

# Suburban NYC Home Sales Continue Historic Run

By John Jordan

WHITE PLAINS—Home sales activity in the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors’ region continued to be historically robust in the second quarter of this year, fueled by strong demand and a continued economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

All key data metrics throughout the region were significantly higher in the second quarter, with the exception of one—for sale inventory, which was down sharply in all markets with the exception of the Bronx. This lack of inventory has been a major contributing factor in the steep increase in home sales value and will likely have a hand in slowing sales activity down when rising prices and available product put downward pressure on sales volume.

“The Second Quarter 2021 Residential Real Estate Sales Report for Westchester, Putnam, Rockland, Orange, Sullivan and Bronx Counties” released recently by OneKey MLS showed strong sales gains in all counties in the suburban markets of New York City. All counties posted double-digit sales gains as compared to 2020 second quarter sales, with Sullivan County leading the way with an

astounding 56.83% increase; followed by Rockland County, which posted a 33.86% increase; Putnam County sales in the second quarter were 27.27% higher; Bronx County posted a 21.75% gain; Westchester registered a 16.25% spike and Orange County enjoyed a 13.7% rise in second sales volume as compared to two years ago.

HGAR Market Area Home Sales Second Quarter 2021	
Sullivan County	+56.83%
Rockland County	+33.86%
Putnam County	+27.27%
Bronx County	+21.75%
Westchester County	+16.25%
Orange County	+13.70%

\* Figures are based on comparisons with the second quarter of 2019.  
 Source: OneKey MLS

**Editor’s Note:** For the full OneKey MLS Second Quarter 2021 Residential Real Estate Sales Report for Westchester, Putnam, Rockland, Orange, Sullivan and Bronx Counties” report and data, go to pages 6 and 7 of the second section in this edition of *Real Estate In-Depth*.

While second quarter 2021 sales volume was significantly higher than the 2020 second quarter, OneKey MLS officials noted that

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# County Executive Latimer Signs Bill into Law Requiring Co-Op Boards Disclose Reason for Applicant’s Denial

By John Jordan

WHITE PLAINS—The Westchester County Board of Legislators in a 15-2 vote on June 28 approved an amendment to the existing Co-Op Disclosure Law that now requires a cooperative Board of Directors to provide a reason for a denial of an applicant seeking to purchase a unit at their property. The measure went into effect immediately as Westchester County Executive George Latimer after that evening signed the bill into law.

The legislative victory ended more than 30 years of advocacy by the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors and its predecessor organizations to advance full transparency in cooperative real estate transactions in Westchester County in order to prevent possible discrimination against consumers they represent.

In 2018 the Westchester County



Westchester County Board of Legislators Chairman Ben Boykin presided over the first in-person BOL session since the COVID pandemic began last year.

Board of Legislators approved a bill (Local Law 2018-11) that provided for specific time frames on acknowledging receipt of an individual’s application (15 days) and informing the applicant of its decision to accept or reject its applica-

tion (60 days). However, that legislation did not include a requirement for the cooperative board to provide the applicant with a reason for a denial.

The amendment to the existing law sponsored by Legislator Catherine

Borgia calls for the cooperative board of directors to provide notice of a rejection to the Westchester County Human Rights Commission and it also requires the disclosure of minimum financial requirements to applicants by the cooperative board before they apply.

The cooperative board at a minimum is now required to divulge, in addition to its reason for denial, the following: the full legal name and address of the Co-operative Housing Corporation; the full address and unit number of the unit that had been applied for; the full names, addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses (if available) for the denied applicant(s) and seller(s); the full names, addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses (if available) for all legal counsel and real estate brokers involved in the rejected transaction; the

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# Orange County Executive Says Route 17 Expansion Is Vital; Should be Funded by Fed. Infrastructure Bill

By John Jordan

GOSHEN—In a no-holds barred interview, Orange County Executive Steven Neuhaus recently told *Real Estate In-Depth* that if Congress passes a large federal infrastructure bill, one of the first projects in New York State that should be funded is the expansion of Route 17, which could come with a price tag of more than \$1 billion.

The New York State Department of Transportation recently held a webinar on its ongoing study of the possible expansion of Route 17. The DOT study, which is expected to be released at the end of October, estimated the cost of the expansion at anywhere from \$245 million to as much as \$1 billion, depending upon the scope of the project.

Neuhaus said the Route 17 project “should be the first one done in New York State. They could do what they want in New York City, they have a lot of infrastructure issues too, but this is a region that is growing. You see massive commercial and residential development. Residential development in Southern Orange County is off the charts. You are going to need to match that with a transportation system that actually works.”

Neuhaus, who is completing his second term of office, also lambasted the prior leadership of the Orange County Industrial Development Agency and said that the agency for the most part was “riddled with conflicts.” He is call-

ing for reform of the IDA and also criticized the plea deals with the three executives who are required to pay back a total of more than \$1 million to the IDA, but will not receive any prison time for their felony guilty pleas.

The County Executive said, “I think the punishment does not match the crime.” He also said the plea deals “stinks to the public of rich man’s justice.”

The County Executive also discussed the county’s efforts in dealing with the COVID pandemic from the dark early days to the many people who volunteered at the mass vaccination centers. He said it was a proud moment for him “as an American to see people from all walks of life coming together. I had people that were wealthy, that were poor, people that were in other professions that just took a leave of absence to volunteer to be part of something bigger than them.”



Orange County Executive Steven Neuhaus

See full interview on page 3.

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# 5 QUESTIONS WITH

## Orange County Executive Steven Neuhaus

By John Jordan

To say that there has been a lot on the plate for Orange County Executive Steven Neuhaus would be an understatement. In his second term of office he had to deal with the death and devastation caused by the coronavirus pandemic beginning in March 2020.

In an exclusive interview with *Real Estate In-Depth*, Neuhaus discusses how he used his experience in the military to spearhead county operations in the tumultuous and tragic early days of the pandemic. He also talked frankly about the scandal at the Orange County Industrial Development Agency (see story on page 2 of the Finance Supplement), the changes he feels are necessary at the IDA and whether the plea bargain reached by three IDA officials with prosecutors that required reimbursement of well over \$1 million, but no jail time, was appropriate. Neuhaus also discusses the Orange County economy post COVID and how important a possible expansion of Route 17 would be for Orange County and New York State.

A life-long Orange County resident, Neuhaus and his two sisters were raised on a working farm in Southern Orange County that is still operational today. He attended Monroeville High School and took courses at SUNY Orange during his senior year. Neuhaus went on to receive a Bachelor Degree in History/Political Science from Mount Saint Mary College as well as a Master Degree in Public Administration from Marist College. He is also a graduate of Orange County's Leadership Orange program.

Neuhaus is a Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy Reserves, currently assigned to a Naval Special Warfare team. He has earned two warfare designations: Seabee Combat Warfare (SCW) Officer and Navy Expeditionary Supply Corps Officer (NESCO) and holds certifications from the Naval War College and the Joint Special Operations University. He also received his Joint Professional Military Education I degree in National Securities Studies in May 2019. Neuhaus returned in June 2019 from a six-month deployment to Iraq after serving with the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force.

Neuhaus, a Republican, was sworn into office on Jan. 1, 2014 after having served as the Town of Chester's Supervisor for six years. At deadline, he is running unopposed for a third term of office this November.

**1 Real Estate In-Depth:** With COVID infection rates and deaths down in Orange County and elsewhere throughout the state, do you believe the worst of the pandemic is behind us? And if that is true, how has Orange County

emerged from the COVID pandemic?

**Neuhaus:** I think the worst is behind us. I think we have come out strong out of it, although it was damaging. So, about a month-and-a-half ago (after) I got assigned to the Pacific Fleet in March as a commanding officer of a new unit—my first command assignment, I was out in Hawaii and Hawaii is really strict. They are just loosening up now as you are interviewing me... But to put it in perspective, Hawaii has 1.7 million people, Orange County has 400,000 people. We have significantly more deaths (861 in Orange County from COVID-19 as of July 6, 2021)

are available for those 20 individuals to come back to work, they (the workers) are protected from not coming back and the employer is forced to hire another 20 people to make up for that gap.

So, that seems to be the legacy prob-

lem that I am dealing with now, as well as some problems with landlords, because of protections not being able to evict and not having tenants pay, they have recurring bills but they don't have that income com-

been anything positive to come out of this that you can point to?

**Neuhaus:** At the beginning of the pandemic it was mitigating the deaths and exposures and also resupplying and providing supplies for hospitals, nursing homes and even towns, villages and cities and for their police departments. That was our beginning mode. We had to buy 18 ventilators. The county was supplying a majority of the PPEs for nursing homes and a good chunk of the supplies for the hospitals and then buying refrigerated trucks to store the (human) remains in. The team during that stage was phenomenal. We had hospital staff embedded in our 911 Center. As much as it was a burden and difficult to get through, from a military perspective it was my sweet spot. I felt at home. I think the people did a phenomenal job. I think most Americans don't want to be spectators. They want to be part of the action—part of the solution and they did that. Then we moved into kind of a pause last summer. The (COVID infection) numbers went down, some things opened up, however most things were canceled... Then all of a sudden, we get into the fall and right after Thanksgiving things skyrocketed and we were in the next phase of this. Right before Christmas, the vaccines came out and we had to assemble a team of a few hundred people, a third of which were volunteers, to run these mass vaccination clinics. So, that was another proud moment for me as an American to see people from all walks of life coming together. I had people that were wealthy, that were poor, people that were in other professions that just took a leave of absence to volunteer to be part of something bigger than them. So, those are some things that I will never forget...

**3 Real Estate In-Depth:** In 2021 has the commercial/industrial sector demand continued to be strong in Orange County and if so, are there any major users mulling investments in the county? Also, tourism and the TV film production sectors appear to be emerging industries in the county. Do you agree?

**Neuhaus:** The commercial and residential sectors have been off the charts. Just for an example in residential, we had 10,000 new people register to vote six weeks before Election Day last November. Most of those people left the five boroughs, they were fleeing from what happened with COVID and I think from some of the civil unrest, to get to a better lifestyle and that has fueled the housing market. You talk to people from around the county and the housing market is hot—Florida, Colorado, all these places are seeing surges.

You are also seeing a surge in Orange County's commercial market. A lot of distribution still, which has some positives and negatives depending on how people read it. I think it is good, but you have to pick the right ones for you and you don't have to give away the



than they did and even a lot more than some of the other counties in New York State. There were a couple of factors: we felt the brunt of the pandemic early. It hit the Northeast, in particular, New York and New Jersey, the hardest. Some of these

other states had the ability to play "Monday Morning Quarterback" to see what was going to happen to them. We have definitely emerged

stronger, but we did have some significant damage done. Some of the damage that we are still reeling from today is the massive amount of people that are still unemployed, which has gone down, but employers still have to pay unemployment, while at the same time they need to fill employment positions. There are many cases where I have employers that are paying for 20 people who are on unemployment, their jobs

ing in. I believe this will all be fixed by September if the federal government doesn't keep extending it... I think the worst is behind us.

