



CITY OF PEEKSKILL  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

John G. Testa  
Mayor



## **City of Peekskill, Ginsburg Development Partner to Preserve 40 Acre Scenic, Historic Property.**

*Site of Revolutionary War battles has breathtaking views  
of Hudson Valley, Peekskill.*

Long-sought Deal Resolves Decades of Controversy, Legal Battles,  
Draws Praise from Preservationists, Historians.

### ***For Immediate Release***

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PEEKSKILL, NY—After long and difficult negotiations, the City of Peekskill, NY and Ginsburg Development Companies have reached an agreement that preserves 40 of the most beautiful, historic acres in the Hudson River Valley.

“This is yet another step forward for our revitalization plan, and it's yet more proof that Ginsburg Development is completely, totally committed to being part of Peekskill's future,” says Mayor John Testa.

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An historian and teacher, Testa has been a Revolutionary War reenactor for more than 30 years.

Preserving Fort Hill and helping set Peekskill on a new path was one of the primary reasons Testa ran for mayor in the first place.

“Five years ago, few people put Class A real estate and Peekskill in the same breath. Yet today Peekskill is one of the Class A leaders in Northern Westchester. We have some of the county's best and most beautiful parks and one of the most dynamic and exciting real estate markets as well,” Testa says.

Ginsburg is building a new Class A development, the Abbey At Fort Hill, on land adjacent to the Park. “There are few sites over the Hudson River or anywhere this magnificent,” says Martin Ginsburg, founder and principal of Ginsburg Development Companies LLC based in Valhalla, N.Y. GDC is one of the Northeast’s leading luxury home builders. “I am thrilled that we are able to make this wonderful gift to the City of Peekskill.

“Preserving open space has always been one of my highest priorities as County Executive, and I'm pleased to see how well this cooperation between the public and private sector has worked out,” says Westchester County Executive Andy Spano. “This kind of teamwork sets a great example for all of Westchester,” he says.

“We acquired the new parkland from another developer who had contested plans to build hundreds of residences on the 47 acre site. We worked with the city to develop a plan annexing only a few acres to the St. Mary’s convent property so that most of this beautiful and historically important site can be preserved and become part of Fort

Hill Park, increasing its size fivefold. We also plan to restore and preserve the convent's beautiful old buildings. The town homes have been designed to preserve the rocky, rugged character of the St. Mary's site" says Martin Ginsburg, founder and principal of Ginsburg Development Companies, which is based in Valhalla, N.Y. Ginsburg also donated \$32,500 to go towards park improvements.

Fort Hill Park is an historic site that at times hosted almost all of George Washington's Continental Army in cramped, crowded barracks during the American Revolution. Peekskill's Fort Hill is one of the least disturbed Revolutionary War sites in the region. It boasts actual remains of fortifications frantically built in 1777 when the British made the first of their three attacks on the then village.

Recognizing the importance of the locale, the City of Peekskill purchased the first nine acres of the park in the 1920s. In the late 1990s, plans started moving forward to intensely develop the 40 acres adjacent to the city park, provoking an intense citizen outcry. Today's agreement will preserve it as a recreational and educational resource in perpetuity.

Preserving Peekskill's history has been a top priority for the city in the last five years. One of the oldest communities in Westchester, Peekskill was founded more than 350 years ago. During the Revolutionary War the then village was the logistical center of George Washington's army, and Washington appointed Benedict Arnold to command West Point here. The city also has an abundance of parks, boasting one of the highest densities of recreational space in the region.

In recent years, that number has increased significantly, as new

parks have opened at Annsville Creek and elsewhere. Add to that the Ginsburg donation and other land that has been remediated and made available to the public in recent years, along with Ginsburg's donation, and the total amount of city parkland has grown by more than 50 acres in recent years. Recognizing these accomplishments, the White House recently named Peekskill a "Preserve America" community.

The donation to Peekskill is the latest in a series of property gifts or below-market sales GDC has made to local governments and environmental groups. GDC and its subsidiaries have made donations or discounts worth more than \$10 million since 1991 to preserve 4,676 acres of open space.

"Developers have a responsibility to benefit the communities where they are active and help them plan for the future," says Ginsburg. "Donating environmentally sensitive land to local governments and groups that preserve open space is one way GDC shows that stewardship."

GDC will build 12 condos in the converted Abbey that gave the development its name along with 124 townhouses. All of The Abbey's residents will have access to the activities and fitness center, which will be highlighted by a gathering room beneath the soaring ceiling of the chapel's former sanctuary, where ornate hand-carved wooden details will be preserved.

Construction at The Abbey is expected to commence during the spring of 2008, with the first homes being ready for occupancy approximately one year later. Prices are expected to start in the \$400,000s. Based in Valhalla, N.Y., GDC is one of the nation's premier

full-service real estate design, development and management companies. Martin Ginsburg is the president and chief executive officer. GDC has developed more than 10,000 residential units during its almost 45 year c history. GDC's residential sales Web sites are [www.gdc-homes.com](http://www.gdc-homes.com) and [www.gdcmetro.com](http://www.gdcmetro.com). Information about GDC's commercial ventures, corporate activities and charitable foundation is available at [www.gdcllc.com](http://www.gdcllc.com).

For more information, call Mayor John Testa at 914-734-4105.

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