

April 29, 2024

A Special Meeting of the Common Council was held in-person in the Common Council Chambers, City Hall, 520 Warren Street as well as remotely via Microsoft Teams on Monday, April 29, 2024, at 6:00 PM with President Thomas DePietro presiding.

Upon roll call there were present: Councilmembers Belton, Merante, Mizan, Morris, Purnhagen, Roberts, Rony, Sarowar, Volo, and President DePietro.

Absent: Councilmember Daskaloudi.

(Councilmember Daskaloudi arrived at the meeting after roll call.)

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 Mizan**, the following Call of the Meeting was ordered received and placed on file:

April 25, 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 **Monday, April 29, 2024 at 6:00 PM**. The purpose of the meeting is to consider the following resolution:

1) Supporting Hudson Housing Authority's Restore New York Funding Application for the redevelopment project.

Very truly yours
Thomas DePietro
Common Council President

cc: Mayor
Legal Counsel Peck
Register Star

Carried.

Communications.

On motion of **Councilmember Morris**, seconded by **Councilmember Sarowar**, the following communications were ordered received and placed on file:

- 1) Thirty-three (33) communications had been received regarding the Restore NY Grant Application for the Hudson Housing Authority Redevelopment Project.

Carried.

Resolution.

President DePietro stated that Proposed Resolution No. 1 would support and authorize an Application to Round 8 of the Restore NY Grant Application for the Hudson Housing Authority Redevelopment Project and stated that the Councilmembers had questions of the developer. He said “before we do that, I want to make a couple of quick comments one is that much, in the various communications I received I noticed there is a lot of misinformation which often happens in situations like this. For one thing let me say that this is, this resolution does not imply anything beyond what’s in the resolution and that is to allow the Hudson Housing Authority to apply for a two-million-dollar grant, Restore Grant, Restore New York Grant for which they qualify. That’s been determined by the State, not by us. The project is not finished. What you’ve been able to see is a first draft and will lead to much discussion in the future. I can see how one might think that supporting this grant means we support the project as it is, but I think that is a mistake.”

Councilmember Morris read the following prepared statement:

“The resolution we are voting on is to approve an application for Restore NY grant money for the demolition of Bliss towers. This is part of a larger project to build replacement housing for Bliss Towers, and then to demolish Bliss Towers and build additional housing on the site. The project as presented to us at the regular meeting of the CC expands the public housing capacity from 135 units – 104 of which are currently occupied - to 315. Placing this volume of public housing in one location is not consistent with the Strategic Housing Action Plan, which specifically speaks of locating affordable housing in multiple locations within the city, rather than concentrating them in one location.

“Restore NY guidelines state:

“Projects should be architecturally consistent with nearby and adjacent properties or in a manner consistent with the municipality’s local revitalization or urban development plan.

“It is further anticipated that the improved community and business climate will result in an increased tax and resource base thereby improving the municipal finances.

“What was presented to us at the CC does not meet these criteria.

“Additionally, the building categories listed by Restore NY are vacant, abandoned, surplus and condemned.

“Currently Bliss Towers does not fit into any of those categories.

“Priority is given to projects based on feasibility and readiness:

“To quote: Applicants that can demonstrate that plans are in place, project financing has been committed, and that the project is expected to start within a year of a Restore NY award will be considered more competitive.”

“The demolition of Bliss Towers will not begin within 1 year. We have been told that this application is only for demolition, so the demolition of Bliss IS the project.

“Further, the application requires submission of a Project Proposal which we have not seen. Nor have we seen any analysis of the financial impact on the municipality as a whole.

“The application also requires evidence of public hearings which have not yet occurred.

“Given the dearth of information provided to the CC, I do not believe that voting to approve and unseen application for a component of a project that has not undergone input from the community at large is responsible or in the best interest of the city.

“Finally, given how this demolition project appears to meet few of the criteria for Restore NY, what is the urgency? It is my belief that a vote in favor of this resolution will be used as a signal to future investors and to the State the residents of Hudson are in favor of the overall project – a project mind you that has not been presented to them. Almost all of the comments I have received have urged me to vote no on this resolution. That is how I will be voting this evening.”