**Editor's Note:** County Executive Neuhaus said he was still keeping a watchful eye on the Delta variant and its possible impact on the county, but noted that due to the high number of vaccinations, the county's worst days are behind it in terms of the pandemic. He added that sales tax collections are up 24% from last year. Approximately 70% of that increase was collected right after the economy first opened back up in May and June of this year.

**2 Real Estate In-Depth:** In looking back on the past 16 months of the pandemic, is there any event or moment that affected you personally the most and has there

# County Executive Latimer Signs Bill into Law Requiring Co-Op Boards Disclose Reason for Applicant's Denial

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date of receipt of the initial application; the date of receipt of the completed application and the date of rejection.

The amendment also requires the completed notice of rejection form to be transmitted to the Human Rights Commission within 15 days of the notice being provided to the prospective purchaser.

Other key changes to the existing Co-Op Disclosure law include all members of cooperative housing corporations are required to undertake fair housing training. The provision, which was advanced by the Building and Realty Institute of Westchester & Mid-Hudson Region and its affiliate Cooperative and Condominium Advisory Council, requires that any new member of a cooperative governing board have a minimum of two hours of fair housing training within 60 days of becoming a member of the board. All members of a governing board are required to have a minimum of two hours of fair housing training every two years.

Legislator Borgia in a speech prior to the vote, noted that the late Westchester County Legislator Lois Bronz first introduced co-op reform legislation in 1990 and since then notable legislators including now New York State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins and now New York State Senator Peter Harckham also championed co-op reform bills during their tenures as a county legislator.

"I think the time is now to pass this law in Westchester County," Borgia, who is also a Realtor with Keller Williams NY Realty in White Plains, said. "Frankly, I am hoping that this will trigger a re-look in New York State." Attempts to pass legislation requiring cooperative boards

across New York State to cite a reason for an applicant's denial have failed to secure approval from the New York State Legislature to date.

Borgia, as well as Westchester County Board of Legislators Chairman Ben Boykin are hopeful that their action will help advance similar legislation in Albany. Boykin, who voted in favor of the

state legislators will follow Westchester's lead and bring further transparency to the co-op purchasing process statewide.

Prior to the vote, a host of HGAR officials and members asked lawmakers to approve the co-op disclosure amendment.

HGAR Government Affairs Direc-

the past 30 years and has served on co-op boards, including a stint as president. "I support the efforts of the Westchester County Board of Legislators to bring about meaningful change to the co-op purchase process. Change can be difficult and is sometimes resisted, however, in this instance change is necessary to create more transparency and structure for co-op transactions," he said.

Former HGAR President Barry Kramer, a longtime advocate for co-op disclosure reform in Westchester and throughout New York State, praised the bill for its transparency requirements, as well as the fair housing training provision. Kramer, who has specialized in co-op transactions, said that most co-op boards say that they reject applicants for financial reasons. "Well, now we will be able to better understand on each and every co-op transaction, why those rejections occurred," he related.

Other Realtors speaking at the Board of Legislators session on Monday evening in favor of the co-op disclosure amendment were: HGAR President-elect Anthony Domathoti and Realtor John Crittenden.

Westchester County Executive Latimer said that the bill was advanced by Westchester County legislators and sparked debate between Realtor interests and the building industry, which had concerns over its impact on cooperative operations.

"I understand the rationale for it, which is there needs to be a rational process that a potential seller of a unit and the buyer of the unit can look at and understand. Otherwise they are trapped in a unit they want to get rid of or they are unable to get into a unit they want to get into," he said.



Pictured prior to the Westchester County Board of Legislators meeting are from left: Realtor Robert Shandley, HGAR Government Affairs Director Philip Weiden, Former HGAR President Barry Kramer, Realtor John Crittenden, HGAR CEO Richard Haggerty and HGAR President-elect Anthony Domathoti.

bill, noted that legislators took out a provision calling for boards to provide an applicant a reason for a denial back in 2018 to see if there was indeed a problem that existed. He noted that since the bill was passed, there have been 553 rejections by co-op boards advanced to the Westchester County Human Rights Commission.

"Something is going on," he noted. Boykin added that he is hopeful that

tor Philip Weiden told lawmakers that charges made by opponents of the bill that litigation against co-op boards would increase as would their operating costs due to the new requirements were simply unfounded. Westchester now joins Suffolk County in requiring co-op boards to disclose the reason for a denial of an applicant.

HGAR CEO Richard Haggerty related that he has resided in a cooperative for

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Crystal Hawkins-Syska  
HGAR President



# Fear and Blame in the Real Estate Culture

I had a chance meeting at lunch with a Mother and Daughter real estate team in Briarcliff Manor—Mary Jane Florent and Nancy Beard. Mary Jane was talking about the good old days of real estate. “It was just fun! People trusted each other and everyone got along. Now real estate is fear and blame.” That struck a chord with me and I asked if I could use it. And she told me to go right ahead. I agree with her, real estate can feel like a lot of fear and blame, which is actually quite jarring and problematic to mental health. Therefore, I thought this was a good topic to write about for the benefit of our membership.

As we all emerged out of the world of COVID, we were plagued with fear on a monumental scale. I remember being on line at the grocery store at the beginning of the restrictions and lockdown. Seeing all the masked and gloved patrons and the staff who were spraying down shopping carts with a backpack like something out of “Ghostbusters” was nearly apocalyptic. Our businesses shut down and we were all effectively out of work. Our sources of income choked out in a night. Not being able to support ourselves, that was a major cause for fear.

When we as real estate agents were allowed back to work, the fear over disclosure forms, questionnaires, access to properties, possible exposure to the virus and potential liability just caused more fear to mount. Our work of selling homes had an added layer of responsibility that was a stress factor. It meant the adoption of unfamiliar technology and processes that proved more challenging for some more than others. That also added to the fear.

Then there is the blame factor. As agents, we carry a heavy weight on our

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# HGAR Meets with Congressman Jones



HGAR officials met with U.S. Rep. Mondaire Jones at an event earlier this month and discussed some key issues impacting the real estate industry. From left, HGAR Chief Executive Officer Richard Haggerty, HGAR President Crystal Hawkins-Sysksa, U.S. Rep. Mondaire Jones and Legislative Council Co-Chair Leah Caro.

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## GATEWAY PERSPECTIVES

By Richard Haggerty, HGAR CEO



# Perseverance Pays Off

Approximately 30 years ago, when I was the Director of Member Services and Professional Standards Administrator for the then Westchester County Board of Realtors, I vividly remember walking over to the Westchester County Legislative offices where the Board of Legislators was conducting a public hearing on co-op transparency legislation, which would require co-op boards to provide a reason when they rejected a prospective applicant. The meeting room was packed to the rafters, primarily with individuals who opposed the proposed legislation. I had signed up to speak in favor of the bill, but for every proponent of the legislation there were three to four opponents who spoke. The legislation went down in flames.

However, we didn't give up and continued to plug away at co-op transparency legislation year-after-year and it remained on the top of our list of legislative priorities. From our perspective, co-op transparency was, first and foremost, a Fair Housing issue. After our merger with the Rockland Board of Realtors and the Orange County Association of Realtors to create the Hudson Gateway Association, we succeeded in getting a modified version of co-op transparency legislation passed in Rockland County. Then, in 2018, we finally had a breakthrough in Westchester County, achieving co-op transparency legislation that set forth a timetable that co-op Boards had to follow when acting on applications, and which required co-op Boards to report instances when they rejected applications to the Westchester County Human Rights Commission.

From December of 2018 until this year, a total of 573 co-op applicant rejections were reported to the Westchester County Human Rights Commission. That truly gave us the ammunition we needed to argue that additional work had to be done to achieve a more transparent process for co-op transactions. New legislation was introduced that would modify the existing law and require that co-op boards must state a reason when they reject an applicant, which has always been our primary goal. Further modifications required co-op board members to take Fair Housing training. HGAR representatives were there every step of the way, attending virtual Committee meetings and a public hearing before the Board of Legislators, and this time around proponents of the legislation outnumbered the opponents.

Finally, on June 28, 2021, the Westchester County Board of Legislators passed the amended legislation by an overwhelming margin, and Westchester County Executive George Latimer signed the bill into law that same night. I want to thank Westchester County Legislator Catherine Borgia, the sponsor of the bill and its staunchest proponent, for all of her efforts over the last several years. I also want to acknowledge the efforts of HGAR's Government Affairs Director Phil Weiden who was always on top of this issue. Finally, I want to thank all the Realtors who never

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# Reminisces

By Ann Garti  
HGAR Chief Operating Officer

This may be the most difficult thing I've ever written as goodbyes often are. Although I know I have made the right decision to retire it does not come without ambivalence. It is difficult to imagine that I won't be waking up each morning and heading to the job I love and have loved doing for the past rewarding 40 years.

At the start of any position, we usually don't have an awareness that we are embarking on a long-term career that will become our personal identity. Prior to being hired as the executive officer of the then Orange County Board of Realtors, my entire real estate education consisted of being on the selling side of one home and the buying side of two. Not a very auspicious knowledge base for an organization whose members expected you to know license law, the Realtor Code of Ethics and all there was to know at that time about the MLS.

Perhaps those who hired me, a committee headed by John Dwyer, a past OCAR and NYSAR President, saw that spark of excitement in me knowing I would be taking on a challenge as well as my candid acknowledgement that while I knew truly little about real estate, I could learn. Admittedly, at the time, I had no idea how much there was to know and that the learning curve would continue for four decades.

Many Realtors and colleagues along the way were generous in their kindness and in their willingness to share their expertise. Generosity, I have learned, abounds in the Realtor community. I begin to realize just how long I've been around when I recognize that my mentor George Kohl, a past NYSAR President, is not a familiar name to many. Nonetheless, his support gave me credibility within the Realtor community, and I am forever grateful. I've also had the good fortune to have as a role model, a voice of reason and colleague Gil Mercurio, who began his career with the former Westchester County Board of Realtors (WCBR) when I began mine in Orange County. I probably got to know Richard Haggerty (finally, a familiar name) very soon after Gil hired him, and we established a rapport that has turned into a valued friendship. I will miss our daily professional interactions but have no doubt that the friendship will endure.

Anyone who has achieved any recognition or success in any field realizes that it is not done in a vacuum. To my credit, I have made some excellent staff decisions and they have been my ballast as well as my silent partners without ever seeking or getting the recognition they truly deserve.

While I will miss it all and look forward to new adventures, I realize it is all about the incredible interaction over the years; you have truly helped to make me “all that I could be.”



# Recent Ransomware and Cyber Attacks: The Real Estate Industry Must Beware!

## LEGAL CORNER

By John Dolgetta, Esq.



