



THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE NEW YORK

PUBLIC HEARING

Monday, May 3, 2021 5:30 p.m.

City Hall / Zoom

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 May 3, 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 NOMINATION OF 112 MILL STREET AS A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

Councilmember-At-Large Salem called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

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

- 1. Naomi Brooks** – S. Grand Ave - My grandfather, who was born in 1886, came to America from Romania in 1912. He died when I was young, but I was transfixed by his stories of the old country, the little villages where his father was a grain merchant, the pig that bit him when he was a child. I traveled to Romania about a decade ago to see for myself and nothing remained houses he lived in the businesses all gone. Even the cemetery was locked and overgrown. His family, once in America, dispersed to make new starts around the country. Again, I searched for some of the old addresses found in census records, places where he worked and lived. None remained. It was disheartening and it leaves a hole in the knowledge of my past. It's a puzzle piece that will never be found because the bearers of those stories and

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the physical manifestation of their past, both are gone now. Here in Poughkeepsie, a similar story unfolded in a similar time frame, but with a different result, a thriving factory and its offices were pivotal part of our area and which became to be known as Little Italy. When the business closed, the buildings remained, the buildings remained. And an Italian immigrant named Carmelo Barrone, also born in 1886, who arrived in Poughkeepsie in 1912 after immigrating a few years earlier, bought the Pelton's PIN factory office building and proceeded to make it his family home. He had attaches to the architecture that reflected his Italian heritage. He planted a fruit orchard overlooking the Falko Creek and the hillhouse the Pelton's mansion. We have a remarkable opportunity here. Not only do the Cotan factory and the mansion remain, but the Pilton offices at one Mill Street remain in the Brown family. Carmelo's daughter, Jean, still lives there. The history of the family is written in each of the changes they made to the building, many of the plantings on the grounds that are still thriving. We should recognize this property as a pivotal part of little Italy's history, both in its place during factory operations and later as the neighborhood thrived with the Brown family, home and grocery business. It's a puzzle piece here in Poughkeepsie that is not lost at all and deserves the support and protection of historic designation. So the story remains to be read. Thank you.

2. **Laurie Sandow** - South Grand Avenue - I have spoken before and I'm speaking again absolutely in support of 112 Mill designation as a local historic landmark. I also note that an hour has been allowed for this public hearing. And I suggest that this be the basis of all public hearings at least an hour, including the special informational meeting that the same courtesy given here for potential speakers be given at other meetings. Thank you. Again, I'm in support of 112 Mill as a local historic landmark.
3. **Toni Mauro** - Commissioner with the HDLPC - Thank you for allowing me to speak. My name is Toni Mauro and the commissioner with the HDLPC and I had the incredible honor of writing this historic nomination. For the family that has spent decades living at one mill, Millstreet, it has a renowned history and a prominent history in the first ward of Poughkeepsie. As Naomi so eloquently stated, we know that it goes as far back as the before the mid 19th century, when Slocombe and Joelson, who became known for their famous Poughkeepsie pens and invented the A device that would attach pens to paper, and we would refer to it today as the stapler. We're working in Poughkeepsie and manufacturing pens. Then with the arrival of the Pelton's brothers, they secured the building, but they also purchased Slocomb and Jolson's business. And then they set up, as you heard, Naomi State on Mill street taking over first the building next door to the former silk factory, which then became Pelton's carpet factory. And then we have the PIN factory. It employed quite a few people and then it went on to be a successful business until the Pelton's stopped working there. And several businesses later, many decades later into the early 20th century, it became the famous cigar factory. Once we begin to discuss Carmela Boron's history in this building, it's important to realize that we are very proud of this building I grew up in the first walk around the corner from it, passed it every day, every week on my way to church, attending more Carmel School, and always thought that its Mediterranean look was

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different compared to the other 19th century structures that we saw in the neighborhood. Certainly it's lovingly, affectionately called Little Italy today, but to us it was home and the barons were very much a part of making it home for so many Italian immigrants. For Carmelo Barrone, his wife Rosaria, and his brother Marcelo Barrone, it wasn't an easy journey. It wasn't romantic in any way, and I think that that's most important to keep in mind. One of the most startling things we've come to realize that I came to realize in researching this home as a Carmella Barrone, who first lived directly across the street from where we're Carmel School is, which was the old Barrone store before he purchased this property in the neighborhood at the time, sadly, of Italian immigrants who had come to live in the neighborhoods. Delafield Street, Clover Street. Dwayne St. One common place, we're not listed in the earliest directories by their surnames, but rather as quote unquote Italians, it was not easy, but the Barones helped to make it easy for several immigrants as they came specifically to Poughkeepsie for the community that was growing in the first ward. Bartolo Barrone and Carmelo Barrone were able to speak English, they were able to help people with their travel arrangements so that they could come to Poughkeepsie, they Bartolo Barrone had his own bank, as we all remember, as I remember it from way back when he was a travel agent as well, and he, Carmello was able to assist people to buy their own homes, help them to set up their businesses. And this has become really significant in terms of the history of 112, Mill street. So when I was approached by the family because they wanted to historically landmark their home so that it was part of our architectural heritage in Poughkeepsie. It was an honor and an adventure. It was great to sit with Jean and with Laura and to find their stories, to write them down. And now to have documented them. So I strongly, highly recommend that the council move. To vote for one 12 Mill street as a historic landmark in the city of Poughkeepsie. I hope that you enjoyed reading the history and if you have any questions, I'd be happy to answer them for you. If not here and now, you can certainly email me about them. Thank you very much.

At 5:44 PM the Public Hearing was adjourned.

Dated: May 11, 2021

I hereby certify that this true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Common Council Public Hearing held on May 3, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

**Jasmin N. Davis
City Chamberlain**