Councilmember Morris questioned the second whereas in the resolution. She said “the actual project is not for restoration or renovation, it’s for rebuild and tear down.” She read from a prepared statement “under Section 8 of the terms and conditions, it states a municipality that is granted an award for affordable housing units shall be solely responsible for enforcement and verification of compliance with the requirements set for herein. The municipality shall be required to file an annual declaration confirming that the property containing affordable housing units has been inspected and the declaration shall further state incomes of tenants of have been verified and final the Empire State Development reserves the right to full or partial recapture of housing awards should the municipality fail to comply.” She said “so my first question is do those terms and conditions apply to the City for this application and I want everybody to notice that terms and conditions apply to the municipality not to the Housing Authority, so we would be

held accountable not the Housing Authority. If you could just answer the question on whether or not you think that Section 8 applies to this particular situation?”

Crystal Peck, Counsel for the Council said “I have not given the terms and conditions that you just read a hard enough look so I can’t answer that question comfortably right at this moment.”

Eu Ting-Zambuto of Mountco Construction and Development Corporation stated it seems like your question is are we eligible for this...

Councilmember Morris said “no I am asking are we bound by those terms and conditions since what we are doing is related to public housing.”

Ms. Ting-Zambuto said “is the nuance there because the recipient, the beneficiary is Hudson Housing Authority then would terms and conditions be any different?”

Councilmember Morris said “no that’s what I’m saying. The Housing Authority cannot apply, the municipality has to apply. The terms and conditions apply to the municipality not to the Housing Authority because we are the applicant, it has to come from us.” She said “what you’re applying for is monies to tear down a building once you get the replacement housing. Would the City of Hudson be held to account under the terms and conditions in Section 8 because this is a public housing project.”

Ms. Ting-Zambuto stated she needed to read up on that. She said “if ESD did for example recapture, that recapture would not come from the project. I don’t know if that kind of helps?”

Councilmember Morris stated I just wanted everybody to realize that there is something in here that holds the City of Hudson liable not the Housing Authority so if there are any issues with filing these annual compliance reports, we need to think about that. We just need to be aware of it.

John Madeo of Mountco Construction and Development Corporation said “that’s not an uncommon position throughout the State of New York where a municipality has a municipal housing authority, the Housing Authority is the first in the line of responsibility, but the City has a responsibility too. So, you are absolutely right there is a responsibility from the City and just tagging on to a piece of what I thought you did already, the issues have to restore and replace and that type of thing. That’s a determination that the State is going to have to make.” He said “we’re taking it in the broadest term, we’re redeveloping, the Housing Authority is redeveloping, the site which includes restoring units that are offline now. Eventually those units will be torn down, but we are restoring units to the market. There are units that are off market now and we are restoring them as part of the overall redevelopment plan, again the State is going to make a

determination on that, and they will decide does this application comply with the restore program or not.”

Councilmember Morris stated the resolution we are considering is applying for a grant to demolish, not applying for a grant to restore any units.

Mr. Madeo said “right but the programming includes both.”

Michelle Tullo, Housing Justice Director said “in response to the grant guideline, in terms of your question the municipality, we are not actually the recipients, we are not receiving the funds.” She stated that we will have to follow guidelines, we talked to the State. Hudson Housing Authority is the actual recipient, so they are the ones who have to ensure different guidelines for the matter. The State is just recommending it. We have done other Restore Grants in the past already. We do not actually receive the funds; they go to the petitioner.

Councilmember Morris said “but it does say that the municipality shall be solely responsible.”

Kamal Johnson, Mayor said “I just also want to add, when we applied, the State gives us feedback, this project application had no feedback. They said they didn’t need any further information than this.”

Councilmember Purnhagen questioned if the offline units being restored were in Bliss Tower or in other building.

Mr. Madeo stated they will be in other buildings, adding that Bliss Tower should not be rehabilitated. The plan is to build a new building, move the people and then tear that building down.

Councilmember Purnhagen reiterated we are not restoring anything in Bliss Tower.