Recent ransomware attacks and major hacks have thrust into the spotlight the importance of businesses, including those in the real estate industry, having the necessary protocols and protections in place to protect themselves and their clients from cybercriminals. During the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a substantial rise in cybercriminal activity. The recent ransomware attacks and cyber-attacks on targets such as the Colonial Pipeline Co. (which runs a major East Coast fuel pipeline), JBS, S.A. (one of the world's largest meat processors), the Washington D.C. Metro Police Department, and New York City's Law Department, to name a few, should make businesses aware of the very real threat of such attacks and the widespread disruption they can cause.

The real estate industry, unfortunately, is extremely vulnerable to attack by cybercriminals because many real estate agents, attorneys, bankers, mortgage brokers, appraisers, home inspectors and others involved in a real estate transaction do not implement the cybersecurity protections necessary to protect themselves against such attacks. Many real estate agents, who are independent contractors, utilize their own personal e-mails, which leaves them, and their clients' data and personal information vulnerable. This can cause the real estate brokers for whom the real estate agents work for to accrue liability for such data breaches.

In 2016 (see Beware of Cyber Threats: The Importance of Implementing Data Security and Privacy Policies at <https://bit.ly/3ziZNxF>) and again in 2018 (see Cyber-crime and Ransomware Are Very Real and Costly Threats! at <https://bit.ly/3ghYvue>), this column focused on the risks and threats that exist in connection with cybersecurity and data breaches. Those articles highlighted existing laws and related requirements of businesses to protect consumers from data breaches and cyber-attacks as well as best practices and insight on cybersecurity insurance coverage. Real estate brokers and agents should review these articles as they are even more relevant today in light of current events. This article will revisit these issues. It will provide an update on the FBI's 2020 IC3 Report on Cyber Crimes ("IC3 Report") issued in March (see <https://bit.ly/2TWReIP>). It will also highlight some of the more recent laws dealing with data protections and cybersecurity such as New York State's SHIELD Act (see <https://bit.ly/3g8BbjR>) and New York City's pending Tenant Data Privacy Act (see <https://on.nyc.gov/3vaW6H0>).

### 2020 FBI IC3 Report on Cyber Crimes

The FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) provides individuals and businesses victimized by cyber-attacks with a place to report cybercrimes. The IC3 also provides the public with invaluable information on cybercriminal activity and publishes its annual IC3 Report. In the introduction to the 2020 IC3 Report, Deputy Director of the FBI Paul Abbate points out that "In 2020, while the American public was focused on protecting our families from a global pandemic and helping others in need, cyber criminals took advantage of an opportunity to profit from our dependence on technology to go on an Internet crime spree." It is clear that while society's primary focus was (and still is) on the COVID-19 pandemic, cybercriminals have been taking advantage of current conditions, targeting and exploiting individuals, as well as businesses and governmental agencies of all types and sizes.

IC3 reported that in 2020, it "received over 28,500 complaints related to COVID-19." These criminals targeted the individuals and businesses which sought to receive economic assistance under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act"). The IC3 indicated that it "received thousands of complaints reporting emerging financial crime revolving around CARES Act stimulus funds, specifically targeting unemployment insurance, Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans, and Small Business Economic Injury Disaster Loans, as well as other COVID-related fraud." These cybercriminals obtain personally identifiable information through phishing and other methods and then file false unemployment claims and submit fraudulent grant and loan applications.

The IC3 Report points out that in the last five years there were 2,211,396 complaints filed and more than \$13 billion in total losses that were suffered by victims of cyber-attacks. In 2020 alone, there were 791,790 complaints filed with the IC3 and \$4.2 billion in total losses. The number of complaints filed represented a 69% increase from 2019. In 2020, Business E-mail Compromise (BEC) and E-mail Access Compromise (EAC) attacks were among the most common and the costliest totaling \$1.8 billion. BEC/EAC attacks involve sophisticated scams that target businesses and individuals performing transfers of funds. The real estate industry is specifically targeted due to the frequent use of wire transfers, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, where remote closings were commonly utilized. Real estate agents and real estate attorneys are particularly vulnerable because the e-mails exchanged between these parties and their clients contain critical information as to when a closing will occur, the amounts that will need to be wired and the location to which the wire transfers are to be made. A cybercriminal will wait for the opportune moment and then strike.

The IC3 Report further points out that in 2020 there was "an increase in the number of BEC/EAC complaints related to the use of identity theft and funds being converted to cryptocurrency." The IC3 Report explained that victims would be forced through "Extortion, Tech Support, Romance scams" to provide a form of personal identification to cybercriminals. The criminal would then use the victim's identification to set up a bank and use it to receive stolen funds and then transfer the funds to anonymous cryptocurrency accounts. With the popularity of cryptocurrency and the anonymity it offers, this form of cybercrime will certainly increase in the years to come. Ransomware was also on the rise in 2020.

IC3 received 2,474 ransomware complaints and victims suffered losses in excess of \$29 million. Based on recent events, a substantial increase in incidents and losses is expected in 2021. In operating their businesses, real estate professionals have in their possession critical client information and must, to the best of their abil-

ity, safeguard that information and adhere to all legal requirements.

### New York State's Cybersecurity Law: The SHIELD Act

In July, 2019, New York State enacted the Stop Hacks and Improve Electronic Data Security Act (the SHIELD Act). The SHIELD Act expanded the data breach notification obligations under New York law and imposed affirmative cybersecurity obligations on those entities specifically enumerated in the law. The SHIELD Act makes significant changes to existing New York law. One change now makes any business that maintains private information of New York residents subject to New York data breach obligations under the law regardless of the location of the business, even if that business is located in another state or country.

The SHIELD Act also broadened the definition of "private information" and expanded the notification obligations of a business in the event of a breach. In addition, the law also expanded the definition of a data breach which would trigger the notification requirements to include unauthorized "access" to private information. Previously, New York law only required a business to notify affected individuals if their private information was "acquired" in the event of a data breach.

Prior to the enactment of the SHIELD Act, New York law provided for minimum civil penalties of \$5,000 for a violation of the notification obligations, or \$10 per instance of failed notification to each affected individual, whichever was greater, up to a maximum penalty of \$150,000. Under the SHIELD Act the minimum penalty is still \$5,000, however, the penalty for each failed notification has been increased to \$20. Additionally, the maximum penalty was increased to \$250,000.

The most significant change under the SHIELD Act is that as of March 21, 2020, "any person or business that owns or licenses computerized data which includes private information of a resident of New York shall develop, implement and maintain reasonable safeguards to protect the security, confidentiality and integrity of the private information including, but not limited to the disposal of data". Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there was not much attention paid to the new requirements. A business or individual is now affirmatively obligated to put in place reasonable safeguards and procedures with regard to the maintenance and security of private information. The SHIELD Act specifies three distinct areas: (1) Reasonable Administrative Safeguards, (2) Reasonable Technical Safeguards and (3) Reasonable Physical Safeguards. The SHIELD Act outlines specific requirements for each of the areas. While the new "safeguards" requirement applies to all businesses or individuals owning or licensing private information, there is a carve out for small businesses (i.e., businesses with less than 50 employees) that provides for a less stringent standard based on the size and scope of the small business.

The SHIELD Act provides that "a small business" is in compliance with the above requirement if the "small business's security program contains reasonable administrative, technical and physical safeguards that are appropriate for the size and complexity of the small business, the nature of the small business's activities, and the sensitivity of the personal information the small business collects from or about consumers." Nevertheless, all businesses, including real estate brokerage firms, law firms, title companies, etc., must adhere to the requirements of the SHIELD Act as well as all other data breach and notification laws.

### New York City: The Tenant Data Privacy Act

The Tenant Data Privacy Act (TDPA) became law in New York City on May 28th. The TDPA "would require owners of multiple dwellings that utilize keyless entry systems, including but not limited to key fobs, biometric identifiers and electronic technologies, to provide tenants with a data retention and privacy policy." The TDPA also sets forth restrictions relating to the use and collection of tenants' data contained in these systems and databases. It will also require a landlord to do or comply with the following: (1) obtain consent from tenants and other users to use any such information, (2) restrict the sharing of such information with third parties, and (3) require that any data collected be "...removed, anonymized, or destroyed within a given time." This legislation would establish a private right of action for tenants against a landlord that violates the TDPA. Tenants could sue for compensatory damages or statutory damages ranging from \$200 to \$1,000 per tenant and could also seek attorney's fees.

Under the TDPA, building owners would need to provide a "plain language" privacy policy to tenants. The owner of a smart access building, or an agent thereof, must provide to tenants a written policy in plain language that describes, at a minimum, the information listed under subdivision b of § 26-3004 of the TDPA (see <https://on.nyc.gov/3vaW6H0>). Similar to the SHIELD Act, the TDPA requires that affirmative "security measures and safeguards" be put in place. If the TDPA is signed into law, it will take effect at the end of June 2021 and there will be a grace period until Jan. 1, 2023 for building owners to come into compliance.

### Being Prepared is Critical!

The potential for a cyberattack should never be taken lightly. Individuals and companies must put in place protections to ensure that they are protected. Cyber-attacks are very real and all individuals and businesses need to be aware of dangers and risks, and take them seriously. While these hacks and cyberattacks can cost thousands and even millions of dollars in damages, the compromised companies and individuals are also required to spend thousands more to comply with the data breach and notification requirements of state and local laws. Businesses and individuals should look into obtaining cybersecurity insurance coverage as most insurance policies do not cover cyberattacks or the damages and costs incurred as a result. Appropriate cybersecurity coverage will not only cover the damages incurred, but will also provide coverage for the costs involved to send the required notices under the law, which can be very expensive. Once an attack occurs it is too late; preventative measures are critical.

*Legal Column author John Dolgetta, Esq. is the principal of the law firm of Dolgetta Law, PLLC. For information about Dolgetta Law, PLLC and John Dolgetta, Esq., please visit <http://www.dolgettalaw.com>. The foregoing article is for informational purposes only and does not confer an attorney-client relationship.*

**CORRECTION:** An archived column by John Dolgetta mistakenly ran in the June 2020 edition. *Real Estate In-Depth* apologizes for the error.

# U.S. Existing-Home Sales Drop Nearly 1% in May; Northeast Sales Fall 1.4%

WASHINGTON— Existing-home sales decreased for a fourth straight month in May, according to the National Association of Realtors. Only one major U.S. region recorded a month-over-month increase, while the other three regions saw sales decline. Sales in the Northeast slid 1.4% in May.

While sales declined, each of the four areas again registered double-digit year-over-year gains, according to the NAR report released on June 22.

Total existing-home sales, completed transactions that include single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums and co-ops, dropped 0.9% from April to a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of 5.80 million in May. Sales in total climbed year-over-year, up 44.6% from a year ago (4.01 million in May 2020).

“Home sales fell moderately in May and are now approaching pre-pandemic activity,” said Lawrence Yun, NAR’s chief economist. “Lack of inventory continues to be the overwhelming factor holding back home sales, but falling affordability is simply squeezing some first-time buyers out of the market.”

He added, “The market’s outlook, however, is encouraging. Supply is expected to improve, which will give buyers more options and help tamp down record-high asking prices for existing homes.”

The median existing-home price for all housing types in May was \$350,300, up 23.6% from May 2020 (\$283,500), as every region registered price increases. This is a record high and marks 111 straight months of year-over-year gains since March 2012.

