



The City of Poughkeepsie New York

Common Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

5:30 PM

Common Council Chambers

I WELCOME:

Welcome to the scheduled Public Hearing of the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council for the purpose of receiving comments on the proposed Downtown Improvement District. The date is Tuesday, November 19, 2024 and the time is 5:34 PM.

II ROLL CALL:

7 Present, 2 Absent (Councilmember - 2nd Ward Evan Menist, Council Member At-Large Da'Ron Wilson)

III PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Five (5) minutes per person for public comment on the Proposed Business Improvement District.

Jason Fox - Academy St
Jim Sullivan - Cannon St
Daniel Atonna - College Ave
Joseph Troche - Delafield St
Phil Bronzi - DC Regional Chamber of Commerce
Laura Belfiore - Main St (submitted written comments only)

To Whom It May Concern,

I am submitting this comment to be included in this evening's public hearing on the Business Improvement District (BID) in the City of Poughkeepsie. I am unable to attend in-person this evening, but would like to offer my support for the initiative. As a property owner and small business owner, I believe the BID would be instrumental in enhancing Poughkeepsie's business climate and quality of life.

Additionally, I would be interested in serving on the BID if there are any available positions.

Thank you.

Best,

Laura Belfiore

Curio Cabinet of the Hudson Valley

300 Main Street

Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

914-450-1567

RESOLUTION

(R-24-81)

NOTICE AND HEARING ON THE PROPOSED DOWNTOWN POUGHKEEPSIE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

**SPONSORED BY CHAIRMAN WILSON, COUNCILMEMBERS PATTERSON-
THOMPSON, HENRY, MENIST, JAMES, GRANT & DEICHLER**

WHEREAS, by resolution R-24-50, the Common Council authorized the preparation of a District Plan for the Downtown Poughkeepsie Business Improvement District; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to General Municipal Law §980-e, the Common Council wishes to hold a public hearing on the District Plan for the Downtown Poughkeepsie Business Improvement District.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Common Council as follows:

1. A copy of District Plan for the Downtown Poughkeepsie Business Improvement District dated **October 28, 2024** is on file in the office of the municipal clerk (a/k/a City Chamberlain) and is available for public inspection; and
2. A copy District Plan for the Downtown Poughkeepsie Business Improvement District is also attached hereto as Exhibit A and is available on the City website at: _____; and
3. **The Common Council shall hold a public hearing on the District Plan for the Downtown Poughkeepsie Business Improvement District on Tuesday, _____, 2024 at _____ p.m.; and**
4. The Clerk shall publish or cause to be published a copy of this resolution as public notice in the official newspaper of the City of Poughkeepsie of said public hearing at least ten (10) day prior thereto; and
5. Any owner of real property, deemed benefitted and therefore within the district, objecting to the plan must file an objection at the office of the municipal clerk (a/k/a the City Chamberlain) within thirty days of the conclusion of the hearing on forms made available by the clerk.

SECONDED BY: _____

**DT
PK**

CITY OF Poughkeepsie
CITY CHAMBERLAIN

2024 OCT 28 PM 3:35

Downtown Poughkeepsie
Business
Improvement
District

DISTRICT PLAN

Prepared by
DTPK BID Steering Committee

Rev: 10/28/2024

This is our moment in Downtown Poughkeepsie. The recent completion of major projects like Luckey Platt, The Academy, and 40 Cannon (just to name a few) have created great momentum in our city. Now, with record investment pouring in and plans to re-imagine our historic downtown with new restaurants, shops, hotels, and entertainment venues, the time is right for our citizens to band together and lead the way in establishing The Queen City as the next great jewel of the Hudson Valley.

By creating a Business Improvement District (BID) in our commercial core, local people - not politicians - will have a voice in what is the future of our city and direct control over funding to make a tangible impact on ensuring we have clean and safe streets, an engaging identity, and are welcoming to new residents, visitors, and businesses.

Pursuant to the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council resolution passed on July 2, 2024, the preparation of this district plan is one of the requirements necessary to comply with New York State General Municipal Law Article 19-A, which provides for and governs Business Improvement Districts.

This plan, written by the members of the DTPK BID Steering Committee (henceforth, “committee”), provides a summary of the legal requirements, formation process, goals, areas of focus, budget, and funding resources to establish and operate a business improvement district in Downtown Poughkeepsie. It includes input from property owners, business owners, commercial tenants, and residents.

A successful BID in Downtown Poughkeepsie will deliver a tremendous return on investment by helping raise property values, lower vacancy rates, increase foot traffic, and create a nimble, community-run apparatus to accept donations, apply for grant funding, and raise sponsorship dollars.

