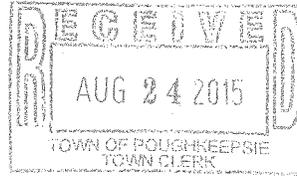


Isaac Jeffreys
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Town of Poughkeepsie Town Board/Clerk
Town Hall
1 Overocker Road
Poughkeepsie, New York 12603



by mail

To whom it may concern,

My name is Isaac Jeffreys, a 15 year old sophomore attending Rhinebeck High School, and I would like to share my thoughts about the development plan concerning the former Hudson River State Hospital property from a student's perspective.

First off, I have always been fascinated with the hospital and its rich history. Not only did the property that the vacant hospital stands on today originally belong to James Roosevelt, but the designer of the grounds, Calvert Vaux, is well known for designing the layout of Central Park in the city of New York. Even after time has ravaged the site over the past 12 years, it is clear that the grounds of this hospital were thoughtfully planned during its construction in the 1800's.

Another important thing to seriously consider when planning out the site's development would be whether or not the buildings, notably the administration building and its patient wings, are viable for presentation. While it is clear that saving the north and south wings from demolition would be too costly due to major structural damage from fire and years of decay as both wings were closed in the 1970's, they do still have many salvageable building elements. For example, the south wing's building shell and non-burned portions have many significant design elements that add to the buildings character and history, such as the "1868" date stones, the intricate and detailed facades, and the remaining intact stained glass windows. I have enclosed photos of only two of the many attributes that the south wing still possesses which could be incorporated into a future memorial or building plan.

What I and many of my peers think would be very beneficial to not only the project, but the citizens of Poughkeepsie as well as the rest of Dutchess County would be preservation and reuse of the administration building. As you may know, the administration building is notable for its High Victorian Gothic architecture (the first use of that style for an American institutional building), designed by architect Frederick Clarke Withers. In 1989, the U.S. National Register of Historic Places designated the building (and its two wings) a U.S. National Historic Landmark. From what I have read, EFG/DRA Heritage is planning on demolishing 55 of the 59 vacant buildings on the 156 acre property, and even the 4 remaining buildings aren't guaranteed protection--including the administration building. I feel that if the project is called "Hudson Heritage" the developers should be putting in an effort to save, preserve, and reuse at least one building from the original hospital in the new plan. Many other people including myself feel that the preservation of the administration is vital to the success of this plan. Realistically,

preservation will be costly due to structural damage, though when the structure is compared to that of its adjacent wings as well as many other desolate buildings on the campus which are in much worse states of decay, it should be clear that this building is savable and reusable if given the chance.

This building is a contributor to not only local history, but national history as well. I ask that there is serious thought put into this issue, because too many historic historic asylums have recently been razed without being given the chance to have a second life, and we as a community can't let that happen to Hudson.

Sincerely,



Isaac Jeffreys