Total housing inventory at the end of May amounted to 1.23 million units, up 7.0% from April’s inventory and down 20.6% from one year ago (1.55 million). Unsold inventory sits at a 2.5-month supply at the present sales pace, marginally up from April’s 2.4-month supply, but down from 4.6-months in May 2020.

Properties typically remained on the market for 17 days in May, unchanged from April and down from 26 days in May 2020. Eighty-nine percent of the

homes sold in May 2021 were on the market for less than a month.

First-time buyers were responsible for 31% of sales in May, also even with April, but down from 34% in May 2020. NAR’s 2020 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers—released in late 2020—revealed that the annual share of first-time buyers was 31%.

Individual investors or second-home buyers, who account for many cash sales, purchased 17% of homes in May, even with April and up from 14% in May 2020. All-cash sales accounted for 23% of transactions in May, down from 25% in April and up from 17% in May 2020.

A new study released by NAR last week—the 2021 Vacation Home Counties Report—found that from January to April 2021, the share of vacation home sales to total existing-home sales rose to 6.7%. Vacation home sales jumped 57.2% year-over-year compared to the 20% year-over-year growth in total existing-home sales.

“The appeal of vacation homes has certainly grown during the pandemic, especially among employees permitted to work from home,” Yun said. “As businesses decide new guidelines for remote workers, even allowing permanent remote options in some cases, look for vacation homes to remain a popular option.”

Distressed sales—foreclosures and short sales—represented less than 1% of sales in May, equal to April’s percentage but down from 3% in May 2020.

According to Freddie Mac, the average commitment rate for a 30-year, conventional, fixed-rate mortgage was 2.96% in May, down from 3.06% in April. The average commitment rate across all of 2020 was 3.11%. Yun expects the 30-year fixed-rate mortgage to remain below 3.5% in 2021.

## Single-Family and Condo/Co-op Sales

Single-family home sales dropped to a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of 5.08 million in May, down 1.0% from 5.13

million in April, and up 39.2% from one year ago. The median existing single-family home price was \$356,600 in May, up 24.4% from May 2020.

Existing condominium and co-op sales were recorded at a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of 720,000 units in May, unchanged from April but up 100.0% from one year ago. The median existing condo price was \$306,000 in May, an annual increase of 21.5%.

“As outlined in last week’s NAR/Rosen Consulting Group report, we continue to face a dire shortage of available housing in this country,” said NAR President Charlie Oppler, a Realtor from Franklin Lakes, NJ and the CEO of Prominent Properties Sotheby’s International Realty. “NAR continues its advocacy efforts to find new, creative and effective ways to increase housing construction and supply. The right policies will provide huge benefits to our nation’s economy, and our work to close this gap will be particularly impactful for lower-income households, households of color and first-time buyers.”

## Regional Breakdown

For the second straight month, only the Midwest experienced higher sales from the prior month.

Existing-home sales in the Northeast decreased 1.4% in May, but the annual

rate of 720,000 was a 46.9% jump from a year ago. The median price in the Northeast was \$384,300, up 17.1% from May 2020.

Existing-home sales in the Midwest rose 1.6% to an annual rate of 1,310,000 in May, a 27.2% increase from a year ago. The median price in the Midwest was \$268,500, an 18.1% increase from May 2020.

Existing-home sales in the South declined 0.4%, posting an annual rate of 2,590,000 in May, up 47.2% from the same time one year ago. The median price in the South was \$299,400, a



22.6% jump from one year ago.

Existing-home sales in the West fell 4.1%, recording an annual rate of 1,180,000 in May, a 61.6% climb from a year ago. The median price in the West was \$505,600, up 24.3% from May 2020.

## Douglas Elliman Relocates to New Office in Greenwich



75 Arch St., Greenwich, CT

GREENWICH, CT—Douglas Elliman recently announced it had relocated to a new larger location in Greenwich at the historic, free-standing John Lockhart House on 75 Arch St.

Company officials stated the move underscores the brokerage’s commitment to the region, increasing its office footprint to a four-story, 6,000-square-foot building in order to accommodate its 70 agents and growing business.

“While we have enjoyed our time at 88 Field Point Road in Greenwich, it is time we trade up to a larger space for

the betterment of our successful agents and their clients,” said Scott Durkin, president and chief operating officer of Douglas Elliman. “We are incredibly proud to call the John Lockhart House home and look forward to conducting best-in-class real estate service from our new stomping ground.”

Originally built in 1867, 75 Arch St. was once the home of John Lockhart and in 2013, it won landmark status from the Greenwich Landmarks Registry. The historic clapboard house has been masterfully restored and renovated, boast-

ing a mansard roof with pedimented dormers, two chimneys and a charming full-width porch. With a stellar location in-town, the new Elliman office sits near the Greenwich Train Station and is only one block from “The Ave.,” Greenwich’s main drag for luxury shopping and fine dining.

“The John Lockhart House and now Elliman office is in the heart of Greenwich,” says Michael Fitzgibbon, executive manager of sales for Connecticut and Westchester at Douglas Elliman. “This notable space will allow

our agents to thrive in a comfortable environment and be active, engaged members of the surrounding community.”

In 2020, Douglas Elliman’s Greenwich office closed a record \$281,958,000 in real estate which was a 34% increase in sales volume from 2019. In January 2021, Sally Slater of Douglas Elliman brought the buyer to Tommy Hilfiger’s estate at 30 John St. for \$45 million, the highest sale in Greenwich so far this year.

## Perseverance Pays Off

Continued from page 4

gave up on this issue over the last 30 years; J.P. Endres, John and Carol Kope, Dorothy Botsoe, Leah Caro, just to name a few, with a special shout out to Barry Kramer, who was relentless in his advocacy on this issue.

If there is a moral to this story, it is never give up. If you know the cause is right and just, persevere and keep climbing the mountain because you will eventually get to the top, even if it takes 30 years!

On a different topic, as we have reported previously, I am very excited that HGAR has hired Freddimir (Freddy) Garcia as our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer. Freddy will be engaging with the membership on DEI issues in the weeks and months to come. For the balance of July, we will also be conducting a survey of HGAR members concerning diversity issues. Please do take the time to complete this important survey. It will enable us to know more about our members so we can provide the necessary support and services to help you succeed and thrive in your careers. Thank you.

## The Henry Apartments in Pomona Bought for \$54M by Harbor Group



The Henry in Pomona features 169 rental apartment units.

POMONA—Harbor Group International, LLC, which is headquartered in Norfolk, VA, has acquired The Henry, a 169-home luxury apartment community in Pomona, for \$54 million.

Commercial brokerage firm CBRE reported the sale on June 16. The CBRE team of Jeffrey Dunne, Gene Pride, Jeremy Neuer, Steve Bardsley, David Gavin and Travis Langer represented the seller, a joint venture between Spirit Investment Partners and The Bascom Group, and procured the buyer, an affiliate of Harbor Group International, LLC (HGI).

Built in 2001 and recently renovated, the highly amenitized community features a resident clubroom, pool and sundeck, billiards room, fitness center and basketball courts. The apartments have designer finishes with granite countertops, plank flooring, stainless steel appliances, tile backsplash and updated hardware and lighting.

CBRE's Dunne said of the transaction "We are pleased to represent Spirit Investment Partners and The Bascom Group in the sale of this asset. They did

a fabulous job renovating the clubroom and apartments. The offering received significant interest from a broad group of investors considering the quality of the asset and site constrained location."

"HGI is highly familiar with the Rockland County market given their past ownership of Alister Nanuet. The Henry is a terrific opportunity to apply their management expertise and local market knowledge. Renters are increasingly looking for larger apartments in suburban locations, which bodes well for continued strong performance at the asset," added CBRE's Gene Pride.

CBRE Institutional Properties is currently marketing for sale: The Essex County Workforce Housing Portfolio, an eight-property apartment portfolio consisting of 536 units in East Orange and Newark, NJ; Glenview House, a 146-unit apartment community in Stamford, CT; Harbourside SONO, a 129-unit newly developed apartment community in Norwalk, CT and development parcels for multifamily in South and East Orange, NJ, Plainfield, NJ and White Plains.

## Keller Williams Realty Partners Opens New Expanded Office in Baldwin Place



The grand opening of the Keller Williams Realty Partners office in Baldwin Place.

BALDWIN PLACE—On June 9, Keller Williams Realty Partners finally hosted a Grand Opening celebration for its brand-new office in Baldwin Place at 57 U.S. Route 6.

Keller Williams Realty Partners had moved into their new space in late 2019 with a plan to host a Grand Opening in the spring of 2020. That plan was halted when the coronavirus pandemic forced a lock-down.

The need for a larger space became evident as the sales team expanded and literally grew out of the previous location, officials with the brokerage firm stated. KWRP currently has more than 250 agents working out of three offices. While the Baldwin Place office is the headquarters, KWRP also has offices in Bedford and Hopewell Junction.

"We've waited a long time for this event and it's great to see so many of our agents here tonight with us. While

COVID-19 has taught us all to operate more independently, the power of community has never proven itself to be stronger," said Marc Caldarone, CEO and Team Leader for KWRP. The event was attended by more than 75 agents from Keller Williams and other local brokerages.

Lou Cardillo, broker and chairman, cut the "red ribbon" to make the opening official. He said, "I remember starting this company with a vision and three people at my dining room table. Today we have over 250 agent partners and have shared over \$1.7 million in profit share. When you make your mission about helping others achieve their goals, they absolutely help you reach your goals. We are still in the infancy of our journey, and I am honored to be able to share that road with all the great agents in attendance tonight."

## Hines Tops Off NorthLight Project At Edge-on-Hudson Development



The 246-unit NorthLight at Edge-on Hudson apartment community will be situated on a parcel proximate to a range of recreational parks, trails, and historic sites, as well as a myriad of shopping, dining and entertainment options.

SLEEPY HOLLOW—International real estate firm Hines reported on June 24 it had topped off its NorthLight at the Edge-on-Hudson development being built at the former General Motors minivan assembly plant site on the shores of the Hudson River here.

The new apartment community will bring 246 rental apartments to a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood. NorthLight is part of Edge-on-Hudson \$1-billion, a 70-acre phased master-planned development that will feature more than 16 acres of community parks and a waterfront promenade. The NorthLight site was purchased fully entitled in October 2019 in a joint venture with MetLife Investment Management. Santander Bank and Provident Bank provided construction financing for the project.

"Our experience creating one-of-a-kind rental housing options ensures

that NorthLight at Edge-on-Hudson will become the most sought-after lifestyle community for renters seeking an amazing waterfront setting combined with convenient access to New York City," said Tommy Craig, senior managing director, Hines. "Hines' renewed commitment to raising the bar for multifamily housing in the Northeast region is coming together as NorthLight nears completion on our rental project in New Haven, CT, The Whit Wooster Square progresses. It's incredibly satisfying to see Hines increase its footprint in this part of the country as we continue expanding Hines' portfolio into the future."

