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REAL ESTATE IN-DEPTH

Official Publication of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors



Intense Demand Leads to Double-Digit Increases in Home Sales in Hudson Valley

By John Jordan

WHITE PLAINS—A perfect storm of market forces—strong buyer demand, low interest rates, soaring housing costs in New York City and a vibrant local economy—helped propel residential home sales in the four-county market area of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors to a five-year high.

The Hudson Gateway Multiple Listing Service, Inc. reported 4,525 residential closings in the second quarter, an increase of 23% over the second quarter of 2015.

According to the 2016 Second Quarter Residential Real Estate Sales Report for Westchester, Putnam, Rockland and Orange Counties, released recently by the Hudson Gateway Multiple Listing Service, (see full report and statistics on pages 21 and 22) all four counties posted double-digit increases in sales transactions as compared to a year earlier. Putnam County posted the largest second quarter increase at 31.9%, followed closely by Orange County at 30.1%. Rockland County registered a 24.5% rise in sales, while Westchester closed 19.9% more transactions than a year earlier.

HUDSON VALLEY HOME SALES

Second Quarter 2016

Putnam County	+31.9%
Orange County	+30.1%
Rockland County	+24.7%
Westchester County	+19.9%

Realtors interviewed by *Real Estate In-Depth* said that demand was strong across all housing types (single-family, condominiums, cooperatives and 2-4-family residences). In addition, the robust market seemed to be especially strong for moderately priced housing in each market. One drag on the market has been the luxury sector, which continues to struggle.

Three of the four counties in the HGAR market area posted single-family home median sale price increases. Putnam County recorded the largest percentage increase—8.5%—from \$289,500 last year to

\$314,000 this year. Orange County followed with a 6% increase in its single-family median price from \$209,950 in the second quarter of 2015 to \$222,500 this year. Rockland County sported a 4.9% increase in the median single-family home price during that period from \$410,000 to \$430,000. Westchester County was the only market on the negative side of the ledger, posting a 1.6% decline in the median single-family home price from \$660,500 in the second quarter of 2015 to \$650,000 at the mid-point of 2016. It should be noted that the median price of a condominium

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City of Middletown Wins \$10-Million Sweepstakes

By John Jordan

MIDDLETOWN—The City of Middletown defied long odds and stiff competition to land major economic development funding from New York State geared to transforming its downtown district.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo made a stop at the storied Paramount Theatre in Middletown on July 6th to announce that the City of Middletown had won a hotly contested \$10-million state grant. A host of state, county and local dignitaries were on hand for the announcement that Middletown had secured the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant competition for the Mid-Hudson region. Middletown won the award based on the recommendation of the governor's Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council.

The City of Middletown bested six other finalists from the Mid-Hudson

region, a knowledgeable source told *Real Estate In-Depth*. The other finalists were: Ossining, Kingston, Peekskill, Poughkeepsie, New Rochelle and White Plains

The grant is part of a \$100-million effort to improve the urban vitality of city centers across the state. Plans will be completed by early 2017. The state will be awarding \$10-million grants to cities in the other nine regional councils throughout the state. On July 6th, the governor announced that the City of Plattsburgh had won the Downtown Revitalization Initiative for the North Country district and Geneva had won the award for the Finger Lakes region. Since then the governor has announced that the City of Elmira had bested other downtowns in the Southern Tier and the

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From left, New York Secretary of State Rossana Rosado, State Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther, Gov. Andrew Cuomo, Middletown Mayor Joseph DeStefano, Orange County Executive Steve Neuhaus and State Senator John Bonacic.

Putnam County Executive Odell Tells CID: 'Better Days are Ahead'

By John Jordan

MAHOPAC—Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell says the county needs to expand its commercial base by securing additional sewer capacity, and also must attract and retain Millennials, as well as encourage ongoing initiatives like "Envision Brewster" and the redevelopment of Tilly Foster Farm.

Odell was the keynote speaker at the annual breakfast of the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce. The program was co-sponsored by the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, the Putnam

County Economic Development Corp. and the Hudson Valley Chapter of the New York State Commercial Association of Realtors. More than 70 people attended the event held at the Putnam County Golf Course on June 23.

"I would say better days are ahead," Odell said. She said that since she took office in 2012, she has realized while some progress has been made in Putnam via initiatives launched by the public and private sectors in Putnam, the county "needs



Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell

a larger footprint." Odell added, "We really need to engage the region."

In that vein, Odell said that Putnam is continuing to finalize details on a partnership with the City of Danbury, CT to acquire additional sewer capacity and build a connection to the Danbury sewer system along what could be a 15-mile stretch on an underutilized commercial strip along Route 6. The county executive said the initiative could involve the purchase of up to 1 million gallons per day of sewer capacity from the City of

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Putnam County Executive Odell Tells HGAR's CID: 'Better Days are Ahead'

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Danbury.

She described the potential commercial development that the sewer connection could bring as one of the largest opportunities for business growth in Putnam County. Property owners would be able to build larger, cleaner projects by eliminating space for a septic system.

"This partnership between Putnam County and the City of Danbury to purchase sewer will hopefully allow us to develop this (Route 6) corridor all the way back (from Danbury sewer line connection) to the Village of Brewster," she said. Odell said that the Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton and the Danbury City Council are drafting a memorandum of understanding regarding the sewer partnership with Putnam County. She added that another potential partnership with Danbury would be expanded transportation between the Brewster region and Danbury. Odell estimated the sewer connection project would likely cost \$1 million a mile to install. She said the county was applying for a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant from the federal government to help pay for the project.

She said that the sewer initiative along with the revitalization initiative "Envision Brewster" has the potential for making Brewster, Putnam County's Jersey City or Hoboken.

Other initiatives announced by the County Executive included the es-

establishment of a BOCES Culinary Arts program at Tilly Foster Farm. "We are building a teaching kitchen in Tilly. We are rebranding it to be an educational institute."

BOCES students will be at Tilly Foster Farm beginning in September, enrolled in the first of five planned courses that were developed by Putnam County in cooperation with BOCES. These courses will also be open for adults as well, Odell noted.

She also provided updates on the proposed mixed-use projects Union Place in Mahopac and Oregon Corners in Putnam Valley. She said that possibly brining water to Putnam Valley "could be a game-changer" for Putnam County.

Another significant project Odell mentioned is at the former Butterfield Hospital mixed-use project in Cold Spring. Putnam County will be leasing approximately 6,000 square feet at the development to be used as a senior center.

County Executive Odell announced earlier in the month that architectural design firm, Todd Zwigard Architects (TZA), was awarded the contract to redesign the Lahey Pavilion, which will house a new state-of-the-art senior center at the Butterfield site. The first round of draft plans will be submitted to the county by early July.



From left, HGAR CEO Richard Haggerty, Putnam County Chamber of Commerce Chairwoman Jennifer Maher, Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell, Putnam EDC President Jill Varricchio and Putnam County Chamber of Commerce President Bill Nulk.



Putnam County Executive Odell outlined a host of her administration's initiatives at the CID session held at the Putnam County Golf Course in Mahopac.

Middletown Wins \$10-Million Economic Development Sweepstakes

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Gov. Andrew Cuomo

Village of Westbury was selected the winner in the Long Island region.

Gov. Cuomo cited the establishment of Touro Medical College at the former Horton Hospital, as well as the \$60-million the city has spent in the past on its water and sewer infrastructure to help revitalize its downtown as part of Middletown's "powerful application."

"I'm here to tell you congratulations, you won the full \$10 million," Gov. Cuomo said as the several hundred attendees of the press conference stood up and applauded. "Congratulations, congratulations because it was a tough competition and a lot of people worked very hard, but you really did an extraordinary job. Cream rises to the top and you won and you should've won because it was really a job well done."

Middletown Mayor Joseph DeStefano told *Real Estate In-Depth* that specific projects have not been selected as yet for the funding. The award includes up to \$300,000 in planning funds for private sector experts to work with a local planning committee to draft a

Strategic Investment Plan that will identify specific economic development, transportation, and housing and community projects for the City of Middletown. Mayor DeStefano said some of the priorities for funding would involve job development, infrastructure, parking as well as the possible expansion of the Orange County Accelerator (business incubator) to the City of Middletown.

He said he believes the strengths of the city's application were the city's past investments in its infrastructure as well as its willingness to be a "regional player," supplying water to the CPV Valley Energy Center project in Wawayanda and water and sewer to Amy's Kitchen in Goshen.

Mayor DeStefano said, "This \$10-million award from the state is another example of Governor Cuomo's continued commitment to reviving the state's downtown areas, and ensuring they remain a source of economic development in regions all across the state. I applaud the Regional Economic Development Council on such an excellent choice and look forward to our collaboration with the council as we begin to implement this initiative across the region."

The annual Consolidated Funding Application competition that awards the lion's share of state grant funding to counties and municipalities for economic development oriented projects is now underway. The deadline for CFA submissions is Friday, July 29th at 4 p.m. with funding announcements expected in the fall.

For applicants, the CFA is available at <https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/>; and the 2016 REDC Guidebook and list of available resources can be found at

www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov.

Among some of the other dignitaries at the July 6th program at the Paramount Theatre, State Senator John Bonacic said, "Downtown Middletown has long been the historic gathering place of the Hudson Valley, and has fostered great success for local employees and visitors. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will allow us to continue to expand economically and provide even more opportunities for local businesses and community institutions throughout the region."

State Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther added, "Middletown is undergoing a true renaissance. Being selected as a winner of the Governor's Downtown Re-

vitalization Initiative puts it over the top. This funding allows us to bring to completion infrastructure projects critical to attract more businesses and families to Middletown, as well as re-purpose many of our historic buildings to house those businesses and their employees."

Orange County Executive Steve Neuhaus said of the award, "Today's announcement by Governor Cuomo is wonderful news. This funding will create jobs and help projects that have lagged for decades such as the Heritage Trail expansion and Indigot Water development plan come to life. It serves as validation for the hard work done by City of Middletown and county officials."



From left, Middletown Mayor Joseph DeStefano and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo at the award presentation announcement held at the Paramount Theatre in Middletown.

Intense Demand Leads to Double-Digit Increases in Home Sales in Hudson Valley

Continued from page 1

dropped 1.5% to \$356,438 at the end of the second quarter, while cooperatives in Westchester recorded a 6.9% increase in price to \$155,000.

Realtors interviewed by *Real Estate In-Depth* agreed that home buying demand has been robust so far in 2016. The strong sales environment has begun to erode for-sale inventory, particularly in the affordable to moderate-priced home sectors, they said.

HGAR President Marcene Hedayati said that the continued high volume of sales in the Hudson Valley has naturally had a downward effect on inventory. She said that homeowners are in a “holding pattern” at the moment. She noted that some are reluctant to put their home on the market due to the volatility in the stock market caused by Brexit or are unsure where the economy will go after the upcoming election.

Hedayati, who is Principal Broker/Owner of William Raveis Legends Realty Group in Hastings, Irvington and Tarrytown, said, “On the buy side, the high-end markets are definitely more sluggish than the more affordable price ranges and that is evident in the ‘flat’ or minimal decline in the median single-family home price in Westchester as opposed to increases in the median price further north.”

She said that low inventory levels could cause a short-term slowdown in sales and a continued trend of higher prices in most markets.

“My hope is that as things stabilize, sellers will feel more comfortable about their future and start listing, which will provide more choices for the buyer and lead us into a more balanced market,” Hedayati said.

Joseph Rand, managing partner, Better Homes and Gardens Rand Realty, said that continued high sales activity has finally had an impact on pricing, particularly in the mid- to entry-priced markets throughout the HGAR market area.

“We’ve now had sales going up for over four years, with regional transactions rising in 16 out of the last 18 quarters,” Rand said. “Most importantly, we’re now seeing sustained sales increases driving sales totals to levels that rival the height of the last seller’s market, with almost 15,000 single-family home and 3,000 condos sold over the past 12 months.”

Inventory levels are tightening and are trending toward possibly transforming the market into a seller’s market when available inventory reaches six months or less of available housing stock. “Well, we are not yet under six months in any of our regional markets, but we’re moving in that direction, with months of single-family inventory down 24% in Westchester, 38% in Putnam, 32% in Rockland, and 39% in Orange. Condo inventory was also down, falling 38% in Westchester, 48% in Putnam, 9% in Rockland, and 29% in Orange. Both Westchester and Putnam condos are now below six months worth of inventory, and other counties are closing in on the threshold,” Rand noted.

He added that the sustained sales surges in the region have not had widespread impacts on pricing. He noted that prices rose in the second quarter in Putnam, Rockland and Orange. “It was only in Westchester that we had prices go down, but even there we believe that the drop was largely caused by a relative lack of demand in the very high end of the market, for homes selling above \$3 million. In other words, the price drop in Westchester is partly caused by the relative strength of lower-priced markets compared to higher-priced markets throughout the region,” Rand said.

He expects the robust sales market to continue this year due to strong fundamentals in the regional market—rising demand, lower inventory, interest rates at near historic lows, and the overall economy performing well. “Accordingly, we expect that sales will continue to outpace 2015 levels, and believe it’s only

ond quarter.

He said the struggles of the luxury market are not Westchester County’s alone, noting that luxury market sales are down in many major markets nationwide, including New York City.

“The luxury market is sluggish right now in Westchester. There is plenty of

“My hope is that as things stabilize, sellers will feel more comfortable about their future and start listing, which will provide more choices for the buyer and lead us into a more balanced market.”

—HGAR President Marcene Hedayati



a matter of time before the sustained increases in buyer demand starts driving meaningful price appreciation throughout the region,” Rand predicted.

Joseph Valvano, president of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Connecticut and Westchester, agreed with his colleagues that the high-priced market in Westchester continues to struggle, while demand for affordable and moderately-priced homes is very high, fueled by extremely low interest rates. Another contributor to strong sales in the lower priced home sector is the strong regional economy. Demand for not only single-family homes, but also for more affordable condominium and co-operative homes, has also been very keen and led to higher sales in the sec-

ond quarter. This is a key time to work with your Realtor to make sure that the pricing strategy for your luxury property is spot on,” he said.

The ample inventory has also produced a discerning or selective buyer, Valvano noted. “We have found that a lot of luxury buyers don’t want to do much work. They want to move into a place that is in mint condition and is priced properly. They have choices.”

He added that the depletion of available inventory over this current sales surge is creating issues and reducing choices in some price points, housing types and in some markets.

According to the HGMLS second quarter report, overall inventory was down 15.6% in Westchester, 22.3% in

Putnam, 10.9% in Rockland and 17.8% in Orange as compared to the second quarter of 2015.

Valvano said that demand has continued to be strong in the early days of the third quarter and if all positive market forces remain in place, home sales should continue to be strong.

Roberto Vannucchi, executive vice president of Douglas Elliman in Connecticut and Westchester, said of the second quarter, “Overall the market is pretty strong. The well known trend that just continues is the lack of affordability in New York City that is driving people to Westchester.”

Vannucchi said that the homes under contract at the moment in Westchester are very strong, which points to a likely strong sales climate in the third quarter of this year.

He added that a lack of “good inventory” has become an issue in some markets and in some price points in Westchester.

The luxury market (generally priced over \$3 million) is the exception as this sector continued to underperform with ample inventory. “I would say that if I am a buyer in the luxury market, I have a great opportunity that hasn’t been seen in the past few years,” he said.

In contrast, Vannucci said that Douglas Elliman has seen “a healthy multiple offer environment for homes priced under \$1 million and even in some markets above \$1 million.”

He noted that all market drivers are positive and that at least thus far Brexit has not caused any sales deals to fall through. However, he said that Brexit and its potential impacts are definitely on some buyers’ radar screens at the moment.

DISAPPOINTED?

Most Westchester Boards of Assessment Review will issue their decisions on or around September 15. If you or anyone you know are disappointed with either a denial or insufficient reduction, you should know that there’s a second opportunity to seek a reduction; via the Small Claims Assessment Review (SCAR) process. Please call for information.

2014 HGAR AFFILIATE OF THE YEAR



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**PRESIDENT'S
CORNER**

By Marcene Hedayati, HGAR President

**Focus on Fair Housing**

On May 31st, more than 100 of our Managers and Broker/Owners gathered at the Doubletree Hotel in Tarrytown for their first 2016 meeting. Each year, the incoming president of HGAR invites two members to chair a committee that is responsible for organizing a minimum of two educational events throughout the year for the Managers and Broker Owners of companies in our area. The subject to be covered at each session is chosen to specifically address current industry issues and standards.

