



**VILLAGE CHAT - HASTINGS, May 6, 2024**  
**10:00am Zoom**

*In attendance:*

*Mayor Nicola Armacost (Mayor), Barbara Prisament (Hastings Downtown Advocate), Mary Beth Murphy (Village Manager); Shari Rosen-Ascher (Westchester County Director of Policy & Programs for Small Business and Chambers of Commerce), Ellen Sledge (Village Rep/Penny Lick Ice Cream Company), Danielle Davidson (Chamber President/Main Street Business Strategies), Michelle Adams (Chamber Immediate Past President/Saint George Bistro), Amanda Kupillas (Amanda Kupillas Dance), Ted Andreasian (Ted & Nune Studio and Gallery), Chereese Jervis-Hill (Events to Remember), Mary Madigan (Houlihan Lawrence)*

Meeting Notes:

County Update:

- Westchester County event on May 22nd in conjunction with MTA and NYPA - to provide opportunities and resources for small business, i.e. contracting opportunities, etc
- Cultural Festival season is underway at Kensico Dam; cultural festivals take place almost every Sunday
- The Hispanic Advisory Board will be doing a needs assessment for the Hispanic community of Westchester
- NY State Comptroller's Office for Unclaimed Funds - people are encouraged to look for their name or business' name, to see if they are due any unclaimed funds
- Recently had a successful diverse abilities job fair (over 300+ participants). Also had a job fair for social justice-impacted individuals and held a clean energy summit.

Village Update:

- Hastings received CDBG funding for sidewalks. Village has begun sidewalk work, and will complete the work they were unable to finish last year
- New sidewalks proposed for Spring Street to Villard, and on the west side of Warburton this summer. Project is currently out for bid, and they hope to receive all bids by 5/16. Funding is 50% grant with 50% match. (\$200,000 from the village, and \$200,000 from the County). If money is left over, village will add more sidewalks. Work shouldn't affect traffic too much, but may affect parking spaces. Access to all businesses at all times will be ensured.
- Next round of CDBG funding is coming up. Applications will be made by August in hopes to continue more sidewalk work (for east side of Warburton from Spring to Villard, south side of Main Street, from 24 Main to Broadway, north side of Broadway, Maple Ave. in front of Village Hall).

- Trees will be replaced and tree pits are being handled, to make for an easier pedestrian experience.
- Spoke with local businesses regarding fees for parklets and streetlets. Decided on a fair solution in terms of such fees. Some businesses will be exempt (for example, if they only have a bench, like Penny Lick).
- Barb gave an overview of storefronts: French Patisserie to open later in May; former karate studio on Main is currently empty - landlord is trying to decide if they're going to rent or use the space for their own business; Allison wants to open a new bookstore in Hastings. Barb is trying to find her a space; Corset Tree is leaving, so another open space that needs a lot of work. Sterling Bank will not renovate retail space until next Spring. Same person that purchased 555 Warburton also purchased the funeral home. Will be retail space there, but not sure what will be done with the main level of Hastings House. Laundromat also - expensive spot, no one has shown interest. Former Prime Meats taken over by a similar company. 45 Main Street (where a bike shop used to be) - someone is trying to open a cannabis shop there. However he rented that space without having a license first, so can't operate. Not an ideal place for that business, i.e. no parking, next to firehouse, across the street from the community center, etc. There's a better location, but the owner said he can't change the address once an application for a license has already been submitted.
- Danielle suggested the Chamber add ready-to-rent locations in the Chamber newsletter, to help the Rivertowns spread the word about business space for rent.
- There is an issue of high rents. Not sure how they can legally force people to rent at reasonable rates
- "The Dispatch" will replace the "Rivertowns Enterprise"; they will start out as an online publication and will go to print for the Fall (Rivertowns Current may be incorporated with the Dispatch); Westchester Magazine's new managing editor recently took a trip to Hastings to get familiar with the village.
- Village Events: Memorial Day Parade on 5/26, River Arts Music Tour on June 1st, Pride Event on June 7th; Jazz Series on Sunday afternoons from 3:00-5:30pm from 6/9 - 8/11; Quarry Park opening on 6/23; summer concerts at the waterfront every Tuesday in July; Oktoberfest 10/4 (rain date on 10/5); Friday Night Dead 10/25, Window Painting 10/26; More Halloween events to be planned. Tree Lighting 12/6, Drop and Shop movie night for 12/12 and 12/19
- New Hastings Website: HOHNY.gov (also good to look at the Destination Hastings website)
- New businesses are welcome to come speak with the Board of Trustees to introduce themselves. Chamber can do the same.
- Barb looking for help with IG. Michelle and Ellen to assist and will tag Destination Hastings in posts and stories.
- Parking signs have been added at business owners' request.
- Saint George Bistro - open 7 nights per week. \$38 prix fixe menu; eventually looking to open for lunch
- Mayor is willing to share events of interest in the mayor's letter. Please send along information to be shared in 2-3 sentences; Mayor has a new email address (Mayor @hohny.gov)
- Idea of having an art crawl in Hastings with all art galleries in Hastings participating, including those north and south of the river, etc.
- Mayor would like to promote Hastings as an arts hub; they're currently looking into the elements that would be needed to make that happen; Need to be able to publicize it strategically and coherently. Comment that artisans should be included as well.

- IG idea - featured roundups on social media to highlight different spaces available in Hastings, i.e. outdoor dining, etc.
- Community Connections Fair - School fair being planned by local student to connect high school teenagers with community organizations for volunteer work

Chamber Update: Events-

- Women's Social 5/9
- Chamber Meeting 5/15 - call for chamber businesses to host future Chamber meetings
- Taste Local 5/18
- IG Charity/Chamber Digital Fundraiser (to benefit Abbott House) throughout the month of June - Call for donated items
- Chamber Classroom Session on 6/7 - PR 101 for Small Businesses
- Golf Open 9/16 at Sprain Lake - Call for planning committee members and sponsors