NorthLight at Edge-on-Hudson will include studio, one-, and two-bedroom apartments ranging from 565 square feet to 1,406 square feet. Residences will feature high-end finishes and

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# Expert Predict ‘The Seller’s Market is Going to Last’

WHITE PLAINS— With mortgage rates near all-time lows and pent-up demand, will New York’s residential real estate market favor sellers through 2021 and beyond? Real estate experts weighed in on what’s in store for the housing market and how agents can close deals from the East End to the West Side and all throughout the region at a virtual panel hosted by the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc. and OneKey MLS.

Nearly 300 industry professionals registered for “Getting the Deal Done: From The Hamptons to Manhattan, Scarsdale to the Catskills – A Seller’s Market,” which featured Jennifer Grimes, broker/owner, Country House Realty, Sullivan and Ulster counties; Lisa Lippman, associate real estate broker, Brown Harris Stevens, New York City; Laura Miller, associate real estate broker, Houlihan Lawrence, Scarsdale; Ernie Cervi, regional senior vice president, East End, Corcoran, Bridgehampton; and Bruce Cohen, Esq., founding partner, Cohen and Frankel, New York City.

“This seller’s market is going to last – particularly in Westchester, the Hudson Valley and on the East End, for quite some time,” said event host Richard Haggerty, CEO of HGAR and President and Chief Strategic Growth Officer of OneKey MLS, the regional multiple listing service for New York. “One thing that’s unique to the New York City market is that it doesn’t have the inventory issue that the suburban market has. The point our expert panel makes about pricing correctly really resonates because that’s what’s going to make properties move in Manhattan.”

Haggerty at the June 10th webinar pointed to Sullivan County as the “hottest market we’ve had in our area,” noting an 85% increase in the number of single-family transactions in May compared with May of last year and an almost 10% increase in the median sale price.

Grimes, of Country House Realty,



**Nearly 300 industry professionals registered for “Getting the Deal Done: From The Hamptons to Manhattan, Scarsdale to the Catskills – A Seller’s Market,” which featured Jennifer Grimes, broker/owner, Country House Realty, Sullivan and Ulster counties; Lisa Lippman, associate real estate broker, Brown Harris Stevens, New York City; Laura Miller, associate real estate broker, Houlihan Lawrence, Scarsdale; Ernie Cervi, regional senior vice president, East End, Corcoran, Bridgehampton; and Bruce Cohen, Esq., founding partner, Cohen and Frankel, New York City.**

said The Catskills’ market was robust pre-pandemic and a migration from New York City only added to the surge. “The pandemic sped up the process of maturation in terms of people discovering The Catskills, with so many coming up here to hike and do things to get out of New York City,” said Grimes. “The market exploded in an extraordinary way, where in some cases people were trying to buy houses sight unseen. Our value for money is significant here, so people feel they can buy for cash a lot of the time. Our second-home market is really what is driving everything here.”

The discussion was moderated by Brian D. Tormey, NTP, president of TitleVest, a leading New York City-based provider of title insurance and related real estate services. The hour-long session focused on regional market trends, buyer profiles and pricing, negotiating contracts and bidding wars, and how long the seller’s market will last.

“In New York City we had a softer market, then we had COVID and it was super-soft, and now we’re back to where we were, price-wise, pre-pandemic,” said Lippman, of Brown Harris Stevens. “But we have a much better head about

things—there’s a feeling of euphoria. A word of caution to sellers: It is still very, very price sensitive. If you properly price something, it moves immediately. If you over-price it, no one calls. And, if you underprice it, you’ll have a crazy bidding war.”

Cohen, an attorney specializing in real estate, talked about the resiliency of Manhattan and advised buyers and sellers to act quickly in this market. “I don’t think we’ve ever been busier and I’ve been doing this a long time,” said Cohen. “One of the reasons is that interest rates just remain so low. Yes, there is euphoria. It was wrong to write off New York City during the pandemic and anyone who thinks this market is going to last forever is wrong, too. But, I would say to every broker, attorney, buyer and seller—if you want to do something, now is the time.”

Miller, of Houlihan Lawrence, noted Westchester’s numbers indicate “it’s definitely” still a seller’s market. “The West-

chester market is hot, with pending sales in general up over 90%,” said Miller. “In Scarsdale, which is my main area, it’s up around 80% and in Edgemont, pending sales are up around 200%. There’s just high demand and a real scarcity of inventory. We are still seeing multiple bids and listings at all price ranges are selling significantly over asking.”

Cervi, of Corcoran, noted similar trends on the East End. “The Hamptons market is up 89% over last year in the first quarter,” said Cervi. “The average sale price has tipped \$2.7 million and the median price is \$1.6 million, which is up 50%. We’re seeing numbers like we’ve never seen before and activity to match. The sellers are very realistic, if they price appropriately, they’re going to have a bidding war and sell over ask in those cases.”

“Getting the Deal Done” is part of the “Be Your Best” webinar series created by HGAR and OneKey MLS, to help Realtors and agents navigate a changing landscape amid the pandemic. The event was sponsored by TitleVest.

OneKey MLS has 44,000-plus subscribers and serves Manhattan, Westchester, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Orange, Nassau, Suffolk, Queens, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. It was formed in 2018 by the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors and the Long Island Board of Realtors.

The Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors ([www.hgar.com](http://www.hgar.com)) is a not-for-profit trade association representing more than 13,000 real estate professionals in Manhattan, the Bronx, Westchester, Putnam, Rockland and Orange counties. It is the second-largest Realtor association in New York, and one of the largest in the U.S.

## In Memoriam

### Former NYSAR, OCAR President Eugene ‘Gene’ Currier Dies at 88

The Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors regrets to inform its membership of the passing of veteran Realtor Eugene ‘Gene’ Currier of Middletown on June 29 at the age of 88.

During his long illustrious career in real estate, Currier served as President of the New York State Association of Realtors and the Orange County Association of Realtors. He was the founding partner of Coldwell Banker Currier & Lazier Realtors, a successful real estate firm that serviced the Hudson Valley for more than 40 years.

“Gene” as he was fondly referred, exemplified a man of integrity and fairness in all of his endeavors. He was a man of service who gave back to his country, community, and to charitable and professional organizations. He was a proud Army Veteran of the Korean War, former Member of the Middletown Parks & Recreation Commission and Volunteer for Meals on Wheels. Gene was the Past President of many organizations, including: the Middletown Lions Club and the Orange County Golf Club, in addition to the aforementioned Orange County Association of Realtors and the New York State Association of Realtors, just to name a few of his accomplishments.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Marie. Anyone who knew Gene was familiar with his three daughters who he often spoke about with love and pride - Lori Currier Woods (Robert), Jana Currier, who serves as Director of Member Engagement for the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, and Lynn Currier Maltz (Mark). He was the proudest “PopPop” of his eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren: Zachary Woods, Matthew Woods (Jennifer), Callie Woods Savage (Harry), Brent and Bryce Dombal, Billy, Devon and Alexa Maltz, Makenna and Addison Woods. He also leaves behind his brother and best friend Albert Currier, along with his son-in-law Kent Dombal, countless nieces, nephews, friends, colleagues and acquaintances he touched along the way.

He is joined in heaven by his beloved grandson Zachary, whom he grieved until his last breath. Gene, who was born on June 27, 1932, was the youngest of 10 children and predeceased by his father and mother, Clarence and Elsie Currier, and siblings Mildred, Howard, Grace, Florman, Charles, Calvin, Lillian, Frank and mother-in-law Sophie Cahill.

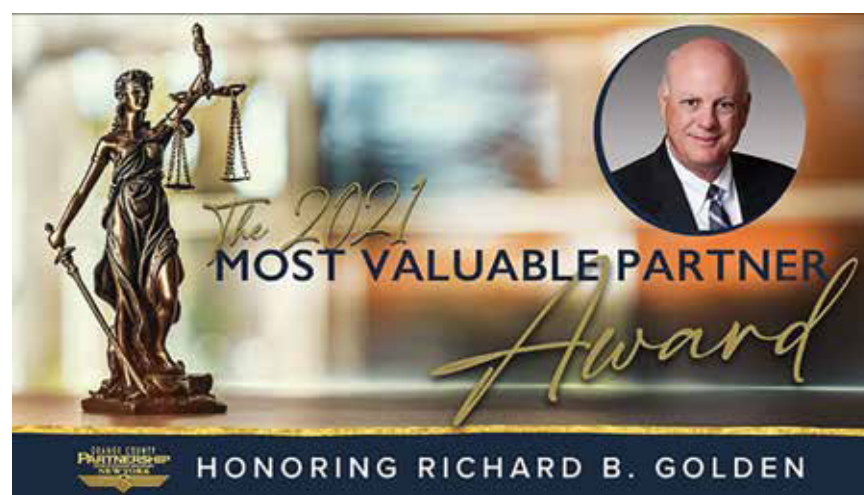
Visitation was held on Friday, July 2, 2021 at Applebee-McPhillips Funeral Home in Middletown, NY from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM. A private family burial took place on Saturday, July 3, 2021 at Saint Joseph’s Cemetery in Middletown, NY at 9:30 AM. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Gene’s memory to: CFOS-Zachary Woods Memorial Fund, 30 Scotts Corners Drive, Suite 203, Montgomery, NY 12549.

## Orange County Partnership Honors Its 2021 MVP Richard Golden

By John Jordan

MIDDLETOWN—More than 300 political, business and civic leaders gathered at the West Hills Country Club in Middletown on June 8 to honor the Orange County Partnership’s 2021 Most Valuable Partner (MVP) veteran attorney Richard Golden.

The program, held in a tent on the West Hills complex to conform with CDC coronavirus guidelines, featured a host of dignitaries who honored Golden, including Orange County Executive Steve Neuhaus, Orange County Partnership Chairman Michael Gilfeather, and Orange County Partnership President and CEO Maureen



Halahan. The event also included a rousing rendition of the National Anthem by Holt Construction’s Dan Depew, who formerly served as the Supervisor for the Town of Wallkill, as well as an update on economic development activity in Orange County by Halahan, who noted that the county is currently experiencing strong demand in both attractions and expansion projects, particularly in the manufacturing and distribution sectors.

Orange County Executive Neuhaus in a videotaped message to the gathering, said that Golden has been helpful to him for years, including during his time as Supervisor for the Town of Chester and in his nearly eight-year tenure as Orange County Executive.

“He has been really instrumental on major projects and crises that Orange County has faced and has helped me navigate through them very successfully,” Neuhaus said. He later added that he looks forward to sitting down with Golden and “flushing out the issues of the day. Every time I see him he is just a wealth of wisdom and knowledge.”

The program featured a video tribute to Golden’s work throughout the years



# Connect New York State's Two Power Grids to Drive Economic Development in NYC and Statewide

## Guest Opinion

By Michael Oates



The New York State Energy Research & Development Authority faces a major decision that could greatly impact all of New York's economic recovery from COVID. Several energy and transmission developers are competing for a NYSERDA energy program with varying

amounts of in-state investment. The choice is clear: Go big and choose New York jobs.