On February 14th of this year Gov. Andrew Cuomo launched a Fair Housing Enforcement Program designed to identify discriminatory behavior in real estate transactions. Under the program, a plan has been put in place whereby "testers" are being used to investigate the actions of, not only real estate agents, but sellers and landlords as well. Its objective is to ensure that the rights of all individuals are protected when it comes to purchasing or renting a property. The governor has also requested that the Department of State propose regulations that would enable officials to move more swiftly and with more conviction to revoke the license of any real estate broker or salesperson should he or she be guilty of any discriminatory conduct.

Of the three fair housing agencies that have been asked to work with the state to execute the program, one of them, Westchester Residential Opportunities based out of White Plains, has been a long-time friend of HGAR. Over the years they have provided training to our members and their helpline, along with numerous other resources, has offered much needed guidance to our members. For this reason, it seemed only fitting to ask WRO to speak on Fair Housing at our May 31st meeting.

Marlene Zarfes, fair housing director with Westchester Residential Opportunities, focused on Source of Income, Familial Status and Disability. Her presentation prompted numerous questions and a host of debates and it became clear to all that navigating Fair Housing Laws is more often than not challenging, even for those of us who have been doing this for decades. Because of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtor's and Westchester Residential Opportunities' shared mission to eliminate all illegal housing discrimination, we, as members, should feel confident that we have the resources and support at hand to address any questions we may have.

The Broker/Owner/Manager Committee's task is to provide information to the mentors of our industry so that they may impart that knowledge to our members. Like all other committees, the expectation is that all of our association's initiatives are helping to fulfill our obligation as stated in our mission statement:

HGAR creates opportunities for members to grow their businesses and succeed in their communities.



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REAL ESTATE IN-DEPTH

July 2016 Published July 14, 2016

Publisher: Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc.

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REAL ESTATE IN-DEPTH, published monthly, is the official publication of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc., One Maple Ave., White Plains, New York 10605. Opinions contained in the articles herein do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Association. The editors of REAL ESTATE IN-DEPTH reserve the right to accept or reject all advertising copy. REAL ESTATE IN-DEPTH (ISSN 0043-339X) or (USPS 677-500) is published 12 times a year for \$12 per year, included in member dues, and \$24 for non-members, by The Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc., One Maple Ave., White Plains, N.Y. 10605. Periodical Postage is paid at White Plains, N.Y. REAL ESTATE IN-DEPTH cannot be responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, nor undertake to return manuscripts or pictures. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to REAL ESTATE IN-DEPTH, One Maple Ave., White Plains, New York 10605.

**GATEWAY
PERSPECTIVES**

By Richard Haggerty, HGAR CEO

**Persistence Pays
Dividends in Albany**

Last month I wrote in detail about HGAR's success in preventing an increase in the transfer tax in the City of Yonkers. It was a great example of the value of teamwork and persistence. This month I want to address an issue that has long been on both HGAR's and NYSAR's legislative agenda, co-op transparency legislation.

In the middle of June NYSAR issued a call to action in support of legislation in the State Senate called the "Fairness in Cooperative Home Ownership Act." The legislation required co-ops or their managing agents to acknowledge whether an application is complete and in acceptable form within 10 days of receipt of the application. Further, the legislation required that a co-op board must take action on an application within 45 days, or the application is deemed approved.

The Senate passed this legislation late in the session and it was our hope that the Assembly would take action as well, but unfortunately that was not the case. Organizations purporting to represent the interests of co-op owners argued that this legislation was unnecessary and created undue burdens and hardships for co-ops. Quite frankly, I think if you were to poll the rank and file co-op owners in the Hudson Valley, they would overwhelmingly support this legislation, as they are the ones who are most impacted when a co-op board fails to take timely action on an application.

While co-op owners technically do not own their apartments, but rather own shares in a corporation, the plain fact is that co-op owners view their units as tangible assets that are marketed in the same fashion as other forms of real estate. Co-op owners are seeking the same type of security and investment opportunity as any other form of real estate.

Ultimately co-op boards have fiduciary obligations to the shareholders of the corporation, and it benefits all shareholders to have a straightforward and predictable application process. The lack of a defined process in the end harms not just the prospective purchaser, but also the seller. When all is said and done, a 10-day period in which to review an application and deem it complete and in acceptable form is eminently reasonable. Further, a 45-day time frame to act on the merits of an application, including an interview, is also reasonable. Importantly, the proposed legislation does not restrict or curb in any way the ability of a co-op board to deny applicants.

Co-op boards typically will not accept an application until the prospective purchaser has obtained a mortgage commitment. With the sale of single-family homes or condominiums, the receipt of a mortgage commitment would be the juncture when the parties schedule a closing date. With co-op sales, the receipt of a mortgage commitment starts a process that is completely open-ended with no obligation on the part of the board to act on the application in a timely manner, allowing mortgage commitments to expire and leading to frustration for both the seller and the prospective purchaser.

We may not have succeeded on this issue during this legislative session, but we can't afford to give up. I firmly believe that the passage of this legislation will positively impact co-op values and the investment security of co-op owners. Having a strong and vibrant co-op market ultimately benefits the entire housing market in the lower Hudson Valley.

**'The Yankees Win'
And So Does RPAC**

Thanks to approximately 60 HGAR members and guests who attended the June 30th New York Yankees game at Yankee Stadium in the Bronx, close to \$7,000 was raised to support RPAC.



From left, Leah Caro, Vicky Gonzalez, Nancy Kennedy, Richard Haggerty, Barry Kramer, John Crittenden and Paul Kennedy

From left, Mike Vanmansart, Maryann Tercasio, Jay Himelson, Ron Garafalo, Renee Zurlo, Debbie Goldstein, Pam Levine and Donna Gennaro



Who's That Knocking At My Door?

Recently, in many communities throughout the Hudson Valley, there has been an increased incidence of door-to-door solicitation being engaged in by businesses and businesspersons, such as cable companies, real estate agents and real estate developers. These businesses and businesspersons are going to the homes of residents, without notice or valid permits, ringing doorbells and knocking on doors in an attempt to solicit business, sign up new customers and make offers to purchase homes from the residents. There have also been allegations made that these individuals and businesses are engaging in "blockbusting," which is illegal under federal and New York State law. While the law clearly prohibits "blockbusting," solicitation is not illegal and, provided one complies with the local laws of the municipality, it is permitted.

In response to the increased soliciting, canvassing and peddling, local communities, such as Orangetown and Clarkstown in Rockland County, have enacted new local ordinances establishing non-solicitation lists and registries. Door-to-door solicitation, canvassing and peddling are not new phenomena and many municipalities throughout New York State have enacted, in one form or another, ordinances that regulate these activities. However, due to the pressure tactics being used, some local municipalities and residents introduced and passed local laws to curtail and control door-to-door solicitation. These laws allow residents who do not wish to be solicited to register on a non-solicitation registry and the new laws provide for increased fines and penalties.

'Blockbusting' is Illegal

"Blockbusting" refers to a practice, usually engaged in by real estate agents, real estate investors and real estate developers, used to frighten homeowners into selling their property by telling them that persons who are members of a particular protected class (e.g., minorities) are moving into their neighborhood, which will cause their property value to decline. This causes homeowners to become fearful and makes them sell their property at a loss. The people engaging in this practice profit from buying the property at the lower price and then selling it to the particular protected class at a higher price. It is important to note that this practice is illegal under both federal and New York State law. Section 296 of the New York State Human Rights Law Subsection 3-b (entitled Unlawful Discriminatory Practices), provides that:

"[i]t shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice for any real estate broker, real estate salesperson or employee or agent thereof or any other individual, corporation, partnership or organization for the purpose of inducing a real estate transaction from which any such person or any of its stockholders or members may benefit financially, to represent that a change has occurred or will or may occur in the composition with respect to race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, sex, disability, marital status, or familial status of the owners or occupants in the block, neighborhood or area in which the real property is located, and to represent, directly or indirectly, that this change will or may result in undesirable consequences in the block, neighborhood or area in which the real property is located, including but not limited to the lowering of property values, an increase in criminal or anti-social behavior, or a decline in the quality of schools or other facilities."

Federal law (see 42 U.S.C. Section 3604 (e)) provides that "...it shall be unlawful... [f]or profit, to induce or attempt to induce any person to sell or rent any dwelling by representations regarding the entry or prospective entry into the neighborhood of a person or persons of a particular race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin." While it is clear that activities that constitute "blockbusting" are illegal, simply because the real estate agents engage in solicitation or canvassing, such activities are not deemed to be by their nature automatically illegal.

Is 'Door Knocking' or Solicitation Illegal?

As stated earlier, door-to-door solicitation is not illegal. Solicitation, canvassing and peddling are permitted provided one complies with requirements of the local ordinances. Nearly all municipalities have "Peddling and Solicitation" laws and require that a "solicitor," "canvasser" or "peddler" obtain a permit or license from the municipality before engaging in any form of solicitation, canvassing or peddling.

According to Section 143.4 of the Peddling and Soliciting Ordinance of the Village of Airmont, a "solicitor and canvasser" is defined as "[a]ny person, principal or agent engaging in door-to-door solicitation at homes, businesses or in any public place or street or from any premises not an established place of business, or order for sale of goods, wares, commodities or other merchandise, including books or periodicals, or for the performance of future services, or for the making, manufacturing or repairing of any article or thing whatsoever for future delivery." Clearly, this definition would apply to real estate agents as they would be "engaging in door-to-door solicitation...for the performance of future services...." Many of the ordinances from other municipalities have similar definitions.

Once it is established that one is deemed to be a "solicitor," "peddler" or "canvasser" under the local ordinance then that person must obtain a permit or license. Each municipality has different requirements and it is incumbent upon the individual and/or business to review the specific ordinance of each municipality to ensure that

LEGAL CORNER

By John Dolgetta, Esq.



he, she or it complies with the requirements of that particular municipality.

Many of the ordinances require that detailed information be provided as part of the license application. Again, using the Village of Airmont's ordinance as an example, some of the information required is as follows: (i) name and address of the applicant; (ii) the physical description of the applicant; (iii) "a detailed description of the particular business, trade or occupation for which the license is requested;" (iv) "the name and address of the person, firm or corporation, if any, he represents; the names and addresses of all partners, if a partnership; the names and addresses of the principal officers, if a corporation; and the name and address of a person upon whom a legal process and notice may be served;" (v) "prior arrests and the disposition thereof;" (vi) "references as to the applicant's good character;" (vii) "if peddling or soliciting is to be conducted as a team, group or other organized party under single leadership or direction, control or sponsorship, the above-required personal information shall also be supplied as to such leader or person in charge and with respect to each such other person, employee or agent so involved;" and (viii) "if such applicant represents or is the agent for a principal, there shall be appended to the application a letter or other evidence of authorization or agency from the principal describing the nature and scope of such applicant's authority." (See Village of Airmont Ordinance, Chapter 143, "Peddling and Soliciting"). It is clear from these requirements that real estate brokerage firms, as well as individual brokers and agents, are required to obtain permits if an agent or agents from a particular firm would like to engage in door-to-door solicitation.

Many of the ordinances also require that the municipalities conduct criminal background checks as well (e.g., Village and Town of Harrison [see <http://ecode360.com/8312619>]; City of Rye [see <http://ecode360.com/6973732>]). The information required as part of the application is extensive and unless the laws are complied with and licenses are obtained, real estate agents are not permitted to simply go door-to-door to solicit new business and clients.

The Non-Solicitation Registry Significant Penalties for Violators

As indicated earlier, several town, villages and cities throughout the area have enacted ordinances, which allow residents to register with the municipality on its "non-solicitation registry" or "non-solicitation list." The most recent municipalities to do so were the Town of Orangetown on April 21, 2016 (which became the first municipality in Rockland County to enact a "Non-Solicitation Registry") and the Town of Clarkstown on June 21, 2016. Other municipalities that have also had similar "Non-Solicitation Registry" laws on the books for some time now include the City of White Plains, the Town and Village of Harrison, the Town of New Castle and the City of Rye. The municipalities will also provide residents with badges, stickers or signs to make solicitors aware that they and their properties are off limits.

It is important to note that the fines and penalties for a violation of the newly enacted "Non-Solicitation Registry" laws are severe. In Orangetown, any person who violates the law will face the following penalties: "A. For a first offense, a fine of not less than \$500 and not more than \$1,500; B. For a second offense within 24 months, as measured from occurrence to occurrence, a fine of not less than \$1,500 and not more than \$3,500; and C. For a third, or more, offense within 24 months, a fine of not less than \$3,500 and not more than \$10,000, or imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, or both."

In Clarkstown, Section 208-18 of the "Peddling, Hawking and Soliciting" law provides that a first time offender may be fined up to \$2,500, a second time offender (if found guilty within 18 months of the first offense) will be fined no less than \$2,500 up to \$5,000, a third time offender (if found guilty within 18 months of the second offense) will be fined not less than \$7,500 up to \$10,000, and a fourth time offender or more (if found guilty within 18 months of the third offense) shall be punished by a fine of no less than \$10,000 and not more than \$15,000. The ordinance further provides that "[t]he continuation of an offense...shall constitute, for each day the offense is continued, a separate and distinct violation hereunder." These penalties are substantial and can even lead to imprisonment.

Real estate agents and brokerage firms need to be aware of these laws and need to be sure that they comply with their requirements. Many real estate agents and brokerage firms may want to use these techniques and solicit door-to-door; however, before they do so, they need to check with their municipalities and see what is required. Before an agent or broker knocks on a person's door, he or she needs to think twice, be aware of what the law requires and the consequences for any violation.

The foregoing article is for informational purposes only and does not confer an attorney-client relationship.

Legal Column author John Dolgetta, Esq. is the principal of the law firm of Dolgetta Law, PLLC, which recently acquired the law practice of Board Counsel, Edward I. Sumer. For information about Dolgetta Law, PLLC and John Dolgetta, Esq., please visit <http://www.dolgettalaw.com>.

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18-Year Saga Ends in Ossining as Harbor Square Project Opens

By John Jordan

OSSINING—A host of state, county and local dignitaries joined veteran residential real estate developer Martin Ginsburg on June 23rd in cutting the ribbon on Harbor Square, a \$65-million luxury multifamily waterfront project here.

The Harbor Square development site has been the focal point of development for nearly 20 years. In 1998, Westchester developer Louis Cappelli's firm Cappelli Enterprises won an RFP to develop the site. Later, GDC became a joint venture partner in the project and in February 2006, the two firms staged a groundbreaking for what was to be a community of 150 condominium units and 10,000 square feet of retail space.

Since then, Cappelli exited the project and GDC changed its plans to a 188-unit luxury rental apartment development that also features a 5,000-square-foot destination waterfront restaurant. GDC broke ground on the project adjacent to Sing-Sing prison in June 2014.

"Today represents a major milestone for GDC and the Village of Ossining. Working together we have been able to transform a former industrial property into a magnificent mixed-use residential community featuring luxury rental residences, a first-class riverfront restaurant and a new public park where residents and their families can enjoy the incomparable beauty of one of the world's greatest rivers," said Martin Ginsburg, principal of GDC. "As a transit-oriented development, Harbor Square appeals to both Millennials and empty-nesters who want the convenience of being just a short walk to the Metro-North train station."

Ginsburg said that 25% (approximately 42 units) of the rental apartment units have been pre-leased, noting that the development's sales office was opening that weekend. He noted that a 5,000-square-foot restaurant would open this fall. While he did not identify the name of the restaurant, he did describe the new restaurant as being operated by a "prominent New York restaurateur" who has a restaurant in Tribeca and another in Edgewater, NJ.

The ribbon-cutting celebration also included the formal dedication of a new public park at Harbor Square in honor of Henry Gourdine, a well-known local fisherman who spent most of his 94 years harvesting the Hudson with fishing crews. The \$1-million public park, which was built by GDC and funded 50% by a grant from New York State, features a children's playground, waterfront promenade and dock that serves the NY Waterway Haverstraw-to-Ossining commuter ferry.

Ossining Village Mayor Victoria Gearity said the opening of Harbor

Square signals a new day and an "exciting new chapter" for Ossining and its waterfront. "Is there any place more magnificent to watch a sunset than over the Hudson River? We are delighted to be welcoming this new opportunity for more people to enjoy the beauty our village," she said.

Westchester County Executive Robert Astorino also praised GDC for its work on the Henry Gourdine park that also includes a distinctive archway sculpture. The park also provides public access to the Hudson River waterfront.

"I am truly impressed by the ambition of Harbor Square, and the scope of what will be offered to Ossining and the entire county as a result," Astorino said.

