider the following:

- 1) Supporting Hudson Housing Authority's Restore New York Funding Application for the redevelopment project.
- 2) Authorizing the Mayor to execute an agreement for Falling Weight Deflectometer Testing Services.

Very truly yours  
Thomas DePietro  
Common Council President

cc: Mayor  
Legal Counsel Peck  
Register Star

Carried.

### **Communication.**

On motion of **Councilmember Belton**, seconded by **Councilmember Purnhagen**, the following communication was ordered received and placed on file:

- 1) Tim Slowinski of Hudson objecting to the Hudson Housing Authority's proposed expansion plans.

Carried.

### **Resolutions.**

**President DePietro** stated Proposed Resolution No. 2 would authorize the Mayor to enter into an agreement with the Transatlantic Group, Inc. to conduct Falling Weight Deflectometer Testing for streets in the city.

**Councilmember Morris** stated she had met with the Commissioner of Public Works, Jason Foster and she said "one of the things we talked about was actually assessing and quantifying the weights that the streets can bear because there are various limitations on what we can do but we need to have kind of very specific information on what the sub-bed is and there are a couple of ways to do this, the most disruptive is the drilling into the road and figuring out what I can bear, this equipment, there not that many of them available, there happens to be a company doing a project in Pennsylvania right now and this equipment assesses what the street can bear by, it's a dropping weight thing and it looks at the weight sheet from the weight hitting the street and it will give us information about, it'll help us predict potential repair needs because right now we can't use CHIPs but every ten years, it can help us look at cost and also help us quantify for DOT".

**Councilmember Purnhagen** asked "did we get any competitive bids"?

**Councilmember Morris** said "there was one other company that also recommended this and then Jason said yea, that's the way to go but we don't have the equipment" and she said "this particular company has this equipment but they're actually based out of Texas, they happen to be in Pennsylvania right now and they'll be finishing up in a week or so, so they would be able to do it before returning to Texas".

**Councilmember Purnhagen** asked "would we find out the same information by drilling"?

**Councilmember Morris** said "pretty much, yes" and she said "the engineers told Jason that this is the preferred method."

**Councilmember Purnhagen** asked "the cost difference"?

**Councilmember Morris** said “we didn’t get a cost on drilling because it’s not the preferred method” and she said “it’s going to give us very valuable information as I say, we have the funds available in the truck money that we got from Didi.”

On motion of **Councilmember Morris**, seconded by **Councilmember Volo**, the following proposed resolution was adopted by the following vote:

**RESOLUTION NO. 2 April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE TRANSATLANTIC GROUP, Inc. TO CONDUCT FALLING WEIGHT DEFLECTOMETER TESTING FOR STREETS IN THE CITY OF HUDSON**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Hudson experiences a significant volume of truck traffic on City streets; and

**WHEREAS**, the streets used by these trucks require more frequent repair than the ten-year service life for CHIP funding; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has not determined the load carrying capacity of the City streets; and

**WHEREAS**, Falling Weight Deflectometer Testing would provide such data; and

**WHEREAS**, these data would enable the City to more accurately predict repair needs; and

**WHEREAS**, The Transatlantic Group, Inc. can provide such a service for a cost of \$32,640; and

**WHEREAS**, funding for this testing evaluation will be provided from Study of Truck Traffic Grant (A.1210.0490); now

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Mayor be hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with The Transatlantic Group, Inc. for Falling Weight Deflectometer Testing within the City of Hudson.

Ayes: Councilmembers Belton, Morris, Purnhagen, Roberts, Rony, Volo and President DePietro.

Nays: None.

**President DePietro** stated Proposed Resolution No. 1 would support and authorize an application to Round 8 of the Restore NY Communities Initiative for the Hudson Housing Authority Redevelopment Project and he said “this project has many, many hurdles to overcome, long way away, this is just to support the application for a very small part of their funding”.