Councilmember Merante questioned why the Strategic Housing Plan was omitted out of the resolution. He stated that two other plans were listed but not the Strategic Housing Plan. The Strategic Housing Plan mentions the cost of housing. He said “in terms of the grant, what you’re proposing with this resolution and with the Restore Application are you committed to what you’re proposing to that in

Nick Zachos, Commissioner of Hudson Housing Authority stated as a member of the Housing Authority and the Housing Trust Fund Committee, which is the Affordable Housing Committee, the City is taking on scattered housing in multiple sites. He said “specific agencies are tasked with specific things and the City is tasked with scattered housing but because of public input that we got in the meetings early on in this process, which came up numerous times, and so the Housing Authority specifically went looked for properties through HCDPA. We identified

several properties that Mountco said that could be a part of the redevelopment and how many additional sites are there in addition to the main property that have been included in this plan.”

Mr. Madeo stated there are four additional sites in addition to the main site. He added that the plan proposed is consistent with the Strategic Plan and the plan is just an initial proposal.

Councilmember Merante questioned if changes to the plan will change the proposal in terms of starting over.

Mr. Madeo stated the Council could submit the application the State could deny the application, or the State could come back saying they like the plan, they like the proposal but the buildings are too high or there are too many units and ask that the plan be restructured. Then Mountco would have to come back to the Council with a revised plan. He stated there will be negotiations with the State going forward.

Councilmember Merante questioned parking, what if you lose the parking garage and if we are asking for this too soon.

Mayor Johnson said “Dominic is correct the Strategic Housing Plan should be a part of this resolution and this project is following the Strategic Housing Plan. When we created that plan, we identified areas that housing can and should be built and as far as concentrating poverty which I’ve been hearing a lot of misinformation about. Hudson is only two square miles so it’s a very dense city there’s only so many places that have buildable land and this land is already occupied and ready to be built. So, there has been a lot of misinformation about the Strategic Housing Plan and the fact that there’s already areas identified in that plan.”

Mr. Madeo stated the City is competing with housing authorities all through the State and the longer the City waits the further behind the line you’re getting. He said “in our judgment we are better off putting in a preliminary application that may change so that we can get on the States radar, and they know that we are going to be ready to go we are proceeding we’re meeting with them, we’re meeting with the City we are moving forward we are doing designs. In our judgement we are better off to get that before the State early. Because if we don’t, we are going to be falling further and further behind to get public housing funds to go with this project.”

Ms. Tullo stated the Restore Grant is only the general issue. They are not asking about other sites and a lot can change with this that doesn’t affect the demolition phase.

Councilmember Merante stated we can accept this as is for demo only and it’s not an acceptance of the draft.

Mr. Madeo responded yes.

Councilmember Merante asked for that to be put in the resolution. He said “we need to move forward with the resolution to demo it, but we need to also have more knowledge. If we lose this parking, it’s going to change this whole thing.”

Councilmember Belton stated that in the guidelines it states that a public hearing must be held to discuss Restore NY Application, the property list and proof of the publication and notice of the hearing.

President DePietro stated it’s in the resolution.

Councilmember Belton questioned the guidelines in the Restore NY Grant regarding a public hearing. She also questioned the comments made about scaling back on things like the parking and the green spaces. She is concerned that the resolution is being rushed for demo when you have no place to put the residents that already live there.

Jeffrey Dodson, Executive Director of Hudson Housing Authority stated that they are just trying to put things together so they can move forward. He added that HCR referred them to this funding source as there was no objection to applying. He responded that they are not rushing they were made aware that this was available, and they just want to move forward.

Councilmember Purnhagen questioned when the application came in?

Mr. Dodson responded when the funding became available in March.

Councilmember Purnhagen questioned when the application must be submitted? He said “it’s \$2,000,000 and we are looking at an overall price tag of \$200,000,000 and so there is concern that what’s the big deal what’s \$2,000,000 off of \$200,000,000 and you have not even begun.” He said “my understanding is that you secured \$80,000,000 for phase one is that correct?”

Ms. Ting-Zambuto said “there’s no commitment to phase one.”