One-bedroom apartments range from a 683-square-foot unit priced from \$2,395 a month to a 1,114-square-foot one-bedroom that is designed like a home with a separate dining room, large den/guest room and two full baths priced at \$3,295. Two bedroom units range from \$3,195 for a 1,156-square-foot apartment to \$6,000 for a 1,448 square-foot penthouse corner apartment that features walls of glass with river views.

A total of 19 rental units will be dedicated as affordable workforce housing and will be priced for those making up to 80% of the Westchester County median income. The project received approximately \$2.3 million from the Westchester County Industrial Development Agency in sales and mortgage tax exemptions.

"This is built like a condominium," Ginsburg told reporters after the ribbon-cutting event. "There is really nothing comparable in Westchester. We did this because we believe that the uniqueness of the location warrants (the investment)."

Harbor Square offers 24-hour front desk concierge services with package and dry cleaning acceptance and penthouse amenities including an expansive club lounge with Hudson River views; a fitness center with available personal trainers; a spa with available treatments from licensed massage therapists, a yoga/motion room with classes and a rooftop pool and sundeck with BBQ stations. Residents also have access to a business center and café serving Starbucks coffee, as well as a pet wash.

Harbor Square marks the Westchester debut of Ginsburg Development's GDC Rentals brand of luxury resort-style properties, which launched last year with the opening of Riverside, a 108-unit luxury rental on the Hudson River at GDC's Harbors-at-Haverstraw community in Rockland County. Other GDC Rentals communities in development



From left, Ossining Town Supervisor Dana Levenberg; Ossining Village Mayor Victoria Gearity; Ossining Village Trustee Quantel Bazemore; Westchester County Executive Robert P. Astorino; Martin Ginsburg, principal, Ginsburg Development Companies; County Legislator Catherine Borgia; State Assemblywoman Sandy Galef and Jamie Ethier of the Office of Planning and Development for the New York Department of State.

include River Tides at Greystone, a 330-unit luxury rental complex overlooking the Hudson in Yonkers, and The Lofts

on Saw Mill River, which features 66 loft-style rental apartments in the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson.

Houlihan-Parnes Realtors Celebrates 125th Anniversary



From left to right, James J. Houlihan, Houlihan-Parnes Realtors; Barbara Jones, Irish Consul General; Westchester County Executive Robert Astorino; Mary Patricia Houlihan, Houlihan & O'Malley and Andrew M. Greenspan, GHP Office Realty.

RYE—On June 9th, Houlihan-Parnes Realtors celebrated the firm's 125th anniversary at the Westchester Country Club in Rye.

Founded in 1891 by Daniel J. Houlihan, an Irish immigrant, the company has always been family owned and operated and is proudly celebrating its 125th year of continuous operation. Since the late 1800s, the firm originally was founded as a carpentry and construction business, which has since evolved into a multi-faceted organization featuring property ownership and development and many related commercial service businesses.

The firm is currently managed by James J. Houlihan, who joined the firm in 1973 and became managing partner in 1987. The other partner, James G. Houlihan is inactive due to health considerations at this time and Howard Parnes, who recently passed away.

Several members of the fifth generation of the Houlihan family have worked at Houlihan-Parnes Realtors over the last few years. Bryan Houlihan, son of James J. Houlihan, has been working at the firm and Jim's other son, Michael McEvoy has joined the firm as a summer intern. In addition, Jim's brother-in-law, James K. Coleman and cousin, Jeremiah Houlihan and Howard Parnes' nephews, Fred and Sheldon Stahl and their mother, Barbara have been with the company for many years.

Proclamations acknowledging the historic business milestone were presented by Westchester County Executive Robert Astorino, Michael B. Kaplowitz, vice chairman on behalf of the Westchester County Board of Legislators, and New York State Senator, Jeffrey D. Klein. Proclamations were also received from Ruben Diaz Jr., the President of the Borough of the Bronx and from the Bronx Chamber of Commerce Chairman Joseph Kelleher and President and CEO Nunzio Del Greco. In addition, Houlihan-Parnes received a New York City Council Citation from Council Member James Vacca from the City of New York.



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Veteran Realtor R.J. Smith to Be Honored In November by Community Foundation

MONTGOMERY— R.J. Smith and Gerald and Rosemary Skoda, outstanding business and civic leaders, will be honored by the Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan during its annual reception on Nov. 16, at Anthony's Pier 9 in New Windsor.

More than 400 community and key business leaders are expected to attend the dinner event, where the three honorees will be presented with the 2016 David T. Cocks Award for Commitment to Community, an annual recognition bestowed upon those who make significant contributions to enrich the lives of people in Orange and Sullivan counties.



R.J. Smith

Smith is a dedicated and respected member of the Orange County business and civic community. A commercial Realtor with more than 40 years experience, he is a respected leader in Hudson Valley commercial and industrial development. In addition to his business acumen, Smith helped establish a community health center in his hometown of Pine Bush and later served as a town councilman, county legislator, and on the Pine Bush School Board. He is founder, past president, and current board member for the Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan, where he helped establish numerous funds that distribute annual charitable grants and scholarships, in addition to two of his own scholarship funds. He also serves on the boards of both the Walkkill Valley Federal Savings and Loan and the Storm King Art Center. He is past president of the Orange County Citizens Foundation.

In October 2015, Smith announced that RJ Smith Realty was merging with Better Homes and Gardens Rand Realty and Rand Commercial Services.

The Skoda's dedication stretches across Sullivan County and beyond. Though both officially "retired," Mr. Skoda operates a large Woodbourne crop farm while running an agricultural consulting and farm tax preparation firm. He serves as president of Mid-Hudson Co-Operative Insurance Co., Montgomery, and serves on the boards of Catskill Regional Medical Center, Greater Hudson Valley Health Systems, Emerald Corporate Park, and Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan. He is a founding member of the Sullivan County Partnership for Economic Development and has a long tenure as executive director of Cornell Cooperative Extension. Mrs. Skoda retired as executive director of the USDA Farm Services Agency and has served scouts and 4-H, as well as SUNY Sullivan, and Hospice Auxiliary. She now dedicates her time to the United Way of Sullivan County. Together, they award an annual Foundation scholarship and donate fresh vegetables to Boys & Girls Clubs, CACHE Community Action, St. Andrew's Church Food Pantry, Sullivan County Federation for the Homeless, and United Way.

The evening will begin with cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and networking at 5:30 p.m. The awards program, with plated desserts and table seating, follows. Event proceeds will support the Foundation's mission to "connect people who care with causes that matter," by helping donors establish charitable funds that award scholarships to local students and grants to support the environment, education, arts, and health and human service programs in the region. For more information, contact The Community Foundation, at (845) 769-9393.

Westchester Realty NY Affiliates With Coldwell Banker Dobbs Ferry

DOBBS FERRY— Joseph A. Valvano, president of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Connecticut and Westchester County reported on July 1 that Mark Turken, Pedro Hidalgo and Jonathan Klein of Westchester Realty NY LLC have affiliated with Coldwell Banker's Dobbs Ferry office.

Turken is an award-winning real estate broker who established Westchester Realty NY, a real estate brokerage firm based in Hastings-on Hudson, 11 years ago. Hidalgo is an associate real estate broker who was instrumental in the formation of Westchester Realty NY. A native of Ecuador, Hidalgo has been licensed to sell real estate in New



Jonathan Klein



Pedro Hidalgo



Mark Turken



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SPAM: More Than What Lies in the Back of Your Pantry

BARRISTER'S BRIEFING

By Leon Cameron, Esq



Is your in-house e-mail system for your brokerage (or that of your brokerage's e-mail vendor) compliant with the CAN-SPAM Act of 2003?

This federal law was signed by President Bush in 2003 to establish the United States' first set of national standards regarding e-mail. It specifically authorizes the Federal Trade Commission to enforce the act's provisions. The act focuses on "commercial electronic messages" with a primary focus of commercial advertisements or promotions. The e-mails sent from brokers/agents to their customers and clients will be classified as commercial advertisements of their services if they are meant to induce those individuals to use the broker's or agent's services.

Quick facts About the CAN-SPAM Act

- The act prohibits consumers from filing their own private lawsuits for damages.
- It authorizes the FTC, state attorney generals, and Internet Service Providers to sue on behalf of consumers.
- Penalties can include a fine of \$250 for every e-mail that is sent after a company has received an opt-out request, and the penalty can be increased three times if it is proven that the company acted "willfully and knowingly."

Basics Elements of the Act

- Requires a visible and operable means to unsubscribe in every commercial electronic message.
- The unsubscribe request must be processed and completed within 10 business days after receipt.

Best Practices

- Brokers and Agents should only send e-mails to individuals that have requested a consumer relationship.
- Commercial electronic messages (i.e. commercial advertisements and promo-

BH&G Rand Realty Opens First Bronx Brokerage Office



Better Homes and Gardens-Rand Realty's new Bronx office is located at 3432-06 East Tremont Ave.

NEW YORK CITY—Better Homes and Gardens Rand Realty announced today the opening of its new Bronx office on East Tremont Avenue in the Throgs Neck section of the Bronx.

The new office is located at 3432-06 East Tremont Ave. and concentrates on the Throgs Neck, Country Club, Pelham Bay, Morris Park, Pelham Parkway and Indian Village neighborhoods.

The Bronx location of Better Homes and Gardens Rand Realty is equipped with agents who are all experts on the Bronx market, some of whom are Bronx residents themselves. Deborah DiMiceli, branch manager of Better Homes and Gardens Rand Realty's Bronx office will lead the team.

"With years of experience conducting business in the Bronx area, this new location will grow our market share throughout the borough," said DiMiceli. "We're excited to continue to serve and cultivate our commitment to the area and community and look forward to being able to assist you with all your real estate needs."

DiMiceli is a long-time branch manager of Rand's Yonkers office and will now run both the Yonkers and Bronx locations for the brokerage firm.

"As we strive to grow our brand and offerings, our newest location in the Bronx will allow us to service new areas, expanding our reach," said Matthew Rand, managing partner of Better Homes and Gardens Rand Realty. "I'm confident that the team of agents in the new Bronx office will be able to fully service the community and I'm excited to see where this takes our brand next."

Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate-Rand Realty, founded in 1984, has 24 offices serving Westchester, Rockland, Orange, Putnam and Dutchess counties in New York, as well as Bergen and Passaic counties in New Jersey.

Rand Realty has more than 800 residential real estate sales associates, as well as a commercial real estate company (Rand Commercial Services) and the Hudson United Group, which provide residential mortgage lending, title services, and commercial and residential insurance.

tions) should provide a very clear explanation of the opt-out process so that there is no question to consumers about how to remove themselves.

- Brokerages should use clear subject lines in e-mails to accurately describe content.
- Put company's physical address in e-mails so that consumers have an alternate means of contact.
- Maintain a documented database of the interactions between the broker/agent and the client to show that the client requested to be contacted.
- In light of the act's requirements and its penalties, it is recommended that all brokerages perform a thorough review with the vendors of their e-mail systems in order to ensure compliance.

The foregoing article is for informational purposes only and does not confer an attorney/client relationship. For a legal opinion specific to your situation, please consult a private attorney.

Leon Cameron is Director of Legal Services & Professional Standards Administrator for the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors.

Westchester Realty NY Affiliates With Coldwell Banker Dobbs Ferry

Continued from page 7

York since 1998. Klein is a licensed real estate salesperson with expertise in assisting homebuyers and sellers in the Rivertowns and has 30 years of experience in music promotion and marketing.

"I am so pleased to welcome Mark, Pedro, and Jonathan to the Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Dobbs Ferry office," said Valvano. "They are highly skilled and respected within the industry and share our commitment and focus to providing the very best service to our clients and customers."

The real estate professionals will operate out of the Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Dobbs Ferry office located at 6 Cedar St., which is managed by Diane Tynan.

"We affiliated with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage because the company offers all of the educational, technological resources and branding that are critical for success in today's

competitive real estate landscape," said Turken. "I am confident that with our new affiliation we will continue to grow and flourish and provide superior service to homebuyers and sellers throughout the region."

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, a leading residential real estate brokerage company in Connecticut and Westchester County, operates approximately 51 offices with more than 2,200 affiliated sales associates serving the communities of Connecticut and Westchester County. Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage is part of NRT LLC, the nation's largest residential real estate brokerage company.



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Rockland Sues State, Water Utility Over Desalination Plant Costs



From left, Rockland Assistant County Attorney Tom Simeti and Rockland County Executive Ed Day.

By John Jordan

NEW CITY—Rockland County Executive Ed Day announced on June 27th that the county had filed a lawsuit against its water company—Suez Water New York, Inc.—and two state agencies in connection with tens of millions of dollars in costs being charged to Rockland County water ratepayers for a failed desalination plant in Haverstraw.

The legal action focuses on a reimbursement request by Suez, the county's water company, has made to the Public Service Commission. The lawsuit names the Public Service Commission, the New York State Department of Public Service and Suez Water New York as defendants. The reimbursement for costs center on Suez Water New York's predecessor United Water New York's failed desalination plant in Haverstraw. In 2014, the PSC ordered the water utility to discontinue its efforts to secure approval of the project.

United Water New York had been seeking to secure approvals to build the "Haverstraw Water Supply" project based on Consent Orders issued by the PSC in 2006 and 2010. However, the PSC in May 2013 announced it would hold hearings on the controversial project as well as reassess whether the desalination plant was necessary due to forecasted water shortages in future years in Rockland County.

While environmental groups, such as Scenic Hudson and Riverkeeper came out against the project, a host of business and building trades interests came out in support of the venture at that time. In its decision handed down on Nov. 13, 2014, the PSC determined that "due to changed circumstances there was no longer an immediate need for a new water supply source in United Water New York's service territory."

The utility had sought to recover \$52.1 million in costs related to the desalination plant project. The PSC later determined that \$39.7 million in plant development costs could be recoverable. Suez is asking the Public Service Commission to approve an 18.7% rate hike that would raise residential water bills \$100 annually, Rockland County noted in its press announcement.

"Rockland residents should not be left holding the bag for an ill-advised and poorly managed project—especially one that no one wanted and one that was ultimately shown to be unnecessary," Rockland County Executive Day said.

In court documents filed on Friday June 24th in New York State Supreme Court in Albany, Rockland County is asking for class action status and court intervention.

"The Public Service Commission was supposed to be the watchdog for the consumer, making sure that the water company acted responsibly," Day said. "Suez did not act responsibly. The costs they are looking to have us pay are not just and reasonable."

At a hearing asking the PSC for a surcharge, United Water submitted 9,532 pages of copies of schedules and invoices for legal and other expenses related to the proposed Haverstraw desalination plant. In an order filed on Feb. 25, 2016, the PSC reduced the previously approved \$39.7 million in plant costs for future recovery to \$38,827,895.

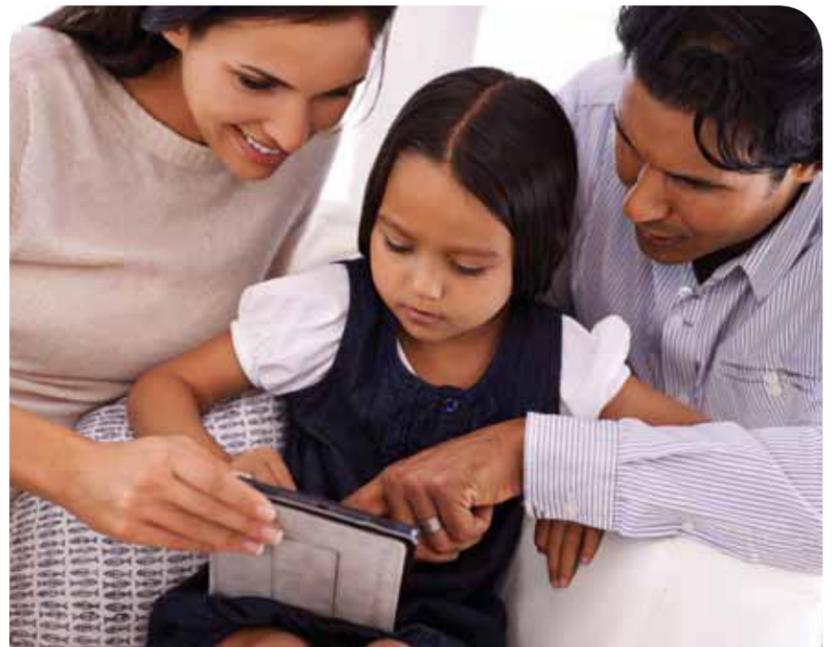
"The State Department of Public Service did not verify these expenses," Rockland County charged. The department merely performed a sample audit of the invoices." Rockland County Executive Day later added, "We don't even know what we are being asked to pay for."