**Councilmember Belton** asked “if we are voting yes on this aren’t we then voting yes for the proposal as it stands.”

**President DePietro** said “no, definitely not” and he said “the existing proposal is still just a proposal.”

**Councilmember Purnhagen** asked “what is this proposal calling for”?

**President DePietro** said “it’s asking the state Restore Fund, Restore Grant Fund to contribute to the development of the, for the properties at Bliss Towers.”

**Councilmember Morris** said “specifically for Phase 1”.

**Councilmember Belton** asked “by voting yes, we would be voting yes to their proposed Phase 1”?

**President DePietro** said “this is only tied to the demolition.”

**Councilmember Morris** said “this is for applying for up to two million in monies for the project and there are limits on how much money can be used for demolition, yes, a component of it could be used for demolition but as far as I understand it, you have to submit your proposal for the project as part of your application”.

**Mr. Dodson** said “we do have to submit information for the proposal but it is my understanding that it had to be earmarked for demolition because there are only certain types of projects that they will approve by the guidelines.”

**Councilmember Belton** asked “this money is specifically for demolition”?

**Mr. Dodson** said “yes, of Bliss and Columbia.”

**Councilmember Morris** said “that was not my understanding when I read the Round 8 and what it could be used for” and she said “there are limits on how much can be used for demolition but it can be used beyond demolition so for example when we were looking at the proposals last year, the funding from this, Restore New York was not just for demolition for the project down on the riverfront so what’s written into the rules for Restore New York are there’s this limit for demolition, this limit for whatever so there are pathways that the money can be used for but it is not limited, under the rules of Restore New York, to demolition”.

**Mr. Dodson** said “if it is not limited to demolition than that’s great but for my understanding, it had to be, like you cannot be used for new construction”.

**Michael Hofmann, Mayor’s Aide** said “the allowances for demolition that Margaret’s referring to are based on the, per property, so my understanding is that because this project involves so many different properties, there isn’t a, the two million dollars would not be hitting that maximum.”

**President DePietro** said “Restore is not build.”

**Mayor's Aide Hofmann** said "Restore is specifically meant for not to build new and it also doesn't support greenspace development, it's very specific on what the funding could be applied to."

**Councilmember Morris** said "criteria for Restore regarding to buildings, are for vacant, abandoned, surplus and condemned, those are the four criteria" and she said "this project doesn't meet those criteria." She said "there's a good probability that the state would say no to this anyway." Councilmember Morris said "I do have concerns with voting yes on this not, not too much that I don't think it actually fits the criteria because the state and Jeff, this is what we said yesterday when we talked, it's up to the state to decide whether they think that this is, meets criteria or not" and she said "the concerns that I have really relate to the fact that we're asking for grant money and the application has to come from us, for a project where we don't really have detail yet because it's still in very early stages, issues related to PILOTS, issues related to what the costs are going to be, not in the construction piece but the whole funding scheme that would be coming from private investors but we don't really have information on what the costs to the City will be because we don't know yet the PILOT numbers are going to be, we don't know what services costs are going to be, we'll be increasing the number of people when the whole project is done". She said "there's a lot more that we need to know about the project as a whole" and she said "do we need to demolish and replace Bliss Tower, we absolutely do and there was an attempt to do that a few years ago and that has been long overdue for that to happen but is this the only approach to doing it, could there not be an approach that looked at some kind of rent-to-own situation but as presented one of the buildings is seven stories high, we know that the soil on that location when it was looked at before, that that presented a major problem and I think one of the reasons this project is so expensive is because of the need to put in girders and so forth to stabilize it for a seven-story building".

**Councilmember Roberts** questioned if the state had to grant permission to begin the project.

**Councilmember Morris** said "no, the developers need to come to us with information."

**Councilmember Roberts** said "if we're not going to vote on supporting or even supporting their application, then what are we going to do."

**Councilmember Morris** said "I think there's a good probability that they won't get it" and she said "whether they do or do not get this grant, the project itself as currently shown is about a hundred and ten million for Phase 1, this is not going to either ensure that the project moves forward or prevent it from moving forward because it's a tiny piece of what needs to happen". She said "I think that in voting to support this application, we are in essence voting to support what has so far been presented to us, as the plan for Phase 1, without enough information being able to say affirmatively yes, I am in favor of how this has been laid out" and she said "none of this has to come back to the Planning Board because public housing, it does not require Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals review or approval".

