



CITY OF PEEKSKILL
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

John G. Testa
Mayor

Peekskill Downtown Revitalization's Time Has Come--Literally.

*Clock Unveiling Will Symbolize Results Generated by New Bid
Strategy of Bringing City, Businesspeople and Non-Profits Together*

15-Foot Tall, Victorian-Style Street Clock Is Symbol of City's Downtown Revitalization.

For Immediate Release

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PEEKSKILL, NY—In a celebration of the progress being made on this city's revitalization, a new local landmark was dedicated on Saturday, July 2 at 10:00 a.m.—a 15-foot-tall timepiece whose antique style will blend in with the downtown's historic architecture at the same time it helps attendees show up on time for shows at the nearby Paramount Center for the Arts.

With attendance at the Peekskill Farmer's Market at record levels and a series of compelling new stores and restaurants open, the City's once bedraggled downtown is looking better than it has in years. One reason: a new focus by the Business Improvement District that concentrates on infrastructure improvements and creating catalytic relationships rather than on doing one-shot events.

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“We’re doing projects that are long-lived,” says Mark Cavanna, president of the BID. “This is a beautification project with a 100-year life,” he says. The project’s goal is to both add another attraction to downtown Peekskill and to give visitors and residents a useful tool, he says. “We basically wanted to create other central points in downtown Peekskill besides the gazebo.”

Creating new landmarks is only one aspect of the BID’s revamped approach. The highly successful Peekskill Farmer’s Market is drawing more people than ever before as it shifts from offering primarily produce to presenting a wide variety of products. “This year we have a jam, cheese, wine, and gourmet Italian desert makers, people selling plants, eggs, chicken and baked goods, and vendors providing a huge variety of fresh produce as well,” Cavanna says.

What’s most impressive about all the efforts is how well many different entities are working together, Cavanna says. “The BID exists to support the City, but the City has really gone out of its way to help us out. I’d like to especially thank Dave Greener and the Bureau of Public Works for the tremendous effort they’ve made on our behalf. They’ve really gone beyond the call of duty, and they’ve done it willingly and without complaint.”

“Revitalizing downtown has been one of our biggest priorities for years. It’s great to see so many different people and organizations working together and accomplishing so much,” says Mayor John Testa.

Another big contributor has been the Peekskill Arts Council, through board member Ed Burke. Burke, owner of Gallery 25N, is also a member of the BID. He has done a tremendous amount of the graphics, creative and organizational work.

Burke has acted as the driving force behind such promotional efforts as First Fridays and the banners that have gone up throughout the business district.

Joe Lapolis, co-owner of Rivertowns GMAC Realty, took time off from his business to hang banners from city lampposts, while longtime bid member and owner of Dominic's Dry Cleaning Dominic Volpe spent innumerable hours organizing, researching and managing the clock's purchase.

Teamwork has been crucial throughout the entire process, Cavanna says. "The City did a wonderful job putting up the high banners, while the volunteers put up the lower ones," he says of the banner project. There was a similar division of labor around the clock. The BID purchased the huge timepiece for around \$14,000, while the City designed and built the foundation and installed the utilities.

Purchasing the clock was one of the first and most important decisions the BID's Capital Improvement Committee made, Volpe says. "We made a wish list, and of all the things we wanted in the downtown, the clock was almost unanimous," he says. Made by Electric Time Inc. of Medfield, MA, the unit is a Howard Pedestal Clock. It is two-sided and has illuminated faces. It has an internal unit that automatically synchronizes itself with using Global Positioning Satellites, so even if there is a power outage the clock will reset itself to the exact fraction of a second.

Although the BID initially purchased the clock, it officially turned title of the unit over to the City at the clock's dedication ceremony, Cavanna says.

For more information, contact Mayor John Testa at 734-4150.

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