Every single dollar that the BID receives is spent in service of improving Downtown Poughkeepsie, and an open board of directors comprised solely of local stakeholders directs how the money is spent in response to the needs of the community at the time. There are no mandates, and the budget is not beholden to the priorities of any elected official.

Working together is the only way to fulfill our vast potential. The BID summarized in this plan will work together with our partners in City government to create an organization that is uniquely tailored to the needs of Poughkeepsie at both this present moment and long into the future.

BID Overview

What Is A BID?

A business improvement district is a geographical area where local stakeholders oversee and fund the maintenance, improvement, and promotion of their commercial corridor.

For more than 45 years, BIDs have been valuable and proven partners in ongoing initiatives of neighborhood revitalization and economic development across the country, and within New York State. Boasting over 100 BIDs throughout – including more than 75 in New York City – New York's BIDs serve more than 300 miles of commercial corridors and invest more than \$162 million into local economies in the form of supplemental services. (Source: NYC SBS, 2023).

The purpose of a BID is to improve conditions in a specific area, attract and retain businesses and enhance the district experience for anyone who lives, works or visits Downtown Poughkeepsie. Working independently, achieving these goals is difficult if not impossible. Joining together, the possibilities are limitless. A BID enables stakeholders to decide which services meet the district's unique needs and ensures that a consistent financial base is in place.

Why Start A BID?

The most basic principle of a sanctioned business improvement district is that it guarantees financial resources are applied consistently to the area for which they are intended, without diversion or competition from other obligations or changing priorities.

- A BID offers a sustainable and reliable revenue source to provide advocacy, supplemental services, promotions, events, and more.
- A BID allows local stakeholders to manage local priorities and decisions directly and provides a structure to respond quickly to the changing needs of the community.
- To build an apparatus able to apply for grant funding, solicit sponsorship, and accept contributions to multiply guaranteed assessment funding and deliver an outsized return on the investment of financing a BID.
- To create a cleaner, safer and more attractive business district
- To collectively market Downtown Poughkeepsie to expand the reach of businesses further than any one merchant could on his/her own
- To work to increase property values, improve sales, and decrease commercial vacancy rates
- To position our district to better compete with nearby retail and business centers and online shopping.

Governance

Each BID is run by a non-for-profit organization known as a District Management Association (DMA) that is led by a local Board of Directors, who are elected by members of the district. This body can comprise up to voting 20 members.

All decision making related to the BID is made by this Board, which must include property owners, commercial tenants, residents, and publicly elected officials. The Board decides how the BIDs budget is spent and who is hired to execute BID initiatives.

Anyone who owns property in the district, operates a business in the district, or lives in the district is eligible to run for election to the BID board.

Upon approval of the BID ordinance by the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council, the DTPK BID Steering Committee will be required to appoint an ongoing board to replace them. This board will become the oversight body as the Downtown Poughkeepsie BID begins operations.

DTPK BID Steering Committee

Carlos Russell

Business Owner, Queen City Lounge

Jim Sullivan

Property Owner, JSullivan Corporation

Jay Blumenfeld

Property Owners, Walkway Group/Chai Developers

Jenay Scarchilli-Parson

Business Owner, Dulce Cakes and Confections

Michael deCordova

Property Owner

MaryVaughn Williams and Jillian Grano

Property and Business Owners, Canvas and Clothier

Russell Beck

Business Owner, 1915 Wine Bar

Doug Nobiletti

Property Owner

Davina Thomasula

Business Owner, Goodnight Kenny

Outline Of Objectives

The Downtown Poughkeepsie Business Improvement District will focus on providing services that impact four key areas: beautification, safety and security, business climate, and downtown identity.

Beautification

Beautification includes things like on-street garbage pickup, adding additional litter receptacles to the district, planting new trees and maintaining current trees/tree pits, hanging baskets of flowers and blooming planters throughout the district, and offering power washing/graffiti removal services.

Safety and Security

Focusing on safety and security means working to purchase and install additional on-street cameras and lights, forming a downtown Ambassador corps, and advocating for additional walking patrols from City police.

Supporting Business Climate

Supporting the business climate is about advocating for ordinance enforcement and changes to parking, working to attract commercial real estate tenants and fill vacant storefronts, organizing community volunteer days, monitoring, and improving the Civic Center Plaza parking deck, and working with community stakeholders to provide additional support services for the unhoused.

Strengthening Downtown Identity

It's also important that the BID works to create an identity for the commercial core, establishing and hosting signature events, installing light pole banners, wayfinding, and other branding throughout the downtown, and commissioning additional public art and murals.