In his 2020 State of the State, Gov. Andrew Cuomo laid out an ambitious vision: expanding New York's renewable energy to reduce the state's carbon

### Hines Tops Off NorthLight Project At Edge-on-Hudson Development

Continued from page 7

thoughtfully designed floorplans while best-in-class amenities will include a 17,000-square-foot outdoor courtyard with swimming pool, fitness deck, outdoor kitchens, firepits, open green

It will be the one of the first rental communities in Westchester County to have a solar roof and will offer residents a significant number of electric car charging stations targeting upwards of 15% of



Attendees at the event celebrated the topping off of the NorthLight at Edge-on-Hudson apartment community and were escorted on a hard hat tour of the building.

spaces, and ample seating and lounge areas for social or coworking use; two penthouse terraces; and a roof deck with sweeping views of the surrounding countryside.

An indoor clubhouse with coworking space, state-of-the-art fitness center, kids' playroom, communal kitchen and wine lounge are also planned. Climate-controlled storage space, bicycle parking, and a pet spa round out the amenity offerings at NorthLight at Edge-on-Hudson. A partially enclosed five-story resident parking garage with 427 parking spaces will offer private access to each floor.

"There is no rental experience like NorthLight within miles of the site," said Lily Ackerman, director of Hines. "The waterfront location will give residents a sophisticated rental option while the well-appointed apartment homes and resort-like amenity offerings will come together to bring this community to life."

In addition to the well-appointed residences and amenity spaces, NorthLight at Edge-on-Hudson will be a model for sustainable development in the region.

all parking spaces. As such, NorthLight at Edge-on-Hudson is poised to achieve LEED Silver or better and FitWel certifications, the developer stated.

NorthLight at Edge-on-Hudson is expected to be completed in the third quarter of 2022. Leasing and first unit deliveries are slated to begin in the first quarter of 2022.

Hines is a privately owned global real estate investment firm founded in 1957 with a presence in 240 cities in 27 countries. Hines oversees a portfolio of assets under management valued at approximately \$160.9 billion, including \$81.7 billion in assets under management for which Hines serves as investment manager, and \$79.2 billion representing more than 172.9 million square feet of assets for which Hines provides third-party property-level services.

Biddle Real Estate Ventures and PC Development are master developers of the Edge-on-Hudson project, which is to include 1,177 units of housing; a 140-room boutique hotel; 135,000 square feet of retail space and 35,000 square feet of office space.

emissions to zero by 2040. This nation-leading goal would fundamentally transform the state's energy system and its underlying economy.

But the governor's vision faces an old problem: the tale of two energy grids. The Hudson Valley and upstate New York have abundant sources of renewable energy and the real estate needed to build new clean energy facilities. Yet it lacks the demand to meet its supply. Simultaneously, downstate has a vast energy demand, but neither the room nor transmission to deliver enough renewable energy to meet needs. Thus, it relies almost entirely on fossil-based power generators.

The result: Hudson Valley and upstate economic development and job creation have been stifled, and environmental justice in New York City has been ignored. Families across New York City continue to live next to dirty, outdated power plants, and face higher rates of asthma than surrounding areas.

That's why Gov. Cuomo initiated the process of delivering renewable energy into New York City. If done right, the program could harness clean energy from across New York State for delivery in New York City. In so doing, the state can boost the entire state's economy while advancing environmental justice.

The state program calls for 3,000 megawatts (MW) of new, clean, renewable energy transmission. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio also has stated that the city is prepared to purchase its entire municipal load from this program—an additional 600 MW. And real

estate leaders face requirements to significantly reduce building emissions by 2030.

That's why state decision makers should use this moment to go big and invest in the entire 3,000 MW of renewable transmission. What's more, they should prioritize homegrown, New York renewables.

From groundbreaking to operation, communities across the Hudson Valley and upstate New York could gain thousands of private-sector clean-energy jobs thanks to this program. These include high-tech construction and operation jobs at new transmission, wind and solar facilities. New York could see billions of dollars in local economic investment and tax revenue, especially in regions that have long experienced significant economic need.

Unlike most issues that dominate Albany, connecting the two grids isn't a zero-sum game. In fact, upstate will only win when downstate wins.

As New York works to build back better from the fallout of COVID, NYSERDA must use this program to revitalize local communities. Republicans and Democrats alike can support it, while upstate and downstate communities will benefit from it.

**Editor's Note:** The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect those of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc.

Michael Oates is President and CEO of the Hudson Valley Economic Development Corp. of Poughkeepsie.



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Michael Adesso



Rashed Khalid



Deirdra McCoy



Mary Screene



Michael Casarella



Joan Harris



Nicole Benincasa

**ERA Insite Realty** has expanded its sales force with the addition of seven licensees. Principal Broker Lou Budetti reported that the licensees have joined the firm's Westchester County-based offices in White Plains, Bronxville and Pleasantville.

**Michael Adesso** has joined the White Plains office as a licensed salesperson. Adesso grew up in Yonkers and earned a Bachelor's degree from Manhattan College and had worked previously in the fitness field, as well as the family automotive service business. He has been licensed for the past two years with a boutique brokerage in southern Westchester. **Rashed Khalid**, a Pakistani native and now White Plains resident, has been a business owner and successful entrepreneur in his home country. He is eager to embark on this newest foray into real estate sales and rentals, company officials stated. Also joining the White Plains office is 22-year industry veteran **Joan Harris** of Yonkers. With a corporate services background that includes NBC and Revlon, she has excelled as a rental, sales and relocation expert at another Westchester firm since 1999. Joining ERA's Bronxville office is **Nicole Benincasa**. With a BA in Communications from SUNY Albany, she has worked in media sales, marketing and coordination in New York City for several years, including stints at NBC and Fox TV. She initially worked at ERA Insite as a weekend admin before earning her salesperson's license and jumping in full-time. Also joining the firm's Bronxville location are **Mary Screene** and **Deirdra McCoy**. Screene is a second-generation Realtor who grew up in Woodlawn; she currently resides in Rockland County where she has been practicing real estate for 13 years. With an in-depth knowledge earned from working in a local Rockland building department, she has more than the usual skills and resources to offer her clients. McCoy has been licensed for more than 15 years, working with well-known brokerages in southern Westchester. She holds an MIS from Iona College and is also a trained paralegal and longtime Yonkers resident.

Mount Kisco resident **Michael Casarella** has joined the ERA office in Pleasantville. Raised in West Harrison. He earned a B.S. in business administration from Boston University. Area residents may know Casarella from his more than 25 years in the restaurant business, including as the former owner of Stone Manor in Hawthorne and Goldfish Restaurant in Ossining, and as director of sales and catering for a five-star luxury hotel. ERA Insite Realty Services, part of the ERA global network, has been serving the Westchester market for more than 35 years out of the same headquarters location at 600 North Broadway in White Plains. It also has offices in Bronxville, Pleasantville and Yonkers, as well as Bethel, CT.

Commercial real estate brokerage firm **RM Friedland** has added veteran real estate executive **Charles Dewey** to the firm's investment sales division.

In his new role, Dewey will provide strategic marketplace analysis of clients' properties, as land and building owners everywhere are (or will be) assessing the highest and best use of their assets in a rapidly changing real estate environment and are seeking experienced counsel from frontline experts. He will also serve as a development consultant for RM Friedland's broader portfolio of clients.

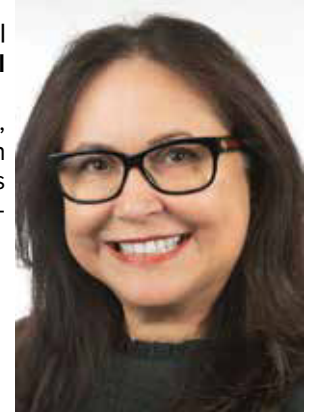
Dewey began his career as Director of New Business and Development for Pappas Enterprises a Boston-based developer. Dewey spearheaded large-scale real estate projects in Downtown White Plains, developing over 3 million square feet of space including Gateway I. Subsequently, Dewey held top-level positions with Mutual of New York and Advantage Real Estate Services. A resident of Scarsdale, Dewey most recently served as President and Managing Member of DDDG, LLC which specializes in real estate development, financing, acquisitions and dispositions, and co-investment opportunities. He received his BA from the University of Pennsylvania and his MBA from Wharton School of Business.



Charles Dewey

**Christie's International Real Estate Westchester | Hudson Valley** announced recently that Realtor **Kay Bal** has joined the firm's Scarsdale Sales Gallery.

Prior to transitioning to real estate full time in 2003, Bal worked as a Research Chemist from 1989 to 2002 in the United Kingdom and New York patenting a process technique in both Europe and the USA. She also operates her home staging service – "Lux Home Staging."



Kay Bal

**R2M Realty, Inc.** in Rockland County reports that **Yin Choy Chen** has joined the firm. Born and raised in Malaysia, Chen graduated with a degree in Mechanical Engineering and an MBA in the UK. He has more than 15 years of professional experience in the commercial and technical career tracks spanning the automotive, landscaping, building materials and control systems industries.

He has been a New York State real estate salesperson since 2014 with R2M Referral Group, a subsidiary of R2M Realty, Inc. He has lived in Rockland County for more than 15 years with his wife and two children. Having lived on three continents, he speaks fluent English, Mandarin (China), Cantonese (Hong Kong), Hokkien (Taiwan), Hakka and Bahasa Malaysia.



Yin Choy Chen



Seated, from left, Lisa Murphy, B.K. Bates and Julie Church. Standing, from left, Angela Kessel, Amanda Miller, Ellen Mosher, Joanne Mancuso and Pollena Forsman.

**Houlihan Lawrence** has announced that a record eight of its agents have been named among America's top 250 real estate professionals. Considered the industry's most definitive ranking, the prestigious REAL Trends & Tom Ferry "The Thousand" list, now in its 16th year, is advertised in *The Wall Street Journal*. The honor places them in the top one-tenth of 1% of the more than 1.4 million licensed real estate professionals nationwide.

The agents and their rankings are: **Pollena Forsman** (Larchmont) ranked 102nd in Transaction Volume with \$138.9 million in sales; **Ellen Mosher** (Greenwich) ranked 125th in Transaction Volume with \$124.9 million in sales; **Joanne Mancuso** (Greenwich) ranked 133rd in Transaction Volume with \$119.7 million in sales; **Julie Church** (Greenwich) ranked 174th in Transaction Volume with \$105.9 million in sales; **BK Bates** (Greenwich) ranked 187th in Transaction Volume with \$102.9 million in sales; **Lisa Murphy** (Rye) ranked 194th in Transaction Volume with \$101.6 million in sales; **Angela Kessel** (Bedford/Pound Ridge) ranked 199th in Transaction Volume with \$101.2 million in sales and **Amanda Miller** (Greenwich) ranked 207th in Transaction Volume with \$99.1 million in sales

**Christie's International Real Estate Westchester | Hudson Valley** announced that accomplished Realtor **Allan Erps** has joined the firm's New City Sales Gallery. The addition of Erps is a part of Christie's ongoing growth and expansion in the southern New York State market and beyond.