William Madden, director of external affairs for Suez, said in a prepared statement, "SUEZ is proposing to recover its costs of approximately \$54 million associated with its long-term water supply project over a 20-year period. The New York State Public Service Commission's Feb. 25, 2016, Order concluded that \$39 million incurred pursuing the Haverstraw Water Supply Project was done so prudently. The Feb. 25, 2016 order is legally sound and the County of Rockland's lawsuit is without merit."

Madden told *Real Estate In-Depth* that in addition to the \$38.8 million in approved recoverable costs, there is another \$14 million in additional expenses yet to be reviewed by the PSC.

He added, "The record is unmistakably clear that the County of Rockland strongly advocated for the expedited development of a long-term water supply project in the company's 2006 and 2010 rate cases. To suggest otherwise is unfair and not supported by the facts."

In regards to the company's rate filing with the PSC, Madden stated that its filing features a new rate structure that will lower bills for 20% of its customers and involve \$150 million in infrastructure improvements over the next five years.



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Diana Singer



Jackie Ruby



Lori Parks



Lynn Trotta

Diana Singer, Jackie Ruby and Lori Parks have recently joined **Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Westchester Properties**.

Singer joined the firm as a licensed real estate sales executive in the Scarsdale office. She returns to the Scarsdale/Edgemont community where she and her husband Doug raised their two children, Mike and Katie, and had lived for 28 years. Ruby has worked in the real estate industry for more than 18 years. Parks has a diverse background, including working with the Harry Walker Agency where she worked with trade associations, colleges and universities, Fortune 500 companies, and NGOs and other non-profit organizations to secure speaking opportunities for

prominent individuals. She also worked at the United Nations Association of the United States of America where she arranged high-level meetings for former diplomats and business people in the US, China, Japan and Russia, as well as briefings and de-briefings with members of the US Congress and US Departments of State and Defense. The licensed real estate salesperson also had a career as a program coordinator and lecture agent.

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Westchester Properties also reported that **Lynn Trotta** of its Eastchester office has been ranked number four in the company for number of units sold for 2015. Trotta has been a licensed Realtor for more than 20 years.



Rachel Geller

Rachel Geller has recently joined the White Plains office of **Keller Williams**. Geller is a seasoned agent with more than 13 years working in Westchester residential real estate.

She graduated from the State University of Albany with a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish Linguistics and Literature and Business Administration. She spent a decade working in Fortune 500 companies where she honed her skills in sales forecasting, product development and marketing, transferring that experience to real estate in 2003. Geller's extensive experience in home building and remodeling allows her to bring an exceptional level of service to both buyers and sellers, the brokerage stated. She has been a resident of White Plains for more than 20 years and specializes in the White Plains, Scarsdale and New Rochelle communities and services all of lower Westchester.

Hudson United Title announced recently that **Randi Rosen** has joined its White Plains office as a title closer executive.

"I'm very excited to be a part of Hudson United Title's growing team," said Rosen. "After building up experience in this industry over the past eight years, I'm looking forward to bringing what I have learned to this group and treating my clients to the finest services we have to offer."

Rosen has always worked in title sales and closing coordination. In a sales capacity, Rosen hosted gatherings for attorney and real estate agent introductions, and she also promoted title services to a wide range of other industry referral sources, the company stated.



Randi Rosen



Randi Robinowitz



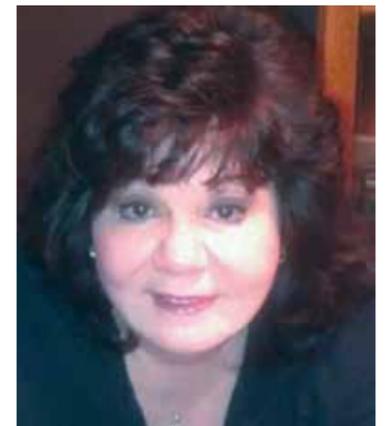
Neelam Malhotra

Nicholas Germak, regional vice president of **Weichert, Realtors**, announced recently that the **Larchmont office** was recognized for outstanding performance during the month of March. The office led its sales region, which is comprised of offices throughout Orange, Dutchess, Westchester and Rockland counties in New York and Fairfield County in Connecticut, in resale dollar volume.

In addition, **Randi Robinowitz** of the Larchmont office was individually recognized in March. As a top producer, Robinowitz was the top associate in the sales region for resale revenue units.

The **New City office** was recognized for its exceptional industry success in March. The office led the region in new home dollar volume. Also, sales associate **Neelam Malhotra** from the New City office was individually recognized for her efforts. Malhotra led the sales region in new home dollar volume for the month.

Weichert, Realtors also recognized sales associate **Christina Acuti** of the



Christina Acuti

Fishkill office for her outstanding performance during the month of March. As a top producer, Acuti led the region in resales.

The **Monroe office** was also recognized for its performance in March. The office led the region in resale listings, resales and resale revenue units.



Jenifer Ross

Ginsburg Development Companies has announced that **Jenifer Ross** has

joined the company as director of community experience for the company's new GDC Rentals brand of luxury rental apartments that made its debut in Westchester County with the opening of Harbor Square in Ossining, a 188-unit property set on the Hudson River across from Ossining's Metro-North Station.

As director of community experience, Ross will be responsible for developing and overseeing events, workshops, programming and special on-site services that facilitate building community among residents and implementing a Preferred Vendor Program aimed at keeping business local and assisting new residents in getting to know (and utilize) their downtowns, including retail, cultural and recreational resources.

What Would You Say?

If one of your suburban clients asked you to sell a property in the Bronx, what would you say? Say yes!
Earn referral income AND serve your loyal client's needs.

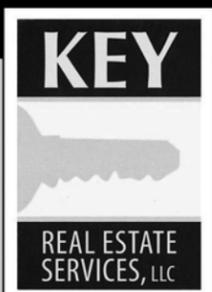
Allison Jaffe, NYS Licensed Real Estate Broker

You have a reliable referral partner in the Bronx.

718-874-2877 • 914-661-0340 • ajaffe@keyrealestateny.com



Allison Jaffe, Broker
GRI, CBR, SRES





HGAR

JULY 2016 UPDATE

HGAR School of Real Estate Kicks Off ‘Lunch & Learn’ Series

By Mary T. Prenon

WHITE PLAINS—The Hudson Gateway School of Real Estate kicked off its first “Lunch & Learn” class on June 21 in White Plains, with more than 50 people attending the “Mold & Other Environmental Hazards” Class taught by Jim Rood of Lighthouse Environmental. Lunch was provided by Hudson United Mortgage, Title and Insurance.

Launched earlier this year, the “Lunch & Learn” Program offers students a three-hour Continuing Education class along with a complimentary lunch. “This is a great benefit for both our students and HGAR Affiliate members. It offers students quality education, lunch, and

the opportunity to meet our Affiliates face-to-face,” said Eileen Taus, HGAR Director of Education. “It also allows Affiliates to share their products and services that can benefit our students’ real estate careers.”

There are six more “Lunch & Learn” Programs for this year. They include:

- July 11 – “Short Sale Solutions” with Carol McCann at HGAR, Goshen.
- August 31 – “Generations & Fair Housing” with Sharon Tucker at HGAR, West Nyack.
- September 15 – “Advertising Guidelines” with Don Cummins, Esq. at HGAR, White Plains.

- October 19 – “Realtor Safety, Safety First NY & NJ” with Laurie DiFrancesco at HGAR, Goshen.

- November 10 – “A Guide to Residential Rentals” with Adam DiFrancesco at HGAR, West Nyack.

- December 8 – “You Said What?” with Louis M. Petralia, Esq. at HGAR White Plains.

All programs are still available for sponsorship, with the exception of the Sept. 15th class, which is being spon-

sored by Judicial Title. For more information on the “Lunch & Learn” sponsorship opportunities, please e-mail mary.prenon@hgar.com



Dean Curtis and Sheila Chesterman of Hudson United, sponsors of the June 21st “Lunch & Learn.”



Realtors enjoyed free lunch at HGAR’s first “Lunch & Learn” at HGAR, White Plains.



It was a full house for HGAR’s first “Lunch & Learn” Program held at the HGAR offices in White Plains.

SPOTLIGHT ON

A Starring Role In Real Estate

By Mary T. Prenon

Pat Palumbo may have the most memorable voice message in the entire real estate community. In fact, it will definitely catch you off guard. What you’ll hear is a personal message from international stage and screen actor Hugh Jackman, posing as her “assistant.”

“It really is him,” explained Palumbo, a sales agent with Houlihan Lawrence’s Somers office. The two met back in 2003 when Jackman was doing “The Boy from Oz” on Broadway, and was not nearly as famous as he is today. Palumbo has been involved with Broadway Cares, Equity Fights Aids and Gods Love We Deliver since 1995, and Jackman also jumped on the fundraising bandwagon while working on Broadway.

“He’s a genuinely warm, friendly person and wanted to support us in any way possible,” said Palumbo. “As a result, we developed a great friendship. It was his first time on Broadway and I even helped him with his lines!”

A Realtor since 2008, Palumbo previously worked with Century 21 Marciano in New Rochelle and Judy Johnson Real Estate Inc. in Somers. “I’ve always been interested in real estate and architecture,” she said. Her friendship with Anthony Marciano eventually coaxed her into a real estate career.

Prior to discovering her love for



Pat Palumbo

listing and selling homes, Palumbo enjoyed a successful career in marketing and public relations. Armed with a Communications degree from Iona College, she headed to Manhattan to work in advertising and media planning. “It was creative and challenging to determine the best ways to reach an audience. It was like putting puzzle pieces together,” she said. Some of her accounts included the U.S. Army, AT& T, BMW, and other consumer products.

Later, she got involved with development for Preston High School in the Throggs Neck section of the Bronx. “Jennifer Lopez actually graduated from that school,” she added. Palumbo

Continued on page 12

2016 HGAR RPAC HONOR ROLL

as recorded by NYSAR to July 2016

Thank you to the following Members who are leading the way in the 2016 RPAC campaign

Platinum R

Dorothy Botsoe, Dorothy Jensen Realty Inc., White Plains
Nancy Kennedy, Houlihan Lawrence Inc. Croton-on-Hudson
Paul Kennedy, Houlihan Lawrence Inc. Croton-on-Hudson

Golden R

Richard Haggerty, Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc

Crystal R

J.P. Endres, BHG Rand Realty, White Plains
Katheryn DeClerck, BHG Rand Realty, Goshen
Russell Woolley, Wright Bros Real Estate Inc. Nyack

Sterling R

Irene Amato, A.S.A.P. Mortgage Corp., Cortlandt Manor
Ann Garti, Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc.
Donna Gennaro, BHG Rand Realty, Central Valley
Marcene Hedayati, William Raveis Legends Realty Group, Tarrytown
Joseph Houlihan, Houlihan & O’Malley R. E. Serv, Bronxville
Pamela Jones, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, White Plains
Sander Koudjis, Great American Title Agency, White Plains
Barry Kramer, Westchester Choice Realty, Scarsdale
John Lease III, John J. Lease Realtors Inc., Newburgh
Clayton Livingston, Coldwell Banker Res Brokerage, Croton-on-Hudson
Stephen Meyers, Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Rye Brook
Rosemarie A. Pelatti, Keller Williams Hudson Valley Realty, New City
Marsha Rand, BHG Rand Realty, New City
WCR, Empire Chapter
Alan Yassky, Rockland Realty Commercial Real Estate Services LLC, Nanuet

President’s Club

Margo Bohlin, BHG Rand Realty, New City
Allan Bohlin, BHG Rand Realty, New City
Lazer Milstein, Realty Teams Corp, Pamona

Capitol Club

Barbara Bodnar, Coldwell Banker, Yorktown Heights
Lawrence Curasi, ERA Curasi Realty, Montgomery
Laurie DiFrancesco, BHG Rand Realty, Suffern
Vicky Gonzalez, White Plains
Michael Graessle, BHG Rand Realty, White Plains
Eric T. Lebenon, Café Realty, Mt. Kisco
Joseph Lippolis, BHHS River Towns Real Estate, Peekskill

Continued on page 19

BOARDROOM REPORT

Please welcome the following new members to your area:

Designated Realtor

Jose L. Torres
Linda Homes & Properties, Inc.
634 Yonkers Ave.
Yonkers, NY 10704
914-246-0350

David Gil
Bronx Experts Realty
3040 E. Tremont Ave.
Bronx, NY 10461
718-737-9000

Jason R. Hallinan
51 Maple Ave.
Patterson, NY 12563
845-319-6063

Marc H. Pantirer
37 W. 21st St. Apt. 603
New York, NY 10010
973-992-2443

Victor A. Garrido Jr.
OwNew York Realty LLC
19 S Bleeker Street
Mount Vernon, NY 10550
914-354-8055

Affiliate

Michael Murphy
Mamaroneck Self Storage
426 Waverly Ave.
Mamaroneck, NY 10543
914-777-1177

Nasiba Alami
Citibank, N.A.
895 Pelham Parkway
Pelham, NY 10803
703-627-1112

Maddaline Kostyra
Citibank, N.A.
777 Westchester Ave

West Harrison, NY 10604
914-473-5605

Mary Ellen O'Connor
Citibank, N.A.
Maddaline Kostyra
777 Westchester Ave
West Harrison, NY 10604
914-473-5605

John Porcello
Citibank, N.A.
John Porcello
1040 Boston Post Road
Rye, NY 10580
914-469-1807

Phillip Robles
Citibank, N.A.
Phillip Robles
95 Pondfield Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
917-405-4536

Erika Stavanau
Citibank, N.A.
95 Pondfield Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
917-405-4536

Realtor

Barbara Fixler
William Raveis Legends Realty Group, Tarrytown

Jean Ruggiero
Real Living Five Corners

Nana Aboagye
Dorothy Jensen Realty, Inc.

Rose Velasquez
CN Direct Realty, LLC

Shakirra P. McKinley
Deutsche Gramatan Vanderbilt Inc

Jean Sheridan
Coldwell Banker Res. Brokerage, Yorktown

Brandon Miller
Keller Williams Realty Group, Scarsdale

Stephen Hughes
Keller Williams Realty Group, Scarsdale

Anthony Iorio
Keller Williams NY Realty, White Plains

Gheri Christon-Kaufman
Pantiga Group Inc.

Christian Parker
Orange Realty & Consulting Inc

Emrush Zeqaj
Keller Williams Realty Group, Scarsdale

Saba Gessesse
Weichert Realtors, Monroe

Lisa M. Owen
Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Rye Brook

Luis Reis
BHHS River Towns Real Estate, Croton

Susan Cermele
Keller Williams NY Realty, White Plains

Farhana Tembulkar
Coldwell Banker Res. Brokerage, Dobbs Ferry

Martin Sather
Coldwell Banker Res. Brokerage, Dobbs Ferry

Elizabeth Valenzuela
Julia B. Fee Sotheby's Int. Realty, Irvington

Danielle MacConel
All In One Realty LLC

Deborah Merced
Coldwell Banker Signature Properties, Bronx

Joseph DiPaolo
Julia B. Fee Sotheby's Int. Realty, Irvington

Alexandra R. Palombo
DRS Realty Group, LLC

Louis Marquis
K. Fortuna Realty, Inc.

Dominick DiFilippo
Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Croton

Ana Melenciano
PLI Realty

Joseph Neuschloss
Equivest Realty Group

Shana Richards
Exit Realty Group

Raymond E. Inello
Houlihan & O'Malley Real Estate Services

Teresa Wakabayashi
Maxwell Jacobs, Inc.

Taneeka Henry
Keller Williams Hudson Valley Realty, New City

Spiro Spiliotis
Keller Williams NY Realty, White Plains

Deanna Hansen
Coldwell Banker Res. Brokerage, White Plains

Deanna Kolodziejczuk
Century 21 VJF Realty

Yingjie Li
Grand Lux Realty, Inc., Armonk

Stephanie Rubin
Houlihan Lawrence Inc., White Plains

Amanda Papaleo
Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Ardsley

Laura Noll
Julia B Fee Sotheby's Int. Realty, Larchmont

Anthony DeTommaso
Benchmark Real Estate Sales, LLC

Jacqueline A. Lester
William Raveis-New York LLC, Katonah

Vincent Kofie
Keller Williams Realty NYC Group, Bronx

William R. Pugh
Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Cold Spring

Dorianne C. Cherry
Platinum Drive Realty, Inc.