Supplementing City Services

All services provided by a Business Improvement District are over and above what is already provided by the municipality. Forming a BID does not reduce or replace the services provided by the City of Poughkeepsie in any way. The Downtown Poughkeepsie BID will seek to leverage additional funding for its district for things like storefront improvements, streetscape improvements and more through city, state and federal grants by hiring dedicated professional staff person who has the knowledge and expertise to identify and secure these funding sources.

BID Boundaries and Map

The Downtown Poughkeepsie BID defines Poughkeepsie’s consolidated commercial core and is an area that has seen both tremendous developments completed in the last ten years, with incredible investment and transformation projected during the next ten. Due to its central location, expansion opportunities exist both north and south of the initial boundaries as the city continues to grow and evolve.

NORTHERN BOUNDARY

Where Market St. reaches Mansion St. to Garden St. south to Mill St. where it reaches Hamilton St. The BID includes only properties on the west side of Garden St. The BID includes properties on both the north and south side of Mill St.

EASTERN BOUNDARY

Hamilton Street between Mill St. and Church St. The BID includes on properties on the west side of Hamilton St.

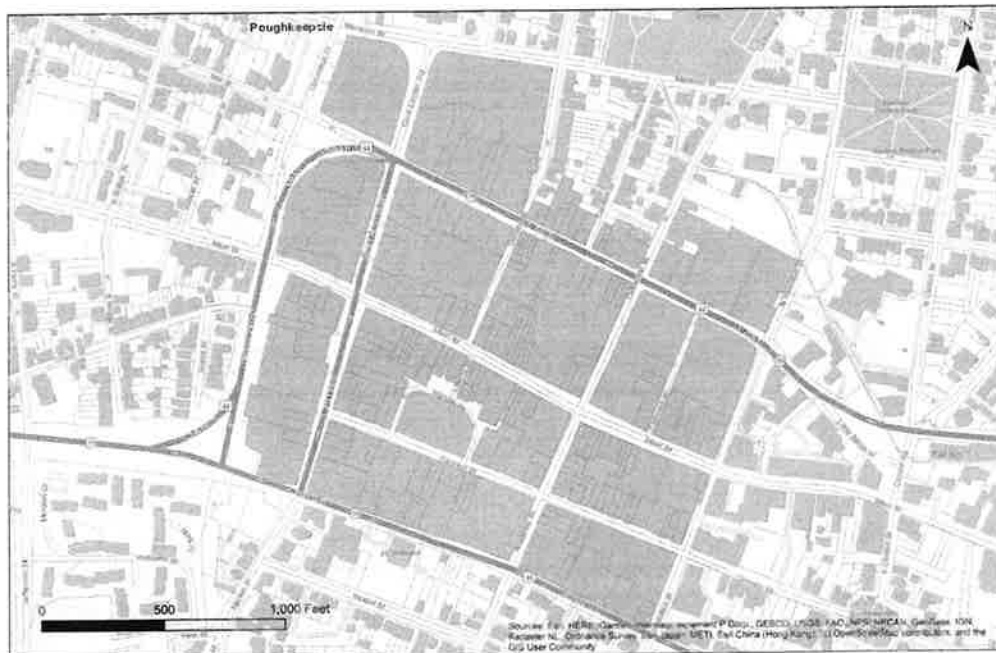
SOUTHERN BOUNDARY

Northernmost side of Church St. from the intersection of the westbound Rt. 44/55 arterial to Hamilton St.

WESTERN BOUNDARY

Mill St. and the westbound Rt. 44/55 arterial behind the Civic Center and County office buildings to its intersection with Church St.

Proposed Poughkeepsie Improvement District



Legal Requirements

New York State General Municipal Law, Article 19-A, Section 980 establishes the legality of BIDs, the formation, powers, plan requirements, organization, and other stipulations required. Key provisions include:

- The local district Plan
 - District boundaries and the district map
 - The district management organization
 - Establishment and definition of the district
 - Funding and expenditure plan
 - Municipal legislative approval
 - Review and approval by New York State Comptroller

According to Article 19-A of the General Municipal Law, the Downtown Poughkeepsie BID Plan is required to:

- 1) Demonstrate approval of the owners of commercial properties included in the proposed district
- 2) Be approved through passage of a local municipal ordinance by the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council.
- 3) Obtain formal review and sanctioning by the State Comptroller.

Prior to the creation of this document, the committee completed a census of all properties within the proposed district and built a database of contact names, phone numbers, and email addresses of a significant majority property owners, and addresses and business names of a significant majority of all commercial tenants. Committee members made direct, personal outreach to 65 property owners and commercial tenants. All affected property owners and commercial tenants were invited to participate in a public meeting and information session on July 22, 2024, to gauge community support for the BID. The committee also sought counsel and best practices on forming a BID from other business improvement district leaders around New York State.

