



Wednesday, September 27, 2023

City of Hudson Planning Board
520 Warren St.
Hudson, NY 12534

RE: City of Hudson Planning Board Public Hearing on A. Colarusso & Son's site plan application and conditional use permit for road improvements

To Chair Theresa Joyner and the Members of the City of Hudson Planning Board:

I write to you today on behalf of Hudson Business Coalition, Inc. [HBCi], a non-profit membership organization committed to advancing the interests of Hudson's diverse and vibrant business community, enjoining you to reject the current application and conditional use permit sought by A. Colarusso & Son.

At this particular moment in time, we believe that the City of Hudson faces an inflection point, and has the opportunity to chart a course that will carry it forward for decades to come. Hudson's waterfront is one of our community's crown jewels, and serves as a place for our residents and visitors to congregate, recreate, and enjoy nature. It's also become a place where many other low-impact businesses are located, and serve their customers and members of the public. These are businesses who are compatible with the City's own vision for what the waterfront zone should look and operate like.

While Hudson's waterfront has a long and storied history of industry, countless other communities throughout the Hudson valley and across New York state have been rethinking their approach to development of their waterfronts for the last several decades.

City of Hudson's own Planning Board has already determined that the proposal currently under consideration is misaligned with the City's own established Vision Plan, Comprehensive Plan, and Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP).

Additionally, we're uncertain how a company that lost its use permit to operate at the waterfront in 2017 is able to continue to do so. It's difficult to imagine that this kind of exception would be granted for any other business.

We recognize and appreciate the need for a measured approach when it comes to economic development, environmental conservation, social justice, and a respect for the traditions and history of a community. But with that said, no one business— regardless of its contributions to the community or its long-standing history— should be permitted to act with impunity or without concern for the negative externalities that its operations may result in.

If A. Colarusso & Son receives approval for its conditional use permits, it will have adverse effects on the waterfront, and indeed, the City of Hudson at large, that will reverberate for decades. And worse still, the City of Hudson will have little or no recourse.

Hudson's waterfront stands on the cusp of further economic development and business expansion opportunities that are better suited to serving the needs and desires of a much greater contingent of residents and visitors to Hudson. There are many other new and incumbent businesses and organizations that currently operate in the areas of hospitality, retail, and entertainment, that are all looking to expand their operations or footprint at the Hudson waterfront. Collectively, our Hudson waterfront businesses employ a greater number of residents working *at the waterfront* than any other single entity. The Hudson waterfront is the place where visitors and residents attend countless private and public community events every year. Finally, given the recent sale of the former "KAZ" property, there is potentially a large-scale mixed-used development that will be breaking ground within years and will be located adjacent to the site in question.

For the safety and well-being of visitors and locals, and the quality of life for our residents, it may otherwise be tempting to approve of the proposal that would seemingly "get the trucks off the city streets," as many advocate for.

However, A. Colarusso & Son and its legal representation have made explicitly clear that they reserve the right to continue to drive gravel trucks through the city streets, even *with* the approval and development of the so-called 'haul road.'

It's worth noting, we *also* support getting the trucks off the city streets, and that serious consideration for moving the truck route must be granted to improve public safety, ensure the long-term health of our residents, and protect the structural integrity of our buildings and infrastructure. But these issues shouldn't be conflated, nor should A. Colarusso & Son use this as a cudgel to extract their own demands.

Furthermore, we understand that denial of A. Colarusso & Son's application before the Planning Board will *not* have a significant adverse effect on the company's ability to conduct its operations or generate a profit. This proposed plan exclusively represents an expansion of A. Colarusso & Son's operations, which will come at the expense of our natural environment, our collective health and safety, and has the potential to inhibit the expansion and development of other businesses and organizations.

Given these facts, we urge the City of Hudson Planning Board to deny A. Colarusso & Son's application for its site plan and conditional use permits.

Respectfully submitted,



Alexandre J. Petraglia, *HBCi President*,

and the HBCi Board of Directors,

Billy Blowers, *HBCi Treasurer & Membership Director*

Ivy Dane, *Rebus*

Eric De Feo, *Made x Hudson*

Kristan Keck, *Wm. Farmer and Sons*

Shanan Magee, *Park Theater Hudson*

James Male, *HOUSE Hudson Valley Realty*

Elizabeth Moore, *Elizabeth Moore Fine Art*

Peg Patterson, *DISH Hudson*

MaryVaughn Williams, *Hudson Clothier*