Richard B. Williams
Café Realty

Felicia B. Putter
Douglas Elliman Real Estate, Chappaqua

Michael A. Tarallo
Café Realty

Jose L. Torres
Linda Homes & Properties, Inc.

Cresyi Padilla-Ruberte
All In One Realty LLC

Joanny Sanchez
J. Philip Real Estate LLC, Pelham

Baruch Friedman
Equivest Realty Group

Frank Kelly
Anthony Squilla Lic RI Est Bkr

Chloe Renee Abena Jensen
Dorothy Jensen Realty, Inc.

Josh Ravano
Weichert Realtors, Rye

Troy A. Abreu
Keller Williams Realty NYC Group, Bronx

Kesa A. Fair
Keller Williams Realty NYC Group, Bronx

Anthony Floyd
Julia B Fee Sotheby's Int. Realty, Bronxville

Kristina Berisha
Coldwell Banker Signature Properties, Bronx

Andre P. Szpynda
Nancilee Holland

William I. Anianwu
Keller Williams Realty NYC Group, Bronx

Ingeborg Stankovici
BHG Rand Realty, New Windsor

Christina Woodruff
Barhite & Holzinger, Inc.

Tonian Thompson
Home Sweet Home Properties

Marvin Castillo
In Motion Realty Group Inc.

Anthony Zagari
Town and Village Realty

Joseph Pasciolla
Keller Williams Realty Partners, Yorktown Heights

Robert J. Christensen
Hudson Valley Prestige Realty

Tracy Marraccini
Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Chappaqua

Jacynth Y. Smith
BHG Rand Realty, White Plains

Barbara A. Lewis
William Raveis Raveis NY LLC, Somers

Jessenia Acosta
Weichert Realtors, Nanuet

Anna C. Shaw
Tuxedo Park Fine Homes

Josef Friedman
Weichert Realtors, Suffern

Amy Hart
Weichert Realtors, Larchmont

Howard S. Grynspan
Charles Rutenberg Realty, Inc., Plainview

Jennifer Jackson
Exit Realty Power

Gary Bricker
William Raveis Real Estate, Yorktown Heights

David S. Jones
Keller Williams NY Realty, White Plains

Michel Fromowitz
Keller Williams Hudson Valley Realty, New City

David Butcher
J. Philip Real Estate, LLC., Briarcliff Manor

Carlos Delgado
NY Future Homes Realty Co.

Tabitha Constantino
Patricia Schiller Real Estate Co.

Chaya Shimon
Weichert Realtors, Suffern

Joshua Fischer
Weichert Realtors, Suffern

Evan V. Heib
Coldwell Banker Res. Brokerage

Ingrid Bernardez
Keller Williams Realty NYC Group, Bronx

Maxine Teele
Keller Williams Realty NYC Group, Bronx

Benjamin Rappaport
Realty Teams Corp, Pomona

Todd Weiss
BHG Rand Realty, New City

Stacy Tollefsen
Joseph O Baratta

Jeffrey Vegh
Silversons Realty, LLC

John L. Karl
Century 21 Marciano

Ethan Mena
Pantiga Group Inc.

Linda E. Torres
Linda Homes & Properties, Inc.

Edwin Moran
Besmatch Real Estate

Christina Ricciardi
BHG Rand Realty, Yonkers

Shawn Werner
Green Team Home Selling System

Kathi R. Moore
Mary Jane Pastor Realty, Inc.

Valerie Koonce
Coldwell Banker Res. Brokerage, Croton-on-Hudson

Rhonda K. Avery
Keller Williams Realty, Chester

Ancris Ramdhanie
Keller Williams NY Realty, White Plains

Adam Niemczynowicz
Douglas Elliman Real Estate, Chappaqua

Miguel A. Alicea
Joseph Green Realtor

Michael Finger
Douglas Elliman Real Estate, Scarsdale

Bernard S. Rooney
Keller Williams Hudson Valley Realty, New City

Ruben Francis
BHG Rand Realty, Stony Point

Gregg Hough
BHG Rand Realty, Goshen

Connie Hecker
Molinaro Assoc. RE & Appraiser

Sherlie Louis
Keller Williams Hudson Valley Realty, New City

Jessica Mendez
NY Future Homes Realty Co.

Christopher Curtin
Coldwell Banker Village Green Realty

John Kotash
Keller Williams Realty Partners, Yorktown

Julie L. Rose
BHG Rand Realty, New Windsor

Christopher Fontaine
BHG Rand Realty, Goshen

Karen A. Silverstein
Coldwell Banker Signature Properties, Valhalla

Kathryn Cancel
Stacie R Laskin

Robert Rohinsky
World Realty Group LLC

Craig Sidley
Berkshire Hathaway HS West. Properties, Scarsdale

Aron Luria
Equivest Realty Group

Marlo Jones
Century 21 Alliance Realty Group, Wappingers Falls

A Starring Role In Real Estate

Continued from page 11

started the alumni newsletter and annual fundraising events. “It was a really wonderful experience!”

After marrying in 1983 and starting a family shortly afterward, Palumbo took on marketing and public relations consulting jobs from her home office. She worked with local businesses, community organizations and also the Special Olympics. When her children were small, she also did substitute teaching.

She considered returning to school for a Master’s Degree in Education, but instead switched to Marriage and Family Therapy, with Pastoral Counseling. “The thing is, I got along so well with those kids who were considered ‘troublemakers,’ that it gave me the idea to get into counseling,” said Palumbo.

In 2001, she set up a private practice, specializing in coaching and helping parents and their children to get structure in their lives. “It was very rewarding,” she noted. Later, she started a family program at St. Joseph’s Church in Croton Falls, encouraging many of the local children to get involved in volunteering and community service.

When Palumbo eventually gave some thought to working in real estate, she assumed it would be much easier than it actually was. “In 2005, if you were breathing, you were selling,” she quipped. “I thought ‘how hard can it be?’” However, by 2008—when she finally got her license—the market had changed drastically. “I actually thought I broke the market!” she added.

She soon found comfort and comradery in the Women’s Council of Realtors (WCR), Empire Chapter. “I remember meeting Carol Christiansen at a lunch and she just never allowed me to leave without joining,” said Palumbo, who serves as its president this year. “It continues to be a wonderful experience because real estate is based on relationships.”

One of her biggest achievements as WCR president was presenting “The Midtown Men in Concert” at the Tarrytown Music Hall. The concert featured the four stars from the original cast of “The Jersey Boys” and benefited the Wounded Warrior Project.

Palumbo met Tony Award-winner Christian Hoff on Broadway during “The Jersey Boys” run. They are now business partners in support of the V Foundation for Cancer Research, founded by Jim Valvano, former basketball coach at Iona College and North Carolina State University, as well as a sports commentator for ABC and ESPN. Valvano died of cancer in 1993. Palumbo and Hoff recently held a “Tony Night” event at Palm West in Manhattan, raising \$10,000 for cancer research.

To date, she is still actively involved with Broadway Cares and is also a member of the Drama League, which encourages and supports young directors and actors. While she loves to be busy, Palumbo does value her free time and spends it reading, writing, cooking and traveling with her husband of 33 years, Anthony. The couple has three grown children: Jackie, 26; Katie, 23 and Thomas, 20.

Of her many careers, Palumbo rates real estate the best. “The biggest satisfaction is being part of one of the most important decisions people will make in their lives—buying a home,” she said. “I’m there to make it easier, less stressful, and provide guidance.”

As for her Hugh Jackman voicemail, Palumbo admits that many people think it’s an impersonator and not the real thing. “I even had one client from South America who had no idea who he was,” she laughed. “He told me I should probably get a new assistant because the one on the voicemail didn’t seem to be that good!”

Continued on page 20



WHITE PLAINS, GOSHEN,
WEST NYACK, PUTNAM

AUGUST 2016 FEATURED CLASSES

White Plains



TUES AUG, 23, 2016 9:00 AM - 5:30 PM
IN PERSON CLASS | CREDITS: 7.5 CE
INSTRUCTOR | NICK GIGANTE

Changing Trends in R.E.: Can you Spare Some Change? + Fair Housing

- Member Price: \$75
- Class Express: \$65
- Non-Member Price: \$90

Additional Classes:

- 8/4- Compliance Day with Ralph R. Ragette
- 8/4- Fair Housing with Ralph R. Ragette
- 8/4- NAR Ethics Compliance with Ralph R. Ragette
- 8/4- NAR Ethics Compliance (NO CE) with Ralph R. Ragette
- 8/11- Matrix 1: Introduction to Matrix with Kristine DiFrancesco
- 8/15- NAR Mandated Ethics with Dorothy Botsoe
- 8/15- NAR Mandated Ethics (NO CE) with Dorothy Botsoe
- 8/17- Only You Can Prevent Closing Fires with Ralph R. Ragette
- 8/24- Matrix 2: The Next Step into Matrix with Kristine DiFrancesco
- 8/24- Matrix 2: The Next Step into Matrix (NO CE) with Kristine DiFrancesco
- 8/30- Matrix 3: Matrix to the Max with Kristine DiFrancesco
- 8/30- Matrix 3: Matrix to the Max (NO CE) with Kristine DiFrancesco

West Nyack



WED AUG, 31, 2016 11:00 AM - 2:30 PM
IN PERSON CLASS | CREDITS: 3 CE
INSTRUCTOR | LAURIE DIFRANCESCO

Lunch & Learn: Generations & Fair Housing

- Member Price: \$35
- Class Express: \$25
- Non-Member Price: \$50

Additional Classes:

- 8/2- Seven Deadly Sins in R.E. with Roberta Bangs
- 8/4- Agency Update with Laurie DiFrancesco
- 8/5- Matrix 1: Introduction to Matrix with Kristine DiFrancesco
- 8/9- Fair Housing with Adam DiFrancesco, GRI
- 8/18- Matrix 2: The Next Step into Matrix with Kristine DiFrancesco
- 8/18- Matrix 2: The Next Step into Matrix (NO CE) with Kristine DiFrancesco
- 8/25- Matrix 3: Matrix to the Max with Kristine DiFrancesco
- 8/25- Matrix 3: Matrix to the Max (NO CE) with Kristine DiFrancesco

Goshen



TUES AUG 16, 2016 9:00 AM - 5:30 PM
IN PERSON CLASS | CREDITS: 7.5 CE
INSTRUCTOR | ROSEANN FARROW

Realtor Roulette: Don't Gamble with Your License + Fair Housing

- Member Price: \$75
- Class Express: \$65
- Non-Member Price: \$90

Additional Classes:

- 8/24- NAR Mandated Ethics with Peter Mallon
- 8/24- NAR Mandated Ethics (NO CE) with Peter Mallon

For details and registration go to WWW.HGAR.Com

CALENDAR

JULY

- Monday, 18**
HGAR Ribbon Cutting/
100th Anniversary Celebration
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
HGAR White Plains
- Tuesday, 19**
WCR Appreciation Cocktail Party
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Bull and Bear Brewery, Brewster, NY
- Wednesday, 20**
Education Council Meeting
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
White Plains
- Wednesday, 20**
HGMLS Board Meeting
10:00 a.m.
White Plains

- Thursday, 21**
New Member Orientation
9:00 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.
- Monday, 25**
HG Realtor Foundation Pub Night/
HGAR 100th Anniversary Celebration (Rockland)
Hudson Water Club
606 Beach Rd, West Haverstraw
- Friday, 29**
Member Experience Committee
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
White Plains

AUGUST

- Friday, 5**
HGMLS Orientation
9:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.
W. Nyack
- Wednesday, 10**
New Member Orientation
6:00 p.m. - 9:45 p.m.
White Plains
- Wednesday, 10**
The Rockland Boulders
7:00 p.m.
Palisades Credit Union Park, Pamona
- Thursday, 11**
HGMLS Orientation
9:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.
White Plains
- Thursday, 11**
New Member Orientation
6:00 p.m. - 9:45 p.m.
W. Nyack

- Monday, 22, - Tuesday, 23**
NAR Leadership Chicago
Chicago, IL
- Wednesday, 24**
RPAC Happy Hour and
HGAR 100th Anniversary
Celebration (Orange)
Billy Joe's Ribworks
26 Front St. Newburgh, NY
- Friday, 26**
Member Experience Committee
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
White Plains

Realtors Need to Know Local Government Rules And Regulations

New York has an estimated 10,500 entities of government including districts and so on. Administration of so many levels costs a great deal of money and results in the creation of a labyrinth of rules that real estate professionals can find hard to follow. For instance, a county's rules on rentals may be different from a town's rules or New York State's rules.

There are several must-know rules when selling a house. You should always be knowledgeable about sign rules and the local sign code for the towns or villages that you market in. For the best information, you can usually call either the local building department or code enforcement officer. Sometimes

the rules are enforced more strictly at different points in the year. It is very important to comply with these rules; not doing so can carry heavy fines and possible criminal penalties in some jurisdictions if not followed. In many towns and villages you must keep for sale signs on the property only, or you may have to get a permit for these signs. Open house signs may have different regulations, for example signs could be required to be on the grass only or on the house property only. Making sure you know these rules and regulations will help your business too. Get yourself acquainted with your elected officials because they can help make a process go more smoothly and more quickly.

'Zombie' Property Bill to Go Into Effect in December

ALBANY—Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed into law the "zombie property" bill on June 23rd. The legislation, which passed the State Legislature, is geared to combating the blight of vacant and abandoned properties throughout the state providing further assistance to those in danger of losing their homes, and in some cases expediting the foreclosure process.

Gov. Cuomo signed the legislation into law at events in Syracuse, Manhattan and Long Island. The legislation seeks to reduce "zombie properties" statewide by expediting the rehabilitation, repair and improvement of these properties, and enabling the state to assist homeowners facing mortgage foreclosure. NYSAR officials told *Real Estate In-Depth* that the statute will become effective 180 days after it gets signed into law, which puts the effective date at Dec. 20, 2016.

"For many New Yorkers, homes are our single most important investment, but that investment can be undermined by the blight of neglected and abandoned properties," Gov. Cuomo said. "For each zombie home that we cure and for each that we prevent with this legislation, we are saving entire neighborhoods from the corrosive effect of blight and neglect. I thank my colleagues in the Assembly and Senate for seeing a crisis and helping to turn it into an opportunity for people to realize the great American Dream of homeownership."

Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said of the bill being signed into law, "Revitalizing and strengthening our communities is a longstanding priority of both the Senate Democrats and Governor Cuomo. For too long the fabric of our communities have been weakened by these zombie properties and today we can begin moving forward to make sure that our neighborhoods are protected. Stronger neighborhoods help build stronger communities"

The legislation includes several provisions that will help prevent people from losing their homes and addresses the scope of unoccupied and ill-maintained properties, which based on voluntary reporting, is estimated to be more than 6,000, according to state officials. Under the new law, reporting is now mandatory, and the number of abandoned homes is anticipated to be even higher.

The legislation includes measures to assist homeowners facing mortgage foreclosure, improving the efficiency and integrity of the mandatory settlement conferences, establishing a pre-foreclosure duty to maintain properties on mortgagees, create an expedited

foreclosure process for vacant and abandoned properties, the creation of an electronic vacant property registry, and the establishment of a Consumer Bill of Rights. The new law will also create the Community Restoration Fund (CRF), a new tool for the State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA) to assist homeowners facing mortgage foreclosure. CRF will purchase defaulted mortgage notes from other lenders and offer favorable mortgage modifications to keep homeowners in their residences. CRF will have the ability to forgive a portion of a loan's principal and make the loan affordable in areas where home values have declined or where a homeowner has experienced a decrease in income.

Some of the key provisions of the new law include imposing a pre-foreclosure duty on banks and servicers to maintain vacant and abandoned properties: Previously, a bank or mortgagee had the responsibility of maintaining a vacant property once a judgment of foreclosure and sale was obtained, creating zombie properties and blight in communities. The new law places the maintenance obligation on a mortgagee when the mortgagee becomes or should have become aware of the vacancy. Under this law, the bank has a duty to maintain and secure a residential real property where there is a reasonable basis to believe it is vacant and abandoned, and faces civil penalties up to \$500 per violation, per property, per day for failing to do so.

The legislation offers plaintiffs an option for an expedited foreclosure process on bonafide vacant and abandoned properties that homeowners no longer want. To initiate this process, plaintiffs would make an application for an order to show cause upon notice seeking entry of judgment of foreclosure and sale on the grounds that the property is vacant and abandoned.

The legislation requires a foreclosing party to move to auction within 90 days of obtaining a foreclosure judgment. In addition, a foreclosing party would be required to take action to ensure that the property is reoccupied within 180 days of taking title.