As is stated in Article 19-A, Section 980-e, titled Notice and Hearing, the committee is submitting this plan to the City Clerk seeking legislative approval. Notice of this proposal will be mailed to owners of property within the district, and their tenants. The committee is asking that the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council hold a public hearing on the proposed formation of the Business Improvement District.

According to New York State law, "Any owner of real property deemed benefited and therefore within the District, objecting to the plan, must file an objection at the office of the municipal clerk within 30 days of the conclusion of the hearing on forms made available by the clerk."

The BID shall not be approved by the members of the District if "Owners of at least 51 percent of the assessed valuation of all the benefited real property situated within the boundaries of the district proposed for establishment or extension, as shown upon the latest completed assessment

roll of the municipality” OR “At least 51 percent of the owners of benefited real property within the area included in the district proposed for establishment or extension, so file their objections, the District will not be established or extended.”

If the plan is approved by property owners, the committee will seek Common Council approval through Local Law. Within 20 days of legislative approval, the plan will be sent for review by the New York State Comptroller.

Establishing a District Management Association (DMA)

In accordance with New York State law, the activities of the Downtown Poughkeepsie BID will be guided by a District Management Association (DMA). The District Management Association is the formal name of the legal, not-for-profit entity that is the BID. The DMA will be governed by a Board of Directors representative of the commercial property owners, business tenants, and residents within the District.

The DMA will be governed by an all-volunteer board of directors comprised of direct stakeholders in the BID district. The certificate of incorporation of the DMA shall provide for voting representation of owners of property and tenants within the district. No individual member or class of member (i.e. property owners) shall be weighted to control more than 33.3 percent of the total number of votes which may be cast. By law, the board will include an individual appointed by the Mayor, City Comptroller, and City of Poughkeepsie Common Council.

The Board of Directors will be elected by the members of the district. BID members vote to elect directors in their respective classes – property owners vote for property owners and commercial tenants for commercial tenants. Board members will not receive a salary. Voting during board meetings will not be weighted - each Director will receive one vote, regardless of their District interests.

The Board of Directors has fiduciary responsibility and will hire an Executive Director to administer the BID on a day-to-day basis. In addition to other powers conferred on the DMA by law, it may make recommendations to the Common Council with respect to any matter involving or relating to the District. The Common Council may also license or grant to the DMA the right to undertake or permit commercial activities or other private uses of the streets or other parts of the District in which the City of Poughkeepsie has any real property interest.

Dissolution

In accordance with New York State law, the BID may be dissolved by vote of the Common Council or upon the written petition of (1) the owners of at least 51 percent or more of the total assessed valuation of all benefitted real property in the district and; (2) at least 51 percent of the owners of benefitted real property in the district, subject to considering the recommendations of the district management association concerning any proposed dissolution.

Funding and Expenditure Plan

Programs and services carried out annually by the Downtown Poughkeepsie BID will require funding of approximately \$325,000.

BID Assessment

Base operating funds for the Downtown Poughkeepsie BID will be provided by property owners within the BID boundaries that determine its programs. When the BID is approved the mechanism for implementing the assessment is put into place. Commercial property owners control this process, subject to state law.

The committee has chosen to leverage the following assessment formula based off each property's city tax liability (this number does not include school, county, or library taxes).

To fund the BID, each taxable parcel inside the BID boundaries will contribute a \$250 base fee plus \$125 for every \$1,000 of annual city tax liability. No property will contribute more than 0.005% of the total district tax base each year, which currently amounts to approximately \$9,000. By law, the disbursement of every dollar raised by the BID assessment is overseen by a board of directors comprised of property owners, commercial tenants, and residents from the district. Every dollar raised by the BID will be spent to directly benefit the BID district.

There are a total of 218 parcels in the BID district, with 168 on the tax rolls. This includes 19 vacant lots, 16 apartment buildings, 10 homesteads, and 22 parking lots. The total tax base of the proposed district is currently \$1,769,123. Projected annual BID assessment and fee revenue is \$232,266¹. The average assessment is projected to be \$89 per month. The median assessment is projected to be \$64 per month.

Homestead properties are exempt from the BID assessment. Properties owned by government, nonprofit, or religious institutions are exempt from the BID assessment, however the DMA will seek to forge shared services agreements with these entities as appropriate to benefit the downtown district.