Mr. Madeo said “Why are we pursuing this, there are going to be a number of financings throughout this. There’s going to be a couple of thousand, couple of thousand with this, there is going to be a tax-exempt filing, there’s going to be a tax credits, we’re looking into the Federal Home Loan Bank, which is separate funding application. We may be looking at other City programs that are available. Our job at this point is to try to assemble as many of those pieces as we can so that the subsidy we ask for from the State in the programs is small as possible so a year from now or four months from now we can say to the State we put an application to Restore, we know we have \$2,000,000 but number one it shows that we are out there looking for other sources of funding, which the State likes, and it’s a piece. It makes their job easier from the State when we submit our application to the State they must go to their Board and their Board is going to say well are they getting any money from any place else and what have they done to

try get it.” He said “we are competing with other Housing Authorities all over through the State, we’ve got to put together the best package we can and then the answer to your question we don’t get a chance at this apple again for another year.”

Councilmember Volo said “I understand and what should be a perfunctory vote is now chaos because part of the problem is the process.” He said “why not start this process with going to the public first and stopping the misinformation and making sure everyone is onboard before you present it to us for a vote. NO, that’s bad process.”

Mayor Johnson said “there’s three opportunities for anyone to get notification about this project. I rarely see any of the Councilmembers at any of those three opportunities. I’ve heard time and time again that everybody is for affordable housing but every time something is put before is Council there’s been an excuse of why it can’t be done. If we are going to have affordable housing the Mayor’s Office is going to need help from the Council. I understand you have to ask tough questions, but I haven’t seen a single legislative move or initiative from this Council to put forth housing. We’ve had a twelve percent decrease in our population, a fifty percent decrease in the black population. There are currently only 833 black individuals in our City to this date and that number is dropping everyday so like this is a part of it.” He said “We need housing. If you don’t have another option or something that you’re proposing, then the question should be how you help move this forward in a helpful way.”

Councilmember Belton said “I agree with you completely and we are here, and we want to part of the process.” She said “we amended our resolution because we want to be part of the process we want the communication. Now I have to tell you I can’t be physically at every meeting because you know all of us in other committees.” She stated she has tried to go online, and she can’t get in.

Mayor Johnson said “my statement was not personal; my statement is a call for help. To say look Hudson Dots came across this Council maybe a month or two ago and there’s objections to that and some people did not vote for that. That was scattered site housing, which was everything that you’re asking for now, but people still said no.” He said “so what can be done for us to finally get affordable housing.” He said “I need help, I can’t do this alone. Our City is literally dying every day, and this is not to any Councilman personally.”

Councilmember Merante stated that he is very invested in all this.

Councilmember Morris stated that with Hudson Dots the Council only had one week to figure it out because nothing was shared with the Council.

Mr. Dodson stated that this is the best thing that could have happened. He said “the entire community is now engaged, my residents are here, we have one lady who has been living at Hudson Housing for fifty years since it’s inception and they are here because there is a need, and everybody agrees with that so now we collectively understand that we all got everybody’s

input.” He said “we’re not trying to hoodwink anybody we are being transparent; we have filed for the application when it became open, and we followed the rules. If you don’t know anything about me, I’m a person of integrity and I stand by my word and so we are not trying to hustle anybody, make money, that’s not for me. It’s about these residents who need a better place to live. I sit in an office in the building where it’s dilapidated. I’ve walked through the units; I walked through the property, and I live in conditions like that and I’m not going to allow the people to either. So, we have an opportunity here. We are going to have discussions.” He said “we have to work together to get this done.”

President DePietro stated the floor would be open for public comment and there would be a time limit of two minutes per person.