In cases where homes are vacant, CRF will offer a mechanism to expeditiously complete a foreclosure and work with land banks, Community Development Financial Institutions, and other local nonprofits to rehabilitate properties and resell them to new buyers, state officials noted.

Under Gov. Cuomo's budget, the state has earmarked \$100 million in available funding to help new homebuyers purchase and renovate "zom-

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

By Philip Weiden
Government Affairs Director for the
Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors



Another area where municipalities may differ is the imposition of transfer taxes. Some municipalities may impose a tax on the transfer of real property, while others do not. For that information you can also call that town or municipality directly. Transfer taxes vary depending on the municipality and it is important for both buyers and sellers to know that information.

Some municipalities also have different advertising regulations and ways that you can approach a potential client in that town. Some towns and villages may have strict penalties while others don't. If new potential regulations are being considered or enacted or if there

are regulations that you are having trouble understanding, you should contact the Government Affairs Department here at HGAR and we will be happy to assist you.

The final thing to consider is that even though we have home rule, when Albany decides to act on a particular issue, state law supersedes a local law or ordinance. This is important to know because once again rules and regulations vary from town to town.

Legislative Affairs columnist Philip Weiden is the Government Affairs Director for the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors.



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HGAR Raises \$17,000 for Make-A-Wish Hudson Valley

By Mary T. Prenon

The Hudson Gateway Realtor Foundation, the charitable arm of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, raised \$17,000 for Make-A-Wish Hudson Valley at its “Red Carpet Spectacular” Gala held this spring at the Clubhouse at Patriot Hills in Stony Point. The Tarrytown-based non-profit organization grants the wishes of Hudson Valley children suffering with life-threatening medical conditions.

This year’s event featured a red

carpet entryway with a photographer and special “Make-A-Wish” backdrop, a caricature artist, raffles for a variety of donated gift baskets, and a Grand Door Prize of Yankees tickets. “Acute Inflections” jazz duo provided live entertainment during the cocktail hour.

Representatives of HGAR presented a check to Make-A-Wish officials on June 29th at the Wish House in Tarrytown.

“We are so grateful to this Associa-



The HGAR Make-A-Wish Committee presented a check for \$17,000 to Make-A-Wish Hudson Valley. From left, Sadiki Pierre; Mary Prenon; Tom Conklin, CEO, Make-A-Wish Hudson Valley; Eydie Lopez, HGAR Make-A-Wish Committee Chair; Michelle Gilliard; Angela Demaris; Elsa Seguinot and Erica Sallahian.

Gov. Cuomo Signs East Ramapo Oversight Bill



Gov. Andrew Cuomo

By John Jordan

ALBANY—Gov. Andrew Cuomo, as expected, signed into law on June 30th a bill that will provide greater oversight of the troubled East Ramapo School District in Rockland County.

The bill was passed by the Assembly and Senate on June 16 and was delivered to the governor on June 28th. Oversight legislation was passed last year by the State Legislature, but was vetoed by Gov. Cuomo. The district is home to roughly 30,000 students, with about two-thirds of them attending private yeshivas or other non-public schools, according to the *Journal News*.

The legislation will bring \$3 million to the district to restore student programs. In addition to the funding, the agreement will continue the appointment of the monitors to the district as well as oversight over the new appropriations and budget review by the Commissioner of Education MaryEllen Elia. The legislation will be in effect for one year.

The proposal, sponsored by State Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee and State Senator David Carlucci, will require that the new funding be used to restore programs that have been cut, including extracurricular activities, support services and full-day kindergarten. The district, in consultation with the monitors, must develop a comprehensive expenditure plan that will detail how the new funding will be allocated. The public will have an opportunity to weigh in on the plan and the funding may only be provided to the district upon satisfaction of the Commissioner that the funds were spent appropriately.

The plan includes oversight that will be provided by the Commissioner of Education. Under the bill, the board must submit next year’s school budget for review to the Commissioner, who will have binding authority. They must also submit any sale of a public asset, capital contract or cut in public education programs for State Commissioner approval.

The bill had widespread support from the Rockland state delegation as well as from local civic and political organizations.

On June 14th, State Assemblymen Kenneth Zebrowski, Jaffee and State Senator Carlucci announced they had introduced the oversight bill legislation in the Assembly and Senate. The bill was the result of negotiations between the lawmakers, legislative leaders as well as the governor’s office.

When the bill was introduced, bill sponsors as well as school officials were hopeful of its passage.

“I have been proud to fight for East Ramapo, and this new legislation will allow us to turn a corner and take the first step in restoring vital programming for our children. With the deal reached today, alongside my colleagues, the dedicated students and advocates throughout the community, our school district will have the oversight and funding it needs for success,” said State Senator Carlucci.

“We were able to come to an agreement late last night, and as sponsor of this legislation I believe that this is one step of many that will help restore academic excellence for the public school students and foster a positive environment in the East Ramapo School District. This legislation will enhance collaboration between the State Education Department, the school board and community as well as provide additional funds for essential educational programs,” said Assemblywoman Jaffee.

“After almost two years of contentious debate, this bill represents hope for the East Ramapo School District. Hope for meaningful oversight, restored opportunities and a future where both sides can come together for the best interests of the kids,” said Assemblyman Zebrowski.

“These additional resources will allow us to expand full-day kindergarten, music and the arts and other enhancements that will improve educational outcomes in East Ramapo. This is a source of great encouragement for our students, teachers and administrators. It really builds hope for a turnaround in the district,” said Dr. DeborahWortham, superintendent of the East Ramapo School District.

tion for all it has done for our organization over the years,” said Tom Conklin, Make-A-Wish Hudson Valley CEO. “With the average cost of a wish ranging from \$7,500 to \$10,000, you will help us make so many more wishes come true.” Over the past 20 years, HGAR, which includes the former Orange County Association of Realtors, has raised more than \$300,000 for Make-A-Wish Hudson Valley.

The event’s special guest speaker was Ramiro Vargas, 15, a recent “Wish” recipient. Two years ago, Ramiro was diagnosed with a rare blood cancer and required a bone marrow transplant. His sister Elena, now 13, donated her bone marrow to save his life. The East Fishkill teen is now a healthy high school sophomore.

Make-A-Wish grants wishes to children with life-threatening medical con-

ditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy. Since its inception in 1986, the chapter has granted wishes to more than 2,400 children in the communities it serves. The wish experience is a combined community effort involving volunteers, staff, donors and medical professionals to make each wish come true.

The Chapter is a proud participant of the Better Business Bureau Charity Seal Program, which indicates that the organization has met the 20 Standards for Charity Accountability. The Chapter serves Delaware, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster and Westchester counties. The organization is currently working on 150 wishes with the average cost of a wish ranging from \$7,500 to \$10,000. For more information about the Hudson Valley Chapter visit www.hudson.wish.org.

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2016 Special Supplement Schedule

AUG. Hudson Valley Supplement

SEPT. Orange County Supplement

OCT. Putnam County Supplement + Hudson Valley Real Estate Report

NOV. Rockland County Supplement



Tips on E-Mail Marketing Services and Windows, File Password Removal

If your computer qualifies for Microsoft's free Windows 10 upgrade and you haven't upgraded yet...you're almost out of time. To learn more, please visit... <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/kb/3095675>

Quick Pre-Windows 10 Upgrade Tips

1) Before performing the upgrade, make sure you first install all the available Microsoft Update's that are currently available for your current computer's operating system. (To accomplish that...Run Windows Update, do the updates, restart, run Windows Update again...and keep doing updates, re-starting and re-running Windows Update until Windows Update reports that there are no more updates available for your computer.)

2) Please do a full computer system backup right before you attempt to upgrade your computer. (Better safe than sorry)!

E-Mail Marketing Services Review

E-mail marketing is alive and well. If you don't have access to an e-mail marketing service/platform through your company, or if the one you have access to does not provide certain e-mail marketing features that you want, it may be time to consider an alternative e-mail marketing service. To identify some of the better e-mail marketing services available, I Googled the following search phrase "best e-mail marketing platforms 2016" [I did the search without the quotes]. The search results uncovered many promising looking links and I followed a few of them. I'm pleased to report that the links I followed all took me to helpful articles and reviews.

My quick conclusion is that all the services I looked into would likely exceed my (or your) basic needs, as all the services provided standard e-mail marketing functionality. However, should you dig into individual products/services in more detail you're likely to be introduced to some feature ("A/B Testing" for example) that you may find interesting and that may not be available from all services. Be prepared to spend some time evaluating things as most of the products/services are quite robust and it simply takes time to review all they have to offer. To help you get started, the following links will lead you to articles that identify and review a number of very capable e-mail marketing services...

E-mail Marketing Services Reviews [Article from toptenreviews.com] www.tinyurl.com/zaawq5e

The Best E-mail Marketing Software of 2016 [Article from pcmag.com] www.tinyurl.com/gqsw64d

(Tip: I recommend reviewing the comments area (at the end of this article) as some of them contain additional information that you may find helpful)

Resetting or Recovering Windows

Generally speaking, if you invest enough time and effort into researching ways to recover/remove passwords from Windows machines and various types of documents, you'll likely find a free solution. However, not all solutions are easy to find and/or work through. I would encourage those of you who want to (more easily) remove some outdated, mystery or duplicate Windows user account passwords (so that you can gain access to those accounts again) to check out Daossoft's "Password Rescuer" product. Although the product(s) you'll come across at Daossoft's website are not free, they are easy to use. In addition to helping you out with Windows user account passwords, their products can also help you gain access to many other types of password protected files (including Microsoft Office and Adobe Acrobat files). To learn more about the company's products and to review the "How to Use Password Rescuer" tutorial, simply visit the following courtesy links...

Password Rescuer's product developers home page www.daossoft.com

How to use Password Rescuer www.tinyurl.com/hrg76hp

Adjustable and Sturdy Notebook Computer Stand

If you are looking for a sturdy notebook computer stand you can use in a variety of ways, please take a look at backpainhelp.com's "Posture Stand." The innovative design of the "Posture Stand" enables you to adjust it into a variety of different configurations. Different configurations can help you comfortably use the product... while on the couch, sitting in bed, laying down in bed and also at your regular (sitting) computing workstation by converting it into a standing computer workstation. After familiarizing yourself with the basic design of the product you can go to Amazon.com and do a product search using "adjustable notebook computer stand" (without the quotes) as your search phrase. The search results will include a number of very similar products that you can purchase at a lower price point. However, over the past few years I've purchased, used and broken a couple of the lower cost models. Currently, I'm now using a Posture Stand and it's definitely a higher quality product than the others I have used. If you or someone you know likes to compute in various situations other than just at a desk, this product could be a nice gift! If you want to learn more, here's a link to the product's home page... www.backpainhelp.com/posture/posture-stand.html

Watch Your Back

If any of your computing situations result in you having your back turned away from an area that you wish to be able to better monitor, consider getting a rear-view mirror for your computer workstation. While you can easily create your own rear-view solution using just about any mirror, convex mirrors will likely give you a wider view. If you don't want to come up with your own rear-view mirror solution for your

TECH TALK

By John Vrooman
john@johnvrooman.com



computing work area, I discovered that Amazon.com actually has some products that are made with this purpose in mind. Simply visit Amazon.com and do a search using "rear view computer mirror" (without the quotes). I suggest you browse through the various product related questions and reviews to gain some additional insight about each product's suitability, quality, etc.

Reminders

This column (and a number of recent past ones) are made available for your viewing convenience and reference at www.realestateindepth.com/technology (The "Technology" section of the new Real Estate In-Depth website.)

If you have comments, suggestions, tips, questions or just want to say "Hi," you are invited to contact me at john@johnvrooman.com. I always enjoy hearing from you!

John Vrooman is an experienced Realtor who enjoys staying on top of real estate, technology, gadgets, marketing, new media and small business trends/developments. He curates information from a diverse range of resources and enjoys sharing tips, thoughts and discoveries with others—using a "something for everyone" approach. He is an Associate Broker with Better Homes & Gardens Rand Realty's White Plains office.



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Developer 'Tops Out' Mount Vernon Rental Project



203 Gramatan Ave.

MOUNT VERNON—The Atlantic Development Group, LLC and To Better Days Construction held a topping out celebration on June 30th for their 203 Gramatan Ave. mixed-use project, the first of three major Atlantic Development projects in Downtown Mount Vernon.

203 Gramatan Avenue is a \$40-million ground-up quality workforce housing development that includes 159 units of workforce housing—30% of which are reserved for Mount Vernon residents—and 20,000 square feet of retail space. Local companies have been awarded 32% of the project cost to date and the project has created 43 full-time jobs for Mount Vernon residents, Atlantic Development stated in an announcement.

Peter Fine, CEO of Atlantic Development said, "We are really proud of our role in the revitalization of downtown Mount Vernon and of this project—our first of three and the first major stride in bringing Downtown Mount Vernon back."

He added, "We have made real investments in this community, its residents, its businesses and its workforce and we look forward to carrying the momentum, excitement and support from this project into Hartley Park Towers, our next major milestone in Mount Vernon's comeback. Hartley Park Towers would not be possible without the success and public improvements of the first building at 203 Gramatan Avenue."

Other notable facets of the 203 Gramatan Ave. development include improvements to the Sidney Avenue Garage: structural repairs, new elevators, new lighting, signage, painting, and pedestrian walkways; as well as Gramatan Avenue streetscape improvements: new sidewalks, trees, benches and street lights.

Atlantic Development's second major investment in the revitalization of downtown Mount Vernon is Hartley Park Towers, which will create an additional 190 jobs. Located at 30 Oakley Ave.—around the block from the 203 Gram-

atan project—the 10-story building will feature 109 units of luxury rental housing. The finishes and amenities will be built to a luxury standard, but the housing will be 60/40 market/affordable. The development will feature 4,000 square feet of amenity space that will include a state of the art gym, media center, lounge and children play area. There will be an additional 4,000 square feet of landscaped outdoor terraces with views of Hartley Parkland is Hartley Park Towers, the first market rate rentals built in downtown Mount Vernon in 40 years.

Atlantic Development estimates that there will be approximately \$6 million in construction and labor contracts that will be awarded to local Mount Vernon businesses. Atlantic Development is ready to break ground in September, pending final approvals from the City of Mount Vernon, company officials noted.

New York City-based Atlantic Development Group, founded in 1995, develops, owns, and manages residential and mixed-use properties, housing units, and retail and community space.

Regus Signs Lease Deal in Mount Kisco

MOUNT KISCO—Regus, a major provider of flexible workspace, has signed a 14,896-square-foot office lease at 100 South Bedford Road in Mount Kisco.

The new lease represents Regus' eighth office location in Westchester County. The shared office space provider currently operates more than 140,000 square feet of office space throughout Westchester County.

David Block of CBRE Group's Westchester/Connecticut office, along with Peter Danna of the firm's Dallas operations, represented Regus in the transaction.

"After a thorough market analysis and evaluation of a number of office properties in the area we were able to ascertain that 100 South Bedford Road met all of Regus' very specific requirements," said Block. "100 South Bedford Road is widely considered to be one the premier office building in Northern Westchester, a market that our client wanted to serve with its industry-leading, high-quality flexible workspaces."

Owned by the commercial investment and management firm, Diamond Properties, the 91,000-square-foot, Class A office property boasts a full-service cafeteria and ample on-site parking.

"Expanding our network into Northern Westchester enables Regus to meet the ongoing demand for flexible office space in the market," said Michael Berretta, vice president, development, Regus. "This strategic location will benefit our customers as they conduct business in the area."

Regus operates a network of 2,800 locations in 106 countries and serves 2.3 million members. Its portfolio encompasses 43 million square feet.

Rockland County Exec. Looks to Cut Costs Over Delayed Bldg. Sale

NEW CITY—Rockland County Executive Ed Day announced on June 20th a series of emergency financial measures, including a hiring freeze, that will be put in place to address a potential \$4-million budget shortfall caused by the County Legislature's failure to move forward with the sale of the Sain Building here.

"We are facing a \$4-million hole in our budget, not because of poor planning or economic circumstances beyond our control," Day said as he stood outside the county-owned Sain Building on New Hempstead Road at a press conference. "We are facing a \$4-million deficit because of senseless political posturing."

The deficit equals an approximate 4% county property tax increase. "We will make some very painful cuts in programs and services in an attempt to recoup as much of that \$4-million shortfall as possible," Day said. "This will be a deficit—and tax increase—created solely by the Legislature."