**Mr. Dodson** said "you're voting to support the Housing Authority in moving forward with trying to build better housing" and he said "what you're really voting for today is the fact that the current housing situation is not safe, it is not adequate and something needs to be done

and this is what's go to assist us." Mr. Dodson said "I urge everybody to vote yes like it's not yes, you're going to have plans, yes I'm open and we can have discussion but you're really voting for is something to move forward so we can do better for the citizens of Hudson that live in area."

**Councilmember Belton** asked "can we have Mountco and HHA come back so we can ask some more questions" and she said "it's a really large project and I just want to get it right."

**Mr. Dodson** said "we will come back to the Council any time but I need everybody to be clear, like it should not be held up because you're concerned about what the project may be, there's governances and the reality of it is that we need to keep up with the times and we need better housing in Hudson".

**Revonda Smith, Chair of the Hudson Housing Authority Board**, said "it starts here, it starts with all of you guys" and she said "we need your support tonight, we need you guys and we need everybody to be in alignment, it starts here, this is the starting ground for us."

**Councilmember Morris**, directing her comment to Mr. Dodson, said "when we met yesterday I specifically asked about the Planning Board and the response was that the building's themselves do not need to go before Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals, only the proposal with regard to pedestrianizing a block of State Street and the Lombard Street development would need to go before the Planning Board".

**President DePietro** said "no, before us."

**Councilmember Morris** said "the PILOT would have to come before us."

**President DePietro** said "and the street."

**Mr. Dodson** said "we're not trying to make some covert action option here you know, we're going to be forth right here at public meetings, we're going to talk to folks, and again, there are governance by the state, we're not just going to build some outrageous building it has to go through a process" and he said "to insinuate that you're not going to have any say so even as citizens, is not a true statement". Mr. Dodson said "the time is now for you to speak up for the residents of Hudson that are poor, that are underserved, that need better, it's long overdue, the building is completely dilapidated and something needs to be done."

**Councilmember Purnhagen** said "I think the concern that some of us have is just exactly what is it that we're voting on tonight".

**Mr. Dodson** said "we need funding and you're sitting there right now concerned about how much money is going to come out of the taxpayers pocket so why not help assist us to get free money" and he said "all you're voting for tonight is to support a Restore application and allow Restore to determine if we meet the guidelines, if they want to give us the money and then we go to the next phase, it doesn't mean it's a guarantee". Mr. Dodson said "we have a physical needs assessment to support the fact that the building is not sustainable and we're debating about whether we should move forward on helping people or not."

**Councilmember Rony** said “I have very similar concerns about how this project will proceed, I think there needs to be established like checkpoints where not only the Council but the City will have their say about you know, not only, because this is such a large project, it will have an effect on how the City will be for the next you know, twenty, thirty years, but at the same time, I look at this vote as more of a moral support from the Council that yes we do need housing, affordable housing and that is an integral part of the future of Hudson, if we don’t have enough affordable housing within Hudson, the City will become even more of a hollow version of itself than we have seen in the last ten, fifteen so while I’m not satisfied with the proposal that’s been brought forward as it stands now, I will urge all of you that are present today to show them moral support for the people that are doing the work in bringing the affordable housing that is a dire need in this City so I totally understand many of the concerns, I have very similar concerns and I would like from Jeffrey and even the company, the developers represent to help us, help you make this into a better project that really you know, checks the boxes for everybody’s that’s living here right now”.