Claire Cousin, Vice Chairwoman of Hudson Housing Authority Board of Commissioners (and First Ward Supervisor) said “I would like to point out a few different things, we’re talking about an agency that provides not just affordable housing subsidized housing which is different than a lot of the other projects we’re discussing, that’s number one. Number two is the building is not sustainable there have been multiple Boards who have not even gotten this far with a project that protects these people’s homes, that’s number 2, number 3 is the Restore Grant is the start of the process you cannot rehouse these people if you have nowhere to put them, you have to demolish somewhere to build something to put people somewhere else. That’s the part of the process. The third thing is that every third Monday on the City calendar this meeting is posted. There have been to multiple meetings before we voted on who the developer was going to be, before we engaged just the tenants on what type of project they want to see and even to this day board members are still talking to Mountco, we think the buildings might be too high, we think the property might be too big, what is the reality of staggering housing, as Board members we’re doing our due diligence to have these conversations with the developers. We don’t have your support because nobody from the Council shows up but it’s possible to ask questions. It’s possible to be a part of the process and the next step in our process as we do our due diligence is to come to you to ask for your formal support, right? That’s the process that we are asking you to engage in. These folks show up to the meetings, they see the empty seats and then there are also the meetings that we are having with City Officials, so the City is engaged. There’s just silent work happening. The Mayor is aware of this project, he’s in the conversations, Michelle who’s employed by the City is in these conversations and helping the process along. The City is a major part of why we are standing in front of you asking you to accept them. If you want to be a part of the process you must take the extra step whether you can show up or not maybe one of your councilmembers can take the initiative to report back to you and maybe we can have the continuous meetings like you are asking for.”

Carla Sadoff said “I am absolutely for affordable housing there is no question. This vote is not about affordable housing. It’s about the demolition, that if I understand correctly, happens after the buildings get built. After the buildings get built or they are almost done according to what I understand.” She said “My understanding is you are not demolishing the original tower until the new towers are built that being said, unless somebody tell me if I’m inaccurate.”

Mr. Madeo stated that is correct but...

Ms. Sadoff said “no I just want to stay at that.” She said “my understanding is that this vote is solely for the grant for the demolition. She said “it is not saying anybody is not for affordable housing or building the two or four buildings.

Ms. Cousin stated you must demolish the lower apartments before you can build new buildings.

Ms. Sadoff said “you are not the developer; I’m asking the developers.” She said “is it accurate that the demolition happens after the buildings are built. Is that true or not true?”

Mr. Madeo said “first I just want to say that housing authority is the developer too, we are partners. It’s a private-public partnership.” He said “I thought the question was is this Grant for the demolition of Bliss. The answer to that question is yes but it’s part of the whole redevelopment plan. It is affordable housing.”

President DePietro stated the question really is suggesting all the builds are built before it’s demolished which is not the case.

Ms. Sadoff said “so the buildings get built and then the residents go into the new buildings before the demolition.”

Ms. Cousin said “there has to be demolition before the new building can be built.”

Ms. Sadoff said “if that is the case then where are the plans to see all this. So, I am all about affordable housing.” She said “why not wait until next year and yes, you’d lose the opportunity until the next year but then there is more information. There is more appreciation. That’s what I want, number two the actual grant, there are so many places where it clearly states the municipality. The municipality will be responsible.” She said “there is nobody from the State here that’s going to say what we are assuming is accurate. So, until we can get clarity about that the City of Hudson, what is the responsibility of the City of Hudson, given how challenged the City of Hudson is right now.” She said “it doesn’t seem like there is enough information for the demolition, not for the affordable housing, not for the building of it, for the demolition.”

Mr. Dodson said “the reason we are moving forward quickly is because that building is not viable. There are two physical needs assessment the building is not viable. So, it’s dangerous and so we cannot continue let the residents live in those conditions.” He said “the longer we wait the longer the process is going to take.” He said “we need money to fill our gaps so that we can make sure everything we need to happen will happen.”

Don Moore stated that a Public Hearing must be noticed before we can apply for a grant and added that before you could vote on resolution the public hearing must be scheduled. He stated his concern with the size of the building and where the funding is coming from. He said “the funding will tell you who is going to be eligible for this housing and there is a good deal of over generalization about what is or isn’t eligible in affordable housing.” He stated his concern for who is eligible to go into this new housing and that the residents that in there now have a right to go back. He suggested that the project be presented to the Planning Board.