To counter the potential shortfall, Day ordered the following steps effective immediately:

- a hiring freeze – including all temps and relief positions.
- curtailed overtime – payments will require prior authorization from the county executive
- review of all scheduled highway work, with delays or stoppages as appropriate
- purchasing orders will be cancelled or delayed.
- all mass mailings are suspended
- Other measures that could be implemented by July 1:
 - Departments will return 20% of county vehicles to the fleet garage, with the exception of fully marked law enforcement vehicles.
 - Hours could be cut at all county parks.
 - Review of all consulting contracts, with some stopped as needed, including, among other actions, cancellation of this year's police academy class.
 - Contract agencies that have migrated to oversight by county depart-

ments under the administration's new rules will be unaffected. However, Day said that the county would be forced to stop payment to other community-based organizations that receive payments via the legislature without similar, appropriate oversight.

Day pointed out that he proposed as part of the budget in October his intention to sell the Sain Building to offset the one-time costs associated with the closure of the Summit Park nursing home to ensure a balanced budget.

The Legislature approved a budget that called for \$4 million from the sale of the Sain building. By vote, each legislator affirmed the sale.

However since then, the legislature has refused to move on the sale even though a well-financed, nationally known company responded to a request for proposals and advertisements and offered to pay \$4.51 million – \$510,000 above the appraised value for the six-story office building, day said. According to published reports, Massachusetts-based National Development Acquisition LLC would acquire the property and tear down the six-story Sain Building and replace it with a senior assisted living facility.

"Now the Legislature, for no lucid reason, is refusing to bring the sale to a vote," Day said. "We cannot even make our case because the chairman refuses to simply place the matter on an agenda."

Aiden Wolfe, chairman of the Rockland County Legislature told the *Journal News* that he did not support the building's sale to National Development until other options were studied, including selling the county-owned Building A in Ramapo. He said a request for proposals issued early this year to help determine Building A's worth had been canceled.

Wolfe also said the county should look into knocking down the Sain Building and building a new county office building at the site.

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Warby Parker Firm to Open Optical Lab in Rockland County

SLOATSBURG—New York Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo announced recently that Warby Parker, which produces its own line of affordable designer eyewear, will create 128 jobs over the next five years in a new 34,000-square-foot optical lab in Sloatsburg.

Outfitted for the assembly of glasses and the finishing of prescription lenses, this is the first optical lab Warby Parker will fully own, and its first expansion into the Mid-Hudson Region. The Manhattan-based company will also retain more than 250 jobs at its New York City headquarters as well as an additional 130 jobs at its New York retail locations.

“Warby Parker is a fast-growing company and their new facility will bring jobs, private investment and a new economic energy to the entire region,” Gov. Cuomo said. “This is another example of our administration’s efforts to improve our state’s business climate with policies to attract and retain innovative companies that create good-paying jobs for New Yorkers.”

“We’re incredibly excited to open our first optical lab in Sloatsburg, Rockland County,” said Warby Parker co-founder and co-CEO Dave Gilboa. “We started Warby Parker with the goal of transforming the eyewear industry by offering an alternative to the overpriced and underwhelming prescription glasses on the market. Since 2010, we’ve been committed to building a business that lasts and, as we continue to scale, the lab will allow for more sustainable growth across our supply chain.”

“Since day one we’ve worked hard to provide our customers with the best shopping experience possible. As a vertically integrated brand, opening our own lab is the next step in continuing to provide remarkable customer experiences,” said Warby Parker co-Founder and co-CEO Neil Blumenthal. “And we couldn’t be more excited to open this lab in our own backyard and bring even more jobs to the state we call home.”

Warby Parker sells fashionable prescription eyewear and sunglasses online and in 31 retail locations across the U.S., including five locations in New York City. Opening its own optical lab in Rockland County allows the company to further manage the manufacturing process and gain better insight into and control over order lead time and quality assurance, state officials noted.

To encourage Warby Parker to expand in New York State, Empire State Development is providing the company with up to \$1.32 million in Excelsior Jobs Program tax credits. As part of the agreement, Warby Parker will invest more than \$15 million to construct and outfit the new factory while creating 128 jobs over the next five years, starting with about 20 new employees, at the Sloatsburg factory. In 2014, ESD agreed to provide the company with up to \$2.2 million in Excelsior tax credits if they created 145 new jobs and retained 271 in the New York City headquarters. Under the terms of both incentive offers, Warby Parker will retain the agreed-upon employment figures through 2025.

“We welcome Warby Parker to Rockland with open arms,” said Rockland County Executive Ed Day. “We appreciate the confidence that this company and Gov. Cuomo have shown in choosing Rockland as the location for this growing and innovative company’s manufacturing facility. Rockland offers a highly skilled work force, easy access to New York City and the metropolitan region and a wonderful quality of life for Warby Parker’s employees. We are ready to assist this company in any way that we can to ease their move to Sloatsburg.”

Orange County Tourism Opens New Office



Orange County Tourism’s office is now located at 99 Main St. in Goshen.

GOSHEN—Orange County Executive Steven M. Neuhaus and other county and municipal officials participated in a ceremonial ribbon cutting on July 6th to celebrate the grand-opening of Orange County’s Tourism Office here.

Neuhaus was joined at the event by Deputy County Executive Wayne Booth, Director of Operations Harry Porr, Orange County Tourism Director Susan Hawvermale, County Clerk Annie Rabbitt, Department of Public Works Commissioner Chris Viebrock, Deputy Commissioner of Infrastructure Services Jim Brooks, Town of Goshen Supervisor Doug Bloomfield, County Historian Johanna Yaun and County Legislators Jeff Berkman, Phil Canterino, Paul Ruszkiewicz and John Vero.

“Orange County has some of the most impressive tourism destinations right here in our own backyard,” Neuhaus said. “Tourism in Orange County has become a growing industry with numerous economic benefits. Our new tourism offices in Goshen will provide a visible location for all tourism related activities.”

Neuhaus increased Orange County’s tourism budget from \$642,000 to \$1.055 million for the 2016 budget. The majority of tourism’s budget is offset by the hotel tax collected by Orange County.

“I have put an emphasis on tourism since I took office and that will continue,” Neuhaus said. “We are all proud that Orange County has become a tourist attraction for visitors from around the world. I know that this trend will continue.”

Orange County’s new 1,500-square-foot office is located at 99 Main St/ in Goshen. This storefront location is much more accessible to residents and visitors. Orange County Tourism was previously located in the 1887 County Building at 124 Main St. in Goshen.

The tourism office is headquarters for the industry in Orange County and part of the I LOVE NEW YORK program. The new facility serves as an information center, offering local and regional brochures as well as maps in its spacious reception area. Visitors to and residents of Orange County can receive help in trip planning with suggestions for restaurants, lodging, and itineraries.

Mount Kisco Building Trades for \$4.4 Million



153 Main St., Mount Kisco

MOUNT KISCO—A two-story commercial building at 149-157 East Main St. in the heart of Downtown Mount Kisco has been sold in a transaction valued at \$4,425,000.

The sale represents the relative stability of the Mount Kisco market since the deal marks the first time in 30 years the building has traded. Longtime owner 330 Realty Associates sold the property to 153 Main St MK Holdings LLC.

The building, also known as 153 Main St., is located on east side of East Main Street, between Lundy Lane and North Bedford Avenue. The property’s approximately 9,755 square feet of prime street front retail is anchored by Exit 4 Food Hall, an upscale, multi-option, dine-around restaurant. Other retail tenants include Reflexology Day Spa and The NY Dolls clothing boutique. Office tenants on the second floor are exclusively in the mental, physical and spiritual health professions.

John Barrett, head of investment sales at Admiral Real Estate, exclusively represented the seller and identified the buyer. “The sale represented an opportunity for the buyer to acquire an investment grade asset of significant size in a space constrained market, with a track record of tenant and cash-flow stability,” Barrett noted.

At the time of the sale, the property had one retail vacancy. The sale occurred at a cap rate of 8.5% on in-place income, roughly \$261-per-square-foot.

Barrett added, “Professionally managed retail assets with stable cash flow continue to attract substantial interest from existing retail operators, as well as buyers who are looking to diversify by asset class. We had over 25 property inspections and, due to the high level of liquidity in the market, received multiple offers without contingencies.”

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PUTNAM POSTING

By Jennifer Maher



Assessing the Business Value of Divided Government

When (if ever) is it acceptable for business community leaders to weigh in on the political makeup of the New York State Legislature? According to a recent article by POLITICO New York's Jimmy Veilkind, Heather Briccetti thinks the time is now. The leader of the Business Council of New York State has maintained for some time that preserving an upstate-downstate balance in state government means supporting Republicans in upstate districts in order to offset the predominantly Democratic representation downstate.

Last fall at the BCNYS annual meeting, Briccetti pointed out that "Republicans, generally speaking, are from Upstate and from Long Island and the Democrats—the vast majority are from the metropolitan New York City area." Veilkind's September report forecast potentially difficult circumstances for Upstate, as Briccetti said, "If the Democrats regain control of the Senate, that means both houses of the Legislature will be controlled by leadership from New York City, which means Upstate and Long Island will be in the minority."

As the 2016 legislative session concluded, she again expressed concern about this Upstate-Downstate political disparity, saying, "I don't think there's a full awareness of the stark differences in the economic conditions of Upstate versus New York City," according to Veilkind's latest POLITICO article. Despite the tension between the Republican and Democratic camps, the BCNYS President/CEO views this as a geographic and not a political issue, and this seems reasonable given the unique and divergent needs of the different communities.

Navigating such treacherous political waters is not easy for any business community leader, but Briccetti has proven to be particularly adept at such matters. An accomplished lawyer who lives on a farm in the Capital Region, she has been willing to take criticism while pushing fervently for causes deemed important to her organization. We would do well to pay attention to her guidance regarding Upstate-Downstate balance in our legislature.

Jennifer Maher served as the 2015 vice president of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors and currently serves as the 2016 vice president of the Hudson Valley Chapter New York State Commercial Association of Realtors and chairwoman of the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce.

Zuckerman Named Putnam County Representative to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board

CARMEL—Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell has named Neal Zuckerman of Garrison to represent Putnam County on the board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Zuckerman has served on the Metro North Railroad Commuter Council in the Putnam County seat since 2010; he has also served on the MTA board in a non-voting capacity as the MNRCC's representative since 2014.

Zuckerman is a partner and managing director of The Boston Consulting Group, where he advises major corporations on business strategy, growth and operations. He specializes in providing advice to companies transforming their businesses in the digital era.

"I am thrilled to have Neal Zuckerman represent the county on the MTA Board, especially since we have already worked together on a range of MTA issues" said Odell in the July 6th announcement "His business experience and career as a U.S. Army aviation officer, where he dealt extensively with safe flying operations, make him a great choice for this position. I have no doubt that Neal will continue to watch closely over, and advocate vigorously for, the needs of the county, our commuters, and our communities, for which transit is paramount."

"It's a great privilege to serve Putnam County on the MTA Board," said Zuckerman. "The needs of our riders are three-fold: (1) safety, above all else; (2) reliable, professional service, which MTA employees deliver every day; and (3) value—the price has to be justified by the service. As a commuter, as well as board member, I will advocate strongly for these needs."

Zuckerman succeeds Robert Bickford of Cold Spring, who served for nine years on the MTA Board. "Bob has been an extraordinary representative for Putnam County on the MTA board, and I am pleased that he will continue to serve as our county's Ethics Committee chair," said Odell. "We are fortunate to have had his service, and will continue to look to him for counsel."

Zuckerman, his wife and two children reside in Garrison (the station from which he commutes). He is a graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point and Harvard Business School. He is a member of the Philipstown Planning Board and the not-for-profit boards of the Putnam History Museum and the Desmond-Fish Library.

2016 HGAR RPAC HONOR ROLL

Continued from page 11

Eydie Lopez, Dorothy Jensen Realty, White Plains
Cynthia Lippolis, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices River Towns Real Estate, Croton
Jennifer Mallory, Keller Williams Hudson Valley, New City
Cathleen Stack, HGAR, White Plains
Eileen Taus, White Plains
Maryann Tercasio, BHG Rand Realty Central Valley
Renee Zurlo, BHG Rand Realty, Central Valley

99 Club

Paulette Bailey, Bronx, Janet Brand, Briarcliff Manor, Randall Calano, , Yorktown Heights, Leon Cameron, White Plains, Gary Connolly, White Plains, Leah Caro, Bronxville Real Estate, Bronxville Patricia Cassese, Berkshire Hathaway HS West. Pr, Scarsdale. Michael Criscuolo. Irvington, Theresa Crozier, White Plains, Nancy Curasi, Montgomery, Kevin Dwyer, Mahopac, Briarcliff Manor. Gail Fattizzi, Westchester Real Estate, Inc. Eastchester, Jeffrey Farnell, Newburgh, Cecilia Feng, Peekskill, Debbie Goldstein, Central Valley, Ronald Garafalo, Pine Bush, Jim Himelson, Central Valley, Patricia Holmes, Rye, Mary Kingsley, Pelham, Carol Kope, White Plains, Gary Leogrande, White Plains, Pam Levine, Central Valley, Kathleen Mangan, Pelham, Gregory Miller, New City, Josef Muller, Scarsdale, Patricia Palumbo, Somers, Kathy Piergiorgi, Goshen, Peggy Shea, White Plains, Myriam Ramos, Yorktown Heights, Cary Sleeper, Larchmont, Patsy Sposato, Valhalla, Claudia Vaccaro, Warwick, Leah Warncke, White Plains, Karen Willman, Brewster

Recap of Contributions Year to Date**

TOTAL: \$108,100 from 2,091 contributors

Goal:\$144,787 from 3,278 contributors

% of dollar goal: 74%

% of member goal: 63%

New Members

continued from page 12

Catherine Charbonneau
Platinum Drive Realty Inc., Chappaqua
Orly Martinez
Keller Williams Realty Group, Scarsdale
Jennifer Kelley
Platinum Drive Realty, Inc., Scarsdale
Lezer Levi
Green Triangle Equities, LTD
Kathleen Anstead
Geba Realty Associates Inc
Philip G. Brady
Marc Jason

Nicole Marks
Country Corners Real Estate
Mardelyn F. Cabrera
Century 21 Metro Star
Janamarie Verzillo
Diligent Searches Realty LLC

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HUDSON VALLEY REAL ESTATE REPORT

Hudson Valley Second Quarter Residential Sales Soar to Five-Year High

Staff Report

Editor's Note: The following is the full text version of the 2016 Second Quarter Residential Real Estate Sales Report for Westchester, Putnam, Rockland and Orange Counties, New York released recently by the Hudson Gateway Multiple Listing Service.

WHITE PLAINS—Prospective homebuyers who were out in force during the first several months of 2016 came to the closing table during the second quarter to post a five-year high of transactions.

Realtors in the four-county area comprising the Hudson Gateway Multiple Listing Service, a subsidiary of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, reported 4,526 closings of single-family houses, condominiums, cooperatives and 2-4 family houses, an increase of 23% over the 3,669 closings reported in the second quarter of last year. The powerful second quarter results continued the strong recovery in this region that commenced in 2011.

The increases were largely concentrated in the single-family house sectors of the four counties. Overall, Putnam County had the largest increase in sales—32%—followed closely by Orange County at 30%. There were no decreases by county or by property type but for a few statistical artifacts in low-volume cooperative and multifamily sectors in Orange County.

For the past two or three years member Realtors have reported a gradual tightening of the availability of properties for sale in the region, reflecting that high sales volumes have been outpacing new listings. Up to now, this has not been too much of a problem; the main consequence being to slow the decision-making process of prospective purchasers as they take more time to find suitable properties. That may

be changing, however, as the second quarter closed with significant year-over-year double-digit decreases in inventory.

At the close of the second quarter of 2015 there were 12,400 for-sale properties recorded with the multiple listing service in its four-county service area and among the four property types. At June 30, 2016 there were 9,972 properties, a decrease of 20%. On a percentage basis, Putnam County inventory dropped the most—22%. On a volume basis, Westchester being the largest county, end-of-quarter inventory fell by 945 properties or 16% from last year at this date.

That sort of imbalance may have consequences: either price increases and/or diminished sales volumes. Putnam, Rockland and Orange counties all



year. Orange County followed at 6.0% and Rockland County at 4.9%.

Westchester on the other hand post-

price of cooperatives on the other hand was an increase of 6.9% from last year. The price graph (above) shows a lot of seasonality in prices, but it also shows that since 2013 the seasonal bumps themselves are trending flat.