BID assessments are not optional and are paid by all non-exempt property owners within the district.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Event Sponsorship

Fulfilling the objective of improving the business climate and creating a downtown identity, the Downtown Poughkeepsie BID will host key signature events throughout the year. These events will be designed to be attractive to corporate sponsorship and incorporate other revenue generating opportunities (i.e. sale of food/drink or merchandise, sale of vendor space, etc.) to positively impact the BID's bottom line.

Grant Funding

¹ The assessments have been calculated using the Mayor's proposed City budget dated October 15, 2024. Any amendments to that proposed budget may result in a reduction of the projected assessment.

As a mission-driven 501c3, the DMA will actively seek to supplement assessment funding via local, state, and federal grants as appropriate. Grant funds will be primarily used to directly fund special capital projects, allowing additional assessment revenue to be applied to BID objectives.

Commercial Tenant “Membership”

During the committee’s strategic planning and outreach process, numerous commercial tenants in the district indicated a willingness to voluntarily support the BID. The DMA will institute a tenant “membership” program seeking \$250 per year from interested participating businesses.

City Of Poughkeepsie

To support the downtown district and help the BID make an immediate impact, the City of Poughkeepsie has pledged \$140,000 in operating support from funds received via the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). These funds will be critical as the BID makes one-time, year one expenditures to purchase equipment and furnishings and hire staff.

Projected 2025 Income

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Assessment + Base Fees	\$0
City Of Poughkeepsie (ARPA)	\$140,000
Event Sponsorship	\$15,000
Grants	\$15,000
Optional Tenant Membership	\$12,500
TOTAL PROJECTED INCOME	\$182,500

Projected 2026 Income

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Assessment + Base Fees	\$232,266
City Of Poughkeepsie (ARPA)	\$0
Event Sponsorship	\$20,000
Grants	\$15,000
Optional Tenant Membership	\$15,000
TOTAL PROJECTED INCOME	\$282,266

EXPENDITURES

Capital Expenditures

The District Plan does not entail any major capital projects for which bonds or other debt instruments would be required. The initial expense projections include relatively minor purchases to be made on a cash basis.

Proposed Annual Expenditure Breakdown

The following is a predicted layout of what the Steering Committee proposes the Poughkeepsie BID establish as an expenditure plan. All future expenses will be dictated at the direction of the BID Board of Directors.

ADMINISTRATIVE		
	Executive Staff Salaries	\$75,000
	Street Team Salaries	\$35,000
	Consultants/Contractors	\$10,000
	Office Space	\$20,000
	Supplies	\$8,500
	Computer Software/Hardware	\$4,500
	Misc. Fees, Costs, Utilities	\$5,000
		\$158,000
BEAUTIFICATION		
	Equipment/Supplies	\$10,000
	Seasonal Décor	\$12,500
	Flowers/Plants	\$12,500
		\$39,000
BUSINESS CLIMATE		
	Printing/Publishing	\$7,000
	B2B Networking	\$2,500
	District Advertising	\$5,000
		\$14,500
SAFETY & SECURITY		
	Ambassador Program	\$35,000
	Cameras & Equipment	\$15,000
	Needs Assessment	\$10,000
		\$60,000
DISTRICT IDENTITY		
	Branding Campaign	\$5,000
	Asset Management	\$2,500
		\$7,500
TOTAL INCOME		\$282,266
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		\$279,500

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

December 2024 – BID Resolution Passes Common Council

February 2025 – BID Assessment Plan Approved by NYS Comptroller

February 2025 – BID District Codified in City Law

March 2025 – Begin Formation of DMA & BID Bylaws/Structure

March 2025 – BID Assessment Included in Tax Bills

April – August 2025 – BID Administrative Startup

September – October 2025 – BID Operational Startup

October-December 2025 – BID Directors Election

January 2026 – First Annual Meeting; Board Election

January 2026 – BID Begins Normal Operation

IV ADJOURNMENT:

At 5:55 PM, a motion to close the Public Hearing was made by Council Member- 6th Ward Grant and seconded by Council Member- 7th Ward Patterson Thompson.

MOTION TO ADJOURN - VOICE VOTE	
Yes/Aye:	Council Member- 3rd Ward Brown, Council Member- 5th Ward James, Council Member- 6th Ward Grant, Council Member- 8th Ward Deichler, Council Member- 7th Ward Patterson Thompson, Council Member- 4th Ward Shook
No/Nay:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Council Member- 1st Ward Henry, Councilmember - 2nd Ward Menist, Council Member At-Large Wilson
Result:	Passed

Dated: November 20, 2024

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Common Council Public Hearing held on Tuesday, November 19, 2024.

**Respectfully submitted,
Donna M. DeLuca
Deputy City Chamberlain**