Ms. Ting-Zambuto said “the program we’re looking at to finance this project is a four percent low-income housing tax credit program. We covered it very briefly the last time we were here but just to repeat this statement. It’s a program where the Federal Government offers tax credit to private affordable housing paying entities. So, there are affordable housing investors that investor can be anything, Citibank, Bank of America, Ulster County Bank, Columbia County Bank whatever. Those banks will get a tax credit in exchange for a value on the dollar. So, they invest maybe a dollar, and they get a dollar twenty in tax credit, something along that line. So that’s their dollar incentive for investing in tax credits plus they get community re-investment credit. It’s a big benefit for the investors of the bank.” She said “that’s the primary dollars that comes into the low-income tax credit program. The federal government makes sure your incomes are exactly as they’ve agreed on so they’ll give you, if you have sixty percent income average and below, they’ll give you a certain dollar amount for it and most investors will give higher or lower depending on where the risk threshold for your project because they want to make sure your project is in exact compliance.” She said “this is where the source of some of the miscommunication is, one is the public housing authority right now, Hudson Housing Authority, has one hundred and thirty-five extremely low-income units. We are not in the business of destroying what you have so let’s all assume that stays.” She said “one social policy component is to stabilize that project and bring the thirty percent population up you can mix incomes so in traditional methods of mixing incomes, you’ve heard the market rate mix, you’ve heard variant, like middle income mixes, this would be targeting as an affordable mix for working families. So here in addition to what we have, we are looking to mix in a population between 50 and 80 AMI and we have those numbers.”

Mr. Moore asked about the Mill Street Project and where that would play into the mix affordable market rate housing.

Ms. Tullo stated it would have seventeen units and incomes ranging from thirty to ninety percent of AMI, slightly a little bit higher than the Housing Authority’s mix and the 4th Street Project has the same income mix with twenty-one units and might possibly be able to get some up to ninety-nine percent AMI.

Britt Zuckermann questioned how the grant is awarded by the State.

Mr. Madeo responded that there is an application deadline.

Ms. Zuckerman stated so if you waited until next year, you might not get the grant, or you'd get less.

Mr. Madeo stated it was uncertain how much Restore money would be available next year and the application is scored so if you were to get it in early and if you had to apply again in the next year you can improve your application. He said "again the main funding source is through the State so you can have some community renewal and if they are recommending that we go in, we are asking the State for a lot of money, to not listen to them and try to get an application in I think will not benefit us for the larger funding that we are asking for."

Ms. Zuckermann said "so you feel if you miss this deadline that the State will then review your future applications with sort of a black mark."

Ronald Kopnicki said "I want to endorse the comments made by Councilmembers Morris and Volo about the Council being brought in at a too late stage in the process. This is not the only example of this, I mean I stated something about this in my written statement. Hudson Dots is an example to cite as an analogy because there, as Morris said, discussions were going on for almost a year between the entity and various unnamed people in City Hall before anything was brought to the Council. And Councilmembers have been taxed and failure to attend meetings I think this is a two-way street and I think there could be some provision of information from one side to another about the burden being on one body to seek it out the Councilmembers are elected representative and unlike the various authorities and boards and they are responsible to the voters, unlike those other bodies."

Matt Maghee said "I am a little disturbed that one of the pillars of our constitutional government is being abridged. We have a separation of powers and I feel that the executive should not be at legislative meetings. They might come to a committee meeting or something, but a meeting of this sort is a meeting of the legislative body and should be that. The other thing that I would like to say is that I'm disturbed at the revelation of the condition of the buildings that these people are living in, and I don't understand why management has allowed this to happen." He said "from what he is saying the builds should possibly be condemned, is it an exaggeration? In any case it seems to be that a failure of doing our duty and yet we are supposed to support them in moving on to continue."

President DePietro said "the deterioration happened over the years Jeffrey Dodson was not the Executive Director during that period. There have been a number of executive directors, there have been a number of boards, many of them have tried to correct things. One of the structural problems that is unsolvable has to do with the exterior of the build separating from the inner wall of the building and that's where all the water continues to get in and has become really the unsolvable problem of that building."

Mr. Madeo said "what's happening at the housing authority here is happening all throughout the State. The larger funding agencies haven't provided enough funds to operate

buildings properly, not just here but throughout the state, and all throughout the state these same programs that we are looking to work with the state other housing authorities are trying the same things because they simply don't have the capital funds to operate. The rents there provide by HUD to operate the building can barely keep the building above water, and they can't do major capital improvements that forty-year-old and fifty-year old-buildings need." He said "this housing authority has done everything they can with the resources they have."

Matthew, State Street resident asked about structural wear and tear, increased traffic, impacts on parking, impacts on the City budget and the subsequent maintenance, and maintaining the character of the City.