Erps is a Licensed Real Estate Salesperson and Licensed Commercial Salesperson with more than 20 years of experience in the industry. He specializes in all phases of real estate, including residential, commercial, relocation, short sales and foreclosures, and rentals and leases. He has been recognized for his superior skills and performance with industry recognition, including being a multiple recipient of various production ranking awards at previous brokerages. Erps has been a Rockland resident for 50 years and a Nanuet resident for 39 of those years. A founder of the Nanuet Social Club, he is a graduate of Bronx Community College, attended Lehman College and holds an Associate's Degree in Accounting and Business Management.



Allan Erps



# HGAR

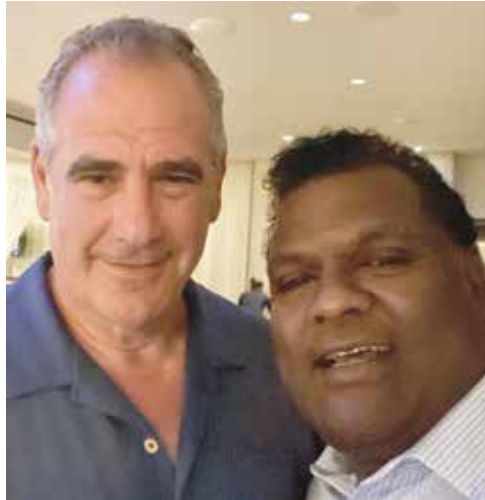
JULY 2021

# UPDATE

## RPAC President's Circle Conference 2021 Did Not Disappoint

By Anthony Domathoti  
HGAR President-elect

The past 15 months have drained me. You've probably felt the same way, for your own set of reasons. After being "Zoomed out in a rectangle" since the pandemic began, I felt a strong need for people, discussion, ideas, solutions, hugs and love!!!



From left; Charlie Oppler, NAR 2021 President and Anthony Domathoti, HGAR President-Elect

All these came at me like a tidal wave at the recent RPAC President's Circle Conference 2021.

The event featured a very well-balanced discussion of politics, real estate trends, economic forecasts, as well as great networking and food.

The program for the RPAC President's Circle Conference 2021 held at Marco Island, FL from June 20- 23rd was intended to provide President's Circle investors with the opportunity to learn and discuss policy concerns affecting the Realtor community. The RPAC President's Circle Conference's goal was to empower Realtors as they preserve, protect and advance the right to real property for all.

The speaker lineup was simply fantastic and the conference delivered on all fronts.

The conference launched with an energetic and thought-provoking opening by Donna Brazile, a renowned political strategist and commentator and a former interim chair of the Democratic National Committee

**Other speakers on Day 1 included:**

- Doris Kearns Goodwin, world-renowned presidential historian, public speaker and Pulitzer Prize winner and New York Times #1 Best Selling Author
- Joe Harris, NAR Vice President of Government Advocacy
- Young Kim, U.S. Representative (R-CA 39th District)
- Shannon McGahn, NAR Chief Advocacy Officer
- Charlie Oppler, NAR 2021 President
- Trish Regan, award-winning financial journalist, television host, opinion columnist and author
- Nate Silver, founder and editor-in-chief of FiveThirtyEight.com and special correspondent for ABC News
- Tom Suozzi, U.S. Representative (D-NY 3rd District)
- Lawrence Yun, NAR Chief Economist and Senior Vice President of Research.

**Day 2:**

Our morning started off with another amazing, delicious breakfast followed by the Morning Kick-Off with Kevin Brown, REALTOR Party Director. A Data & Predic-

tions seminar followed with Nate Silver, who was introduced by Maura Carey Neill, Public & Federal Issues Liaison.

Other highlights of the day included:

U.S. Representative Tom Suozzi (NY-3) in Conversation with VP of Government Advocacy Joe Harris, who were introduced by Asa Fleming, Community Engagement Liaison. We had a wonderful opportunity to share ideas and hear Rep. Suozzi share his vision and direction.

An RPAC Expert Panel was moderated by Tamara Suminski, RPAC Fundraising Liaison and featured panelists: Krista Clark, RPAC Major Investor Council Chair, Holli Woodward, RPAC Participation Council Chair, and Colin Mullane, RPAC Trustees Fundraising Committee Chair.

Another thought-provoking program included celebrated historian Doris Kearns Goodwin in Conversation with NAR President Charles Oppler, who were introduced by Colin Mullane, RPAC Trustees Fundraising Committee Chair. The discussion between NAR President Oppler and Doris Kearns Goodwin was in-



Anthony Domathoti HGAR President-Elect, Jennifer Stevenson, NYSAR Past President, Dave Legaz, NYSAR President, U.S. Representative Tom Suozzi, Jennifer Vucetic, President Elect, NYSAR, Margaret Hartman, NYSAR Past President



From left; Anthony Domathoti, HGAR President-Elect and U.S. Representative Tom Suozzi

Continued on page 12

## SPOTLIGHT ON

## A Woman of Many Talents

By Mary T. Prenon

Eugenia Foxworth recently had the distinction of being named president of FIABCI-USA, the global business networking organization for all professionals associated with the real estate industry. The owner of Foxworth Real Estate in Manhattan, she is also the first African American person elected to this position.

While she has excelled in the real estate profession for more than 20 years, Foxworth also harbors several hidden talents—she was the proprietor of a fine arts gallery on Manhattan's Upper East side, the owner of a national skin care line, a graduate of Drexel University with a degree in engineering, and a survivor of a virus that attacked her heart at a young age.

Growing up in the United Kingdom, Foxworth was exposed to the arts early on, traveling everywhere throughout Europe and the Middle East. When faced with an unknown virus affecting her heart, a doctor told her she may be limited in what she could do, but he also told her to do whatever she wanted.



Eugenia Foxworth

"That's how I got into art," she recalled. "I guess I became a fine arts dealer without realizing I was becoming a fine arts dealer!"

After returning to the U.S., Foxworth

Continued on page 19

**2021 HGAR RPAC HONOR ROLL  
as recorded by NYSAR to July, 2021**

**Thank you to the following Members  
who are leading the way in the 2021 RPAC campaign**

**Platinum R \$10,000**

- Dorothy Botsoe, Dorothy Jensen Realty Inc., White Plains
- Anthony Domathoti, Exit Realty Premium, Bronx
- Richard Haggerty, Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc.
- Nancy Kennedy, Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Croton-on-Hudson
- Michael Schmelzer, Tyrax Realty Management, Inc., Bronx

**Crystal R \$2500-\$4,999**

- JP Endres, Howard Hanna Rand Realty, New City
- Crystal Hawkins Syska, Keller Williams NY Realty, White Plains

**Sterling R \$1,000-\$2,499**

- Leah Caro, Park Sterling Realty, Bronxville
- Carol Christiansen, McGrath Realty Inc., Mount Kisco
- Katheryn DeClerck, Howard Hanna Rand Realty, Goshen
- Ronald Garafalo, John J Lease Realtors, Middletown
- Ann Garti, Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc.
- Joseph Houlihan, Houlihan & O'Malley, Bronxville
- Clayton Livingston, McGrath Realty Inc. Pawling
- Eli Rodriguez, Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors Inc., Bronx
- Mark Seiden, The Mark Seiden Real Estate Team, Briarcliff Manor

**President's Club \$500-\$999**

- Carmen Bauman, Green Grass Real Estate Corp., Bronxville
- Teresa Belmore, Keller Williams NY Realty, White Plains
- Irene Guanill, Century 21 Dawns Gold Realty, Bronx
- Maryann Tercasio, Howard Hanna Rand Realty, Central Valley

**Capitol Club \$250-\$499**

- Paul Adler, Rand Commercial, Nyack
- Roberta Bangs, Howard Hanna Rand Realty, New City
- Kevin Dwyer, The Dwyer Agency, Mahopac
- Marianne Lepore, Corcoran Legends Realty, Tarrytown
- Eydie Lopez, Keller Williams Realty Hudson Valley United, Middletown
- Robert Shandley, Howard Hanna Rand Realty, White Plains
- Cathleen Stack, HGAR, White Plains

**99 Dollar Club \$99-\$249**

- Barbara Barber, Claudia Barnes, Diane Blanton, Janet Brand, Lynette Browne, Randall Calano, Michael Criscuolo, Tony D'Anzica, Maria Theresa Duguet, Mark Engel, Jeffrey Farnell, Mary Kingsley, Patricia Holmes, Barry Kramer, Harding Mason, Tana McGuire, Elisa Bruno Midilli, Joanne Murray, Roseann Paggiotta, Mary Prenon, Brian Phillips, Walter Sadowski, Philip Weiden, Maria Weiss, Joey Williams, Kathy Zamechansky,

**Recap of Contributions Year to Date\*\***

**TOTAL: \$154,925 60% towards goal**

With 3,469 contributors 84% towards participation goal.  
Goal: \$255,201 from 4,103 contributors for a total of 36% of membership

## BOARDROOM REPORT

Boards of Directors  
Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc.  
April 21, 2021 via Zoom

### HGAR Management, Financial & Membership Reports

President Hawkins-Syska presented the President's Report providing her perspective on the state of real estate in the first quarter, observing that buyers are becoming frustrated due to the lack of inventory and bidding competition. President Hawkins-Syska also reported on fair housing issues and related developments indicating that fair housing issues exist in all areas and not just in areas that were featured in the *Newsday* report and need to be addressed by everyone.

CEO Haggerty presented the CEO's Report, indicating that the HGAR offices would be reopening on May 3rd and that half of the staff would come in on a two-week staggered basis. CEO Haggerty also announced that Freddimir Garcia was hired as the new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer of HGAR. He also indicated that there would be a more in-depth review of the newly adopted Policies and Procedures as well as more comprehensive committee reports at next month's Board Meeting.

HGAR Past President and Chair of the Nominating Committee Gail Fattizzi reported that the committee had reviewed 16 applicants for the vacant HGAR Directors position and was recommending Christina Stevens to fill the open position for the balance of this year. After discussion, the Directors confirmed the recommendation.

In-House Legal Counsel and Professional Standards Administrator Brian Levine then presented the Ethics Decision designated 270-E, which was provided to each of the Directors prior to the meeting. After review and discussion, the Directors affirmed the recommendations of the Hearing Panel in this matter.

President Hawkins-Syska then requested the Directors consider making a contribution of \$25,000 to the NAR Disaster Relief Fund. The Fund was first established in connection with the 9-11 attacks in 2001. She explained that the funds go to those Realtors and their families who have been affected by natural disasters and other emergencies. She also indicated that NYSAR had committed to contributing \$75,000 from its reserves. After discussion the Directors approved the \$25,000 contribution to the NAR Disaster Relief Fund.

