

Official Minutes of the Public Hearing of April 5, 2021 regarding the designation of Eastman Park
Oval as a Local Historic Landmark



THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE
NEW YORK

PUBLIC HEARING

Monday, April 5, 2021 5:30 p.m.

City Hall

The Public Hearing was conducted using videoconferencing, as permitted by the NYS Open Meetings Law.

Welcome to the scheduled meeting of the Public Hearing in the City of Poughkeepsie. The date is April 5, 2021 and the time is 5:30 pm.

Effective immediately and based upon notices and health advisories issued by Federal, State, and Local officials related to the Coronavirus, the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council will not hold in-person meetings. Until further notice, all future City Council meetings (including public hearings) will be held via videoconferencing, as permitted by the NYS Open Meetings Law.

Due to public health and safety concerns, the public will not be permitted to attend at the remote locations where the City Council members will be situated. The public, however, will be able to fully observe the video conference meeting by using the registration link that was posted with our meeting notice and the meeting will be available for viewing at a later date and available on our website.

THIS HEARING IS FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE “EASTMAN PARK OVAL” AS A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

Councilmember-At-Large Salem called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Five (5) minutes per person public comment.

- 1. Naomi Brooks** – S. Grand Ave - Have you ever been driving or taking the bus and momentarily forgotten where you are? You look around quickly, trying to get your bearings and see if you missed your destination. It’s a landmark, a unique feature that tells you where you are - that’s what you are searching for. Poughkeepsie is full of them: quirky streets, unique architecture , river views - small gems embedded in our neighborhoods. They are our touchstones, the anchors that let us remember where we are, here in our city. The historic places and buildings in Poughkeepsie are essential in providing our unique signature. Our residents enjoy living in them or looking out at them; our visitors relish learning about them.

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George Eastman had an incredible influence on many of these pivotal sites. He built his own mansion and created its stately grounds right in the heart of the city, and opened those grounds to our residents to enjoy and appreciate. He wanted a safe and inviting place for everyone to participate in wholesome activities. His oval, ringed by trees, had a lush lawn and a beautiful perimeter wall. Now that we are again imagining how to make the entire Eastman site meet many of the same purposes for area residents, we should celebrate and incorporate Eastman's original vision. That will truly make this new endeavor a singular and memorable place in Poughkeepsie, and will honor its past and fold it into its future. Please designate the Eastman Oval as a local historic landmark.

- 2. Laurie Sandow** - South Grand Avenue - At the Common Council's Monday, March 15, 2021 meeting, Resolution R21-33 was passed, setting a public hearing regarding the proposed nomination of "Eastman Park Oval" as a local historic landmark. Was the nomination or any other supporting documentation enclosed in the Council packet of March 15? No, of course not. Nor was the resolution, the nomination, or any other documentation posted to the City website alongside the notice posted for tonight's April 5, 2021, public hearing. The Council pretends to seek public input but, as usual, this Council's doesn't give a rat's patoot, or is outright hostile, to public knowledge and input. There were pages and pages of documents in the March 15 Common Council agenda packet referring to the future of the City of Poughkeepsie Y, and the proposed sale involving the City, the County and Eastman and the future Y. And, in stark contrast, there was an agenda line item and a resolution, but not a single page of documentation for the nomination of "Eastman Park Oval" as a local Historic Landmark. If one searches the City website for "Eastman", one comes up with a big, fat zero. No, instead I, and everyone else, has to wade through agenda pages formatted as graphics rather than as searchable text, before being able to discover that I probably have to go back to the February 11, 2021, HDLPC meeting to find the document I'm looking for. Laurie Sandow comments at Common Council Eastman public hearing, April 5, 2021 — Pg. 2 of 2 Three Councilmembers in particular—Sarah Salem, Sarah Brannen and Evan Menist—are notorious for proclaiming themselves as lifelong or longtime Poughkeepsie or Hudson Valley residents, yet before assuming their elected positions, they have absolutely no track record for involving themselves at Council meetings or other Poughkeepsie meetings. Their "interest" did not develop until they got themselves elected, or walked into their seats unopposed, and assumed the privileged positions of abusing their power, informing themselves behind closed doors, making false promises, yet continuing to deprive the public of easy and transparent information access. Information for the privileged. But for the public?—not a nod in favor of open data, public disclosure, making anything transparent or easy accessible to members of the public. I wholeheartedly support the nomination and declaration of Eastman Park as a locally designated historic landmark. That is different than what the Resolution seems to indicate, which is a designation for only "Eastman Park Oval". The Council needs to clarify what, in fact, they are designating

At 5:41 PM the Public Hearing was adjourned.

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Dated: April 20, 2021

I hereby certify that this true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Common Council Public
Hearing held on April 5, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Jasmin N. Davis
Acting City Chamberlain