



*Housing with compassion...  
Development with a vision*



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## **New Hope Emerges on Poughkeepsie's Main Street through the efforts of Middle Main Revitalization**

Poughkeepsie, NY ~ On Wednesday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm at 248 Main Street in Poughkeepsie, Middle Main Revitalization will hold its sixth open community meeting. Middle Main Revitalization is rapidly emerging as a key player bringing new hope to downtown renewal efforts in Poughkeepsie. The group, initiated by Hudson River Housing, consists of a wide variety of community members, including small business owners, city government officials, landlords, residents, and nonprofit representatives. Their goal is to breathe new life into a struggling section of Poughkeepsie's Main Street, and draw attention to the potential of the neighborhood. "We all believe that there is huge potential on Main Street," says Elizabeth Celaya of Hudson River Housing. "We want to work hard to promote the assets that already exist, such as the rich cultural diversity and small, local businesses, and use that as a means of attracting new businesses, residents, and visitors to this neighborhood, rather than concentrate on the deficits." Middle Main Revitalization is focusing on the section of Main Street between Academy Street and Pershing Avenue.

Advocates for the group don't underestimate the challenges they face. The neighborhood was chosen as the focus of the groups efforts because of those very challenges, including a high commercial vacancy rate, low pedestrian foot-traffic, and general negative perceptions that plague the area. Despite these issues, Middle Main Revitalization strongly advocates that there are many positives that can serve as inspiration to those with the vision to see what Main Street could be. The group hopes to build an identity for the neighborhood under the Middle Main Revitalization umbrella, and promote the large number of ethnic eateries to local foodies, for example. The group is also working with local artists to develop arts projects and events that celebrate the character of the neighborhood.

Many communities in the Hudson Valley have seen their share of similar groups that start off with a great deal of zeal, but unfortunately fade away without achieving many long-lasting accomplishments. "We've known from the get-go that sustainability was one of the key things we had to be focused on," says Ms. Celaya. "We're working on developing a wide network of interested participants, and identifying who among them can take on a leadership role to help keep the group active over time." The group encourages anyone interested in participating in Middle Main Revitalization to attend one of the group's monthly planning meetings.

Middle Main Revitalization is utilizing some unique methods to reach out to the community. They've developed a social networking site focused just on the neighborhood, and encourage those interested in

Middle Main Revitalization’s efforts to sign up and receive updates. Businesses can post information about their products and location, there’s an ongoing blog, photos, and event postings. Anyone can join at [www.middlemain.ning.com](http://www.middlemain.ning.com).

“We need to think about proactive solutions, not reactive ones,” said Dan Hubbell, who regularly attends community meetings. “People need to see this area as a garden that things can grow from.”

Monthly community meetings are held on the second Wednesday at 5:30pm; locations rotate each month. Meeting are open to anyone and no reservations are required. For more information contact (845) 454-5176.

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Hudson River Housing (HRH) has substantial experience developing and managing affordable housing in the community. HRH was created in 1982 to address the emerging homeless problem in Dutchess County, and is now a large, multi-service provider of housing and other services to a wide range of populations. The expertise of Hudson River Housing is increasingly relied upon to inform local planning related to housing, community development and homelessness. Since its formation, Hudson River Housing has developed 37 affordable homeownership opportunities, nearly 300 apartments and 9 commercial spaces. For more information, please call (845) 454-5176 or visit [www.hudsonriverhousing.org](http://www.hudsonriverhousing.org).

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