Ms. Ting-Zambuto stated the architects are working on the design of the building and added the capital is not coming from the City. She stated that Mountco will support the City in infrastructure improvement. The project is supposed to be all electric.

Myron Polenberg asked about the cost and time of the project.

Mr. Madeo stated it depends on the project development and how many units and construction cannot start until all the funding is stacked together.

Mary Decker stated if the building is condemned where are the residents supposed to go.

President DePietro said "there is a legal obligation to be able to place everybody established by HUD and you have to follow the rules."

Debra MacPhearson stated her concerns are the complaints and the number of people moving out. She wants to see her neighbors stay.

Councilmember Belton asked Mr. Madeo to repeat the reasons for trying to get this done.

Mr. Madeo said "one is it's always good to get an application submitted early because if there is a problem with it you can come back next year, correcting any problems. So, if we don't start until next year, it might be the year after that. There is no guarantee that this application is going to be funded, so it's good to get it in early. Number two is that again we need to show the state that we are actively going out and trying to get as many sources of funding as possible so that the subsidy doesn't just come from the state division of housing. Related to that is the issue that the state itself suggested that we go after these funds."

Hugo VanVuuren commented that this was an amazing demonstration of American democracy and asked Mayor Johnson to ensure that if he quotes a specific racial group that he quotes the other groups as well adding that people in public housing come from all back grounds. He asked why we can't just buy houses and fix them up for people to rent to own.

Mr. Madeo stated that the need is immediate, we have over a hundred households that need to be re-located and housed in proper housing. The housing authority has this land, and this will be the quickest way to help the households that are there now.

Ifetayo Cobbins stated she is concerned that the building is falling apart and about to fall down.

Robert Rasner asked what happens if the resolution is not approved.

Mr. Madeo stated that they would have to go back to the state and report that it was not approved. It would not look good for the community. It would not look good for the application. He added they would then have to find an alternative source to make up for the two-million dollars.

Mr. Rasner asked if the project was dead if not approved.

Mr. Madeo said “no.” He stated there are other funding source and what they are trying to achieve is to reduce the number of subsidies received from the state.

On motion of **Councilmember Purnhagen**, seconded by **Councilmember Merante**, the eleventh paragraph was amended to read:

“**WHEREAS**, the Hudson Housing Authority agrees to hold future public meetings concerning the design of this project and will remain in communication with the Common Council by appearing regularly with updates at Council meetings *and does not consider this as final approval of the draft plan.*”

Carried.

On motion of **Councilmember Morris**, seconded by **Councilmember Sarowar**, the following AMENDED resolution was adopted 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

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 buildings methods,”

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 for the demolition of Bliss Towers; 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, and

WHEREAS, the Hudson Housing Authority agrees to hold future public meetings concerning the design of this project and will remain in communication with the Common Council by appearing regularly with updates at Council meetings and does not consider this as final approval of the draft plan.

NOW, THEREOFRE 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, Daskaloudi, Merante, Mizan, Purnhagen, Roberts, Rony, Sarowar and President DePietro. (9)

Nays: Councilmembers Morris, and Volo. (2)

Prior to voting **Councilmember Daskaloudi** said "I just want to say we can't expect other people to live somewhere that we wouldn't, we cannot live, and we won't even visit. At this point the towers must come down, we have to replace them, the size is up to us, all of us, we all have an input and I really feel we have to relax about this and let them get the two million so that we can get going so Aye."

Prior to voting **Councilmember Merante** said "one thing I would like to say is I think there is aligning behind last weeks meeting having to be said and that is to the show of support, the show of the public and the opportunity to give some input into the resolution that hopefully, you know, is the understanding of the application. Step two is now up to the residents, up to voice their opinions, to voice their input, to voice whatever they need to do to feel comfortable moving forward. I think the opportunities can be there. We need to take advantage of that and voice your opinions. Aye."

Prior to voting **Councilmember Purnhagen** said "I support this resolution. I support this initiative. I support the project and I support HHA what you guys are doing. Thank you. Aye"

On motion of **Councilmember Sarowar**, seconded by **Councilmember Mizan** the meeting was adjourned.

Cherri Hirsch
Clerk