On motion of **Councilmember Morris**, seconded by **Councilmember Purnhagen**, the following proposed resolution was **DEFEATED** by the following vote:

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1 April 29, 2024**

#### **A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING AND AUTHORIZING AN APPLICATION TO ROUND 8 OF THE RESTORE NY COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE FOR THE HUDSON HOUSING AUTHORITY REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

**WHEREAS**, Empire State Development (ESD) has released a Request for Funding Proposals for Round 8 of Restore NY Communities Initiative projects for which municipalities are eligible to apply; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Hudson duly submitted an Intent to Apply form to ESD for support of the restoration and renovation of multiple properties in Hudson collectively managed by the Hudson Housing Authority (“HHA”), henceforth referred to as the “Hudson Housing Authority Redevelopment Project”; and

**WHEREAS**, ESD invited the City of Hudson to proceed with preparation of an application for the aforementioned proposal; and

**WHEREAS**, the Hudson Housing Authority Redevelopment Project as presented by HHA aligns with the City of Hudson’s Comprehensive Plan, Diversity Through Balance, in the following areas:

#### **Goal 1: Protect the Traditional Character of Hudson’s Downtown & Neighborhoods**

- “Maintaining and strengthening the City’s unique character while providing an equally critical complement of pedestrian-accessible open space.” (24)

- “Promoting high standards of design and construction for both public and private facilities.” (24)
- “Emphasizing the importance of economic development that meets existing environmental standards.” (24), and
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**WHEREAS**, the Hudson Housing Authority Redevelopment Project aligns with Goal 3 of the City of Hudson’s Downtown Revitalization Initiative Plan, “Livable Communities,” specifically with strategies 6, 7, and 9:

- “ 6. Increase the supply of quality rental housing available to residents at all income levels.  
 7. Create support network for lower-income residents by increasing access to supporting opportunities and information.  
 9. Incorporate sustainable green building methods,” and

**WHEREAS**, the total anticipated cost of the first phase of the Hudson Housing Authority Redevelopment Project is estimated at \$110 million; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Hudson is requesting \$2,000,000 in funding assistance from the Restore NY Communities Initiatives Program to support this redevelopment; and

**WHEREAS**, the Hudson Housing Authority will collaborate with the Mayor’s office to prepare the required application and make publicly available its contents and supporting documentation; and

**WHEREAS**, neither the City of Hudson nor the Hudson Housing Authority currently have the funding to pay for the full rehabilitation costs for the Hudson Housing Authority Redevelopment Project, and it is necessary to obtain New York State funding assistance for the rehabilitation; and

**WHEREAS**, it is desirable to conduct and hold a public hearing pursuant to ESD guidelines to obtain the views of the citizens on community development needs, to establish priorities, and subsequently develop the application, programs, and any amendments or revisions thereto.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the City of Hudson Common Council hereby supports the Hudson Housing Authority’s funding proposal to the Restore NY Communities Initiative upon finding the Hudson Housing Authority Redevelopment Project in sufficient alignment with Hudson’s Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Revitalization Initiative Plan; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Common Council hereby authorizes and directs the Mayor or appointed designee to submit an application for funding under Round 8 of the Restore NY Communities Initiative to support the Hudson Housing Authority Redevelopment Project; and



**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Common Council hereby calls for a Public Hearing on the aforementioned application to be held at 6 pm on Thursday, May 16, 2024 in the City Hall Common Council Chambers, 520 Warren Street, and directs and authorizes the City Clerk to publish a related Notice of Public Hearing.

Ayes: Councilmembers Belton, Purnhagen, Roberts, Rony and President DePietro. (5)

Nays: Councilmembers Morris and Volo. (2)

Prior to voting, **Councilmember Belton** said “I am going to say that I’m conflicted” and she said “I feel conflicted in my heart, I’m hoping that Jeffrey and HHA and Mountco will come back and talk to us and be open and hear what our opinions are as it moves forward, if this is just for demolition as he said, I will vote aye”.

**Councilmember Volo**, prior to voting “no” on the proposed resolution, said “to echo everything that Margaret has said, I have deep concerns about this, the financials to the Hudson city taxpayers and I helped pass the Housing Task Force document years ago that said do not concentrate you know, a multi-housing area.”

On motion of **Councilmember Rony**, seconded by **Councilmember Morris**, the meeting was adjourned.

City Clerk