Analysis

Each county is different as to its size, dominant property type, and price range, so it will take a few more months to discern the likely path of the region as a whole. Certainly the foundation forces affecting the real estate market are favorable for all. Mortgage interest rates are as low as they have ever been, and in this region at least, employment and job security are supportive of prospective purchasers. As always there are the wild cards that can affect real estate markets everywhere, current examples including "Brexit," Puerto Rico's insolvency issues, Federal Reserve rates, and not the least consequential, the upcoming elections. But, so far we are having an excellent run in our market.



posted second quarter price increases for the median sale price of single-family houses. Putnam County posted the largest percentage increase—8.5%—from \$289,500 last year to \$314,000 this

ed a 1.6% decrease in the median sale price of a single-family house, from \$660,500 to \$650,000. Its condominium median, \$356,438, also was down by 1.5%. The \$155,000 median

Legoland Building Case for Incentives for \$500M Resort

By John Jordan

GOSHEN—Will the Mid-Hudson Valley region in the next few years be home to not only a \$1-billion casino resort in Sullivan County, but a \$500-million LEGOLAND New York theme park and resort in Orange County? The approval process that will play itself out over the next six months or so will determine whether the Town of Goshen will be a future tourist destination for Lego enthusiasts young and old.

Officials with Merlin Entertainments plc spoke before the Orange County Industrial Development Agency and to more than 3,000 residents of Goshen and surrounding communities at an Open House earlier this month to lay out their plans for a \$500-million theme park and resort to be built here.

Representatives of Merlin appeared before the Orange County Industrial Development Agency on July 6th to apply for county sales tax incentives in connection with the project. The next day, Merlin staged an Open House for its LEGOLAND New York theme park and resort at the Palacio Catering & Conference Center in the Town of Goshen.

The project was well received by the scores of adults and children who packed the conference center during

the Open House program. Merlin's John Ussher, senior divisional director, Legoland Development, and John Jakobsen, chief new openings officer, made multiple presentations to inform attendees of the specific details of the project and how Merlin was to mitigate some of the concerns the Town of Goshen and its residents might have concerning the development.

The third Legoland park in North America in Goshen would mirror the successful concept of the six operating resorts in Florida, California, the United Kingdom, Germany, Malaysia and Denmark. The proposal for the LEGOLAND New York Resort includes a theme park with more than 50 rides, shows and attractions and a 250-room LEGOLAND Hotel. The theme park will be geared toward families with children ages 2 to 12.

Merlin Entertainments, the developer and operator of the proposed park, filed plans with the Town of Goshen last month and is hopeful that it can secure all necessary approvals by January 2017 and open the theme park in early 2019. Merlin will seek a zone change from the Town of Goshen on 153 acres of 523 acres it controls on a parcel that abuts Route 17 along Harriman Road



More than 3,000 people attended LEGOLAND New York's Open House event.

between exits 124 and 125. Merlin had considered sites all along the East Coast for the project. Merlin was also mulling properties in New Jersey and Virginia before deciding on pursuing the property off Harriman Road.

The developer will initially invest \$350 million in the development of the park and a total of more than \$500 million over the first five years of the theme park and resort. Ussher told *Real Estate In-Depth* that Merlin would be looking to secure a total of \$10 million in incentives from the State of New York. A spokes-

person for Empire State Development said that \$4.1 million in state funding has been committed thus far to the Legoland project, none of which has been disbursed to the company because ESD funds are performance-based. It is believed that Legoland has applied for additional state funding this year through the state's Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process.

In addition, Ussher said that Merlin has met with officials with the New York State Department of Transportation

WESTCHESTER COUNTY

WESTCHESTER - Second Quarters 2013-2016					% Change
Property Type	2013 Q2	2014 Q2	2015 Q2	2016 Q2	2015-2016
NUMBER OF SALES, 2ND QUARTER					
Single Family Houses	1,425	1,232	1,336	1,643	23.0%
Condominiums	296	266	311	376	20.9%
Cooperatives	391	388	420	466	11.0%
2-4 Family	113	73	116	132	13.8%
Total	2,225	1,959	2,183	2,617	19.9%
NUMBER OF SALES - YEAR TO DATE (6/30)					
Single Family Houses	2,202	2,157	2,253	2,663	18.2%
Condominiums	508	444	553	656	18.6%
Cooperatives	674	728	762	868	13.9%
2-4 Family	191	156	235	277	17.9%
Total	3,575	3,485	3,803	4,464	17.4%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	650,000	651,250	660,500	650,000	-1.6%
Condominiums	344,750	363,750	362,000	356,438	-1.5%
Cooperatives	154,000	149,950	145,000	155,000	6.9%
2-4 Family	350,000	421,000	377,500	423,000	12.1%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	859,861	874,026	866,707	841,824	-2.9%
Condominiums	424,403	433,874	449,215	434,512	-3.3%
Cooperatives	190,612	177,028	182,389	182,621	0.1%
2-4 Family	354,491	419,947	381,369	406,052	6.5%
END OF QUARTER INVENTORY					
Single Family Houses	3,702	3,913	3,870	3,387	-12.5%
Condominiums	549	582	607	465	-23.4%
Cooperatives	1,485	1,384	1,126	950	-15.6%
2-4 Family	420	463	447	303	-32.2%
Total	6,156	6,342	6,050	5,105	-15.6%

ORANGE COUNTY

ORANGE - Second Quarters 2013-2016					% Change
Property Type	2013 Q2	2014 Q2	2015 Q2	2016 Q2	2015-2016
NUMBER OF SALES					
Single Family Houses	552	485	610	837	37.2%
Condominiums ¹	69	52	88	91	3.4%
Cooperatives ¹	-	1	2	1	-50.0%
2-4 Family	27	31	42	36	-14.3%
Total	648	569	742	965	30.1%
NUMBER OF SALES - YEAR TO DATE (6/30)					
Single Family Houses	928	897	1,123	1,518	35.2%
Condominiums ¹	140	112	146	174	19.2%
Cooperatives ¹	-	4	5	4	-20.0%
2-4 Family	59	55	86	91	5.8%
Total	1,127	1,068	1,360	1,787	31.4%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	239,750	232,500	209,950	222,500	6.0%
Condominiums ¹	170,000	164,750	151,625	135,000	-11.0%
Cooperatives ¹	na	38,500	41,250	36,000	-12.7%
2-4 Family	80,000	125,000	129,000	87,500	-32.2%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	257,328	259,375	237,740	230,490	-3.0%
Condominiums ¹	183,095	171,003	161,828	154,705	-4.4%
Cooperatives ¹	na	38,500	41,250	36,000	-12.7%
2-4 Family	104,343	118,868	154,102	116,939	-24.1%
END OF QUARTER INVENTORY					
Single Family Houses	2,552	3,023	2,941	2,375	-19.2%
Condominiums ¹	300	273	240	222	-7.5%
Cooperatives ¹	na	na	11	8	-27.3%
2-4 Family ²	na	na	220	201	-8.6%
Total	2,852	3,296	3,412	2,806	-17.8%

¹ Condos & Cooperatives were counted together prior to 2014. The number of co-op sales was and is very slight and does not significantly affect totals or percentages.

² 2-4 Family House end of quarter inventory in Orange was not compiled prior to 2014.

PUTNAM COUNTY

PUTNAM - Second Quarters 2013-2016					% Change
Property Type	2013 Q2	2014 Q2	2015 Q2	2016 Q2	2015-2016
NUMBER OF SALES, 2ND QUARTER					
Single Family Houses	182	170	190	254	33.7%
Condominiums ¹	27	26	33	38	15.2%
Cooperatives ¹	0	2	3	1	0.0%
2-4 Family ²	1	6	3	9	200.0%
Total	210	204	229	302	31.9%
NUMBER OF SALES - YEAR TO DATE (6/30)					
Single Family Houses	297	298	352	467	32.7%
Condominiums ¹	46	45	61	72	18.0%
Cooperatives ¹	-	2	4	3	-25.0%
2-4 Family ²	2	10	8	15	87.5%
Total	345	355	425	557	31.1%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	310,500	285,000	289,500	314,000	8.5%
Condominiums ¹	203,000	226,500	240,000	217,000	-9.6%
Cooperatives ¹	0	53,950	42,000	30,000	0.0%
2-4 Family ²	160,000	176,000	175,000	265,000	51.4%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	345,591	341,255	356,100	369,731	3.8%
Condominiums ¹	220,179	264,216	280,328	278,798	-0.5%
Cooperatives ¹	0	53,950	38,167	30,000	0.0%
2-4 Family ²	160,000	164,333	175,000	316,472	80.8%
END OF QUARTER (6/30) INVENTORY					
Single Family Houses	894	956	955	748	-21.7%
Condominiums ¹	78	77	105	73	-30.5%
Cooperatives ¹	8	18	9	4	-55.6%
2-4 Family ²	38	30	33	31	-6.1%
Total	1,018	1,081	1,102	856	-22.3%

¹ Condominiums & Cooperatives were counted together prior to 2014. The number of co-op sales was and is very slight and does not significantly affect totals or percentages.

² 2-4 Family House end of quarter inventory in Putnam was not compiled prior to 2013.

ROCKLAND COUNTY

ROCKLAND - Second Quarters 2013-2016					% Change
Property Type	2013 Q2	2014 Q2	2015 Q2	2016 Q2	2015-2016
NUMBER OF SALES					
Single Family Houses	333	347	386	495	28.2%
Condominiums ¹	69	81	100	110	10.0%
Cooperatives ¹	24	23	19	23	21.1%
2-4 Family	10	12	10	14	40.0%
Total	436	463	515	642	24.7%
NUMBER OF SALES - YEAR TO DATE (6/30)					
Single Family Houses	587	609	694	854	23.1%
Condominiums ¹	156	155	179	196	9.5%
Cooperatives ¹	24	44	39	30	-23.1%
2-4 Family	18	31	30	29	-3.3%
Total	785	839	942	1,109	17.7%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	390,000	408,750	410,000	430,000	4.9%
Condominiums ¹	215,000	222,500	218,150	210,000	-3.7%
Cooperatives ¹	103,250	72,000	65,000	73,000	12.3%
2-4 Family	261,500	325,000	325,000	286,500	-11.8%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	402,398	432,894	423,171	465,795	10.1%
Condominiums ¹	253,917	246,894	248,874	248,397	-0.2%
Cooperatives ¹	118,510	89,404	82,000	91,239	11.3%
2-4 Family	281,720	290,167	349,000	292,536	-16.2%
END OF QUARTER INVENTORY					
Single Family Houses	1,034	1,027	1,379	1,204	-12.7%
Condominiums ¹	348	264	315	295	-6.3%
Cooperatives ¹	na	76	58	65	12.1%
2-4 Family ²	na	67	84	72	-14.3%
Total	1,382	1,434	1,836	1,636	-10.9%

¹ Condominiums & Cooperatives were counted together prior to 2014. The number of co-op sales was and is very slight and does not significantly affect totals or percentages.

² 2-4 Family House end of quarter inventory in Rockland was not compiled prior to 2014.

Legoland Building Case for Incentives for \$500M Resort in Orange County

Continued from page 21

to discuss how best to make improvements to Exits 124 and 125 off of Route 17 to direct traffic most efficiently to the project site. He added that Merlin

County (approximately \$168,000). Over the duration of the 30-year PILOT, the payments would increase by 1.5% per year.



Merlin Entertainments' John Ussher and Orange County Executive Steve Neuhaus

Villasuso said that while the proposed PILOT is different than most agreements the IDA has entered into in the past, Merlin is proposing a significant increase in taxes from the onset. The current property taxes paid by the various owners of the Legoland parcels total \$91,185.05, according to Merlin's IDA application.

She added that Merlin officials also discussed with the IDA a proposed Host community agreement between Merlin and the Town of Goshen whereby the town would receive each year 65 cents per visitor to Legoland up to 2 million visitors and 20 cents per visitor after

expects the New York State DOT to fund the necessary road and bridge upgrades adjacent to its property.

Merlin representatives filed an application on June 29th that calls for \$13.5 million in incentives from the Orange County IDA. Merlin has requested \$10 million in sales tax exemptions for the construction of the project and another \$3.5 million in sales tax exemptions for fixtures and equipment in connection with the project. Merlin is also requesting a 30-year Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement. Laurie Villasuso, chief operating officer of the Orange County IDA, stressed that the Merlin ap-

the 2-million visitor threshold was hit, with no cap.

Merlin officials estimate the project will generate a total of \$3 million in local taxes and fees each year: \$1 million to the Goshen School district, \$1.5 million to the Town of Goshen and \$500,000 to the county, including other local service fees.

Including annual increases, the taxes and fees will generate approximately \$108 million over 30 years of which \$38.4 million will go to the Goshen Central School District. Over the course of 30 years, LEGOLAND New York will pay \$52.6 million in PILOT payments alone,

jobs. In a presentation in June before Goshen Town Board members and Orange County officials, Merlin officials stated that the theme park and resort would be built as a prevailing wage project under a Project Labor Agreement with the local building trades. During peak season, the park when operational will create 500 full-time jobs and 300 part-time jobs. The total project would involve approximately 750,000 square feet of construction and will take two years to construct.

Merlin officials have stated that they plan to donate well water on the project to the adjoining Acadia Hills development and plan to purchase water from Goshen.

Ussher said Merlin has been pleased with the local community response to the project thus far, although there has been some opposition mobilized on mainly social media.

"LEGOLAND is committed to being a responsible and respectful member of the community and that is the purpose of this open house," Ussher said. "I think



Merlin's Ussher explains the fine points of the \$500-million project.



The LEGOLAND New York project will require considerable local and state financial incentives to move forward.



Merlin staged the Open House for its LEGOLAND New York theme park and resort at the Palacio Catering & Conference Center in the Town of Goshen.

plication includes preliminary estimates of incentives as well as ticket revenues and tax benefits from the development.

The proposed PILOT would begin upon the first year of operation of the theme park and resort and would total approximately \$1.4 million in payments from Merlin, that would be split between the Town of Goshen (approximately \$210,000), Goshen School District (approximately \$1 million) and Orange

of which \$38.4 million will go to the Goshen Central School District. LEGOLAND New York would also pay Orange County's hotel tax, generating approximately an additional \$850,000 annually to the county. Sales tax receipts at LEGOLAND New York would generate approximately an additional \$6 million annually, Merlin officials noted.

The Goshen project is expected to create approximately 800 construction

yesterday was a success as we got to know the people in this great community and they got to know us. I think everyone who came out to ask questions and understand the project now knows that Merlin will be responsible and respectful in Goshen and Orange County and bring many benefits to these communities"

Michael Sussman, an attorney representing opponents to the LEGOLAND New York project, wrote in an op-ed piece published in the *Middletown Times-Herald Record* that the project would create significant burdens to the area's infrastructure. He also criticized financial incentives the developer might receive while "county residents will have to expend millions to provide adequate infrastructure for Legoland."

He concluded his remarks by stating, "Legoland is radically out of scale with our area's infrastructure. When combined with the new casino in Monticello, building it would make traveling

much less convenient while spurring air pollution and profound strains on our infrastructure and increased tax burdens."

Local opposition killed an earlier plan to build the Legoland project in Rockland County. Merlin had proposed to build the Legoland park that would include an amusement park, a water park and a hotel at the 175-acre Letchworth Village site in Haverstraw and Stony Point in Rockland County. However, after the project, which had not been officially presented to the village, drew some local criticism, the Town Board and Town Supervisor Howard Phillips released a statement last October that the village would no longer consider the project. Shortly thereafter, Orange County Executive Steve Neuhaus and the Orange County Partnership, along with officials from Empire State Development, began talks with Merlin Entertainment to develop the theme park in Orange County.

HG Realtor Foundation 'Pub Night,' Somers, June 28, 2016



The HG Realtor Foundation held another successful "Pub Night" at Somers 202, which will become the 202 Steakhouse in Yorktown. The event raised \$4,750 for the HG Realtor Foundation



Eric Stuerken and Cathleen Stack



Lois Hanley and Richard Mishkin



From left, Joan Mancini and Cindy Haas



From left, Barry Kramer and Mark Aakjar



From left, Carol Kope, Irene Amato and Doug Petri of ASAP Mortgage



Carol and John Kope with Myriam Ramos



From left, Mary Prenon, Lin Crispinelli, Stephanie Liggio, Alicia Albano and Bonnie Koff, chair of the HG Realtor Foundation's fundraising committee.



From left, Aimee DeCesare, Robert Shandley and Kerry Fedigan



From left, Jennifer Maher, Hope Mazzola, Lynn Conway and Harding Mason

It was standing room only at the latest Pub Night for the HG Realtor Foundation.