CEO Haggerty then requested the Directors approve an expenditure of \$2,500 to have HGAR purchase a booth at the NAR C-5 Summit being held at the Marriot Marquis in New York City in September, 2021. He explained that the C-5 Summit was similar to the annual MIPIM Summit held in Cannes, France and pointed out that it was a commercial program. After discussion the Directors approved the expenditure.

Treasurer Carmen Bauman and Ron Garafalo, Director and Chair of the Policies and Procedures Committee, presented additional proposed language that was suggested at the previous Board Meeting relating to a specific dispute resolution and notification process to be included in the Policies and Procedures Manual. The Directors were provided a copy of the proposed language prior to the Meeting. Treasurer Bauman reviewed the language in detail. After discussion the Directors approved the proposed language.

The Board of Directors were provided an opportunity to interview and listen to the candidates for NAR First Vice President, Mike McGrew and Tracey Kasper.

CEO Haggerty reported on the amended Bylaws that were necessary for the Hudson Gateway Multiple Service, Inc. ("HGMLS") in light of the joint venture with the Long Island Multiple Listing Service, Inc. establishing OneKey MLS, LLC. CEO Haggerty pointed out that the corporate HGMLS entity was kept in place to take advantage of certain tax deductions and benefits. HGAR Counsel John Dolgetta, Esq. reviewed the proposed amended and streamlined HGMLS Bylaws in detail. After discussion the Directors approved the revised HGMLS Bylaws.

Director Ron Garafalo reminded the Directors about Lobby Day which was scheduled for April 27th and stressed the importance of attendance. He indicated to the Directors that they had to register for two separate Zoom segments, one was the NYSAR segment and the other was the HGAR segment. CEO Haggerty indicated that Phil Weiden was going to e-mail the legislative initiatives to the Directors.

Director Barry Kramer reported on the call to action relating to the Co-op Trans-

### RPAC President's Circle Conference

Continued from page 11

deed special. Our history is so important! The lessons learned in the past and today have the opportunity to change our future!

The multi-day event concluded with closing remarks by NAR President Oppler and President elect Leslie Rouda Smith...

The announcers and the speakers at the event gave us all time to reflect and be grateful for the opportunities here in the USA! I'm so very proud and honored to give back to a profession that has given me so much in the last 22 years. Tears of joy and happiness! A special thank you to National Association of Realtors CEO Bob Goldberg and staff who always go out of their way to keep us members "HAPPY" and thank you for taking the risk and allowing us to finally get-together in Marco Island, FL in 2021!

A welcome piece of good news was reported at the conference. The National Association of Realtors and the Food Recovery Network announced a partnership extension to combat hunger.

In closing, it was so great to be with Realtor family again in person! I was grateful for the opportunity to join the other 1,399 members of the President Circle at this year's President Circle Conference in Marco Island! The perfect conference to recharge, reconnect and RE-enforce the important advocacy that we must remain vigilant about in real estate! Private property rights and home ownership must continuously be brought to the forefront with our legislators! The opportunity to rub shoulders and spend time with the "Army of Good" refueled me, re-energized me, as we all stand ready to fight and win for our industry and the consumers we represent.

*HGAR President-elect Anthony Domathoti is a member of the 2021 RPAC President's Platinum Circle.*

parency Legislation in Westchester County. Director Kramer pointed out that the issue has received significant publicity recently and reported that there may be enough votes on the Board of Legislators to pass the new element to the current legislation, which will require co-op boards to provide a written reason for denial.

President Hawkins-Syska then reported on the upcoming Fair Housing Summit scheduled for April 29th. She reported that Richard Rothstein, the author of the "Color of Law," and Bill Dedman, one of the authors of the *Newsday* undercover investigative report, "Long Island Divided," would be guest speakers at the Fair Housing Summit. President Hawkins-Syska also reported that 46 individuals took the Fair Housing Challenge.

President Hawkins-Syska pointed out to the Directors that reports of the various Committees and Councils (i.e., Members Day Work Group, HGAR Professional Standards Committee, HGAR Fair Housing Committee, HGAR Education Council, HGAR Legislative Committee, HGAR RPAC Committee, HGAR Global Council, HGAR Commercial and Investment Division and HGAR Realtor Foundation) had been provided to them via e-mail and had also been included in their Directors' packets.

President Hawkins-Syska indicated that the session scheduled with Nicole Furlonge, Ph.D. would follow the close of the business portion of the meeting. Furlonge then conducted the diversity, equity, and inclusion training session.

Please welcome the new members in your area:

#### Designated Realtor

Hashim K. Campbell  
TC & Associates Realty Inc.  
906 Allerton Avenue  
Bronx, NY 10469  
718-231-8490

Natalie M. Childers  
Real Prop. Management NY Gold  
11835 Queens Blvd., Ste. 400  
Forest Hills, NY 11375  
347-905-5770

\*\* Marvin Dudley  
NextHome People First Realty  
495 Flatbush Ave., Ste. 16  
Brooklyn, NY 11225  
929-375-7696

\*\* Robert C. Hay  
Pocono Regional Realty, LLC  
404 Park Avenue  
Stroudsburg, PA 18360  
570-296-6400

Jay M. Heydt  
Vertical Real Estate LLC  
520 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10022  
646-747-7824

Eric Linden  
Linden Tree LLC  
395 Riverside Dr., Apt. 15C  
New York, NY 10025  
201-819-9450

Justin B. McCarthy  
McCarthy Realty Advisors  
44 Brookdale Place  
Rye, NY 10580  
914-787-9762

Maurice Morris  
MM Real Estate  
2725 Cruger Ave  
Bronx, NY 10467  
646-294-7010

Nadia P. Mundle  
Upward Movement LLC  
1029 E. 216th St.  
Bronx, NY 10469  
347-231-3289

Steven M. Riddle  
NYC Living Well Realty LLC  
231 E. 33rd St., 2nd Floor  
New York, NY 10016  
917-299-8447

\*\* Kelly H. Tran  
Tran Real Estate Inc  
14 Layton Avenue  
Staten Island, NY 10301  
646-642-2286

Donald E. Wilson  
Blue Woods Management Group  
3 West Main St., Ste. 205  
Elmsford, NY 10523  
914-524-8600

#### Affiliate

Isaac Benschabat  
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Bronx, NY 10461-1601  
718-863-2200

Denise Cranney  
CardSnacks For Business  
29 Faith Lane  
Ardsley, NY 10502  
408-888-5010

Adam R. Gonnelli  
Law Office of Adam R. Gonnelli  
707 Alexander Road  
Princeton, NJ 08540  
917-541-7110

Isaac Kohan  
Sodana Abstract  
2102 Ave Z  
Brooklyn, NY 11235  
718-902-7893

David Mizrahi  
FM Home Loans  
2329 Nostrand Ave., 3rd. Floor  
Brooklyn, NY 11210  
917-597-0870

Lou Triscari  
Maxons Restorations  
711 Westchester Avenue  
White Plains, NY 10604  
914-235-6767

#### Realtor

Sophia Alleyne  
Exp Realty, Yonkers

Idilcia Aracena  
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- August 5-** CORE Day\* with Dorothy Botsoe
- August 9-** Pricing Strategies For Listings and Listing Presentations\* with Katheryn DeClerck
- August 10-** Ethical Business Practices (CORE Requirement)\* with Peter Mallon
- August 11-** Matrix 1: Introduction to Matrix\* with Ismail Kolya  
 Legal Update (CORE Requirement)\* with William O’Keefe  
 Agency Update (CORE Requirement)\* with Carole McCann
- August 12-** Financing the Deal; Understanding the Mortgage Process\* with David Moore
- August 16-** How To Be A Real Live Agent Mastering VIRTUAL Real Estate\* with Katheryn DeClerck
- August 17-** Human Rights and Fair Housing (CORE Requirement)\* with Dorothy Botsoe
- August 18-** Matrix 2: The Next Step into Matrix\* with Ismail Kolya
- August 19-** Work with Municipalities – Navigating the Assessors Office/Building Department like a Pro\* with Katheryn DeClerck
- August 24-** Consumer Expectations (Includes 2 hrs. Agency)\* with Katheryn DeClerck
- August 25-** Matrix 3: Matrix to the Max\* with Ismail Kolya
- August 26-** Contracts to Closings\* with William O’Keefe
- August 31-** (Transaction Desk) Instant Forms & AuthentiSign\* with Katheryn DeClerck  
 HomeSnap: How to Provide Exceptional Service with Fastest Growing Mobile Platform\* with Katheryn DeClerck



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### CALENDAR

**JULY**

- July 26**  
 Update on Tax Implications of Foreign Investment in U.S. Real Property  
 Via Zoom, 12:00 Noon – 1:00PM
- July 27**  
 RPAC Happy Hour  
 Billy Joe’s Ribworks, Newburgh, 5:00PM – 7:00PM
- July 28**  
 Breakfast with Benefits  
 Indoor Air Quality  
 Via Zoom, 9:30AM – 10:30AM

**AUGUST**

- August 3**  
 Global Chat with State of Texas  
 Via Zoom, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM
- August 4**  
 Breakfast with Benefits: “Nine Technologies to Grow Your Business Easily”  
 Via Zoom, 9:30AM – 10:30AM

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## BARRISTER'S BRIEFING

By Brian S. Levine, Esq



## LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

By Philip Weiden



# The End of the State of Emergency: So Now What?

The New York State of Emergency effectively ended on June 24, 2021. With its ending, many of the regulations enacted by the governor ended as well. We've been waiting for this emergency to end for over a year. So now with the ending of the emergency and a transition back to what is "normal," Realtors should be asking themselves, "So now what?" What do we do regarding open houses, mask wearing, social distancing, vaccinations and COVID-19 forms? This week's article is a cheat-sheet of sorts of best practices and reminders.

### Cold Calling

The cold calling ban is over. You can, once again, cold call, so long as the recipient is not on the Do Not Call Registry. Make sure you check.

### Mask Requirements

Federal CDC guidance will still remain in effect in New York. This means that unvaccinated individuals will still be required to wear masks. Masks will still be required on all public transportation, as well as in certain settings such as pre-K through grade 12, large-scale indoor events, nursing homes, health care facilities, homeless shelters, etc. Masks may also be required by individual brokerage offices in order to enter, as well as homeowners may require the use of masks regardless of vaccination status.

### Refusal to Wear a Mask

If an individual refuses to wear a mask, the Realtor should not go forward with allowing the person access to the property. It is expected that all persons comply with the guidelines to keep others safe from possible exposure. All Realtors are obligated under the Real Property Law to act in an honest and trustworthy manner. To allow a person access to a property without a mask, when a mask is required, would be a violation of the law and could subject the Realtor to potential loss of licensure. It may also be deemed a violation of the Code of Ethics (Article 1 and 3).

### COVID-19 Forms

These forms were never mandatory, but they were effectively used during the pandemic to screen parties. Use of these forms are still at the discretion of the homeowner and a discussion should be held early on in a Realtor's representation of a homeowner as to whether the homeowner wishes to continue to utilize them. If a homeowner requires the execution of any COVID-19 form in order to gain access to a property, that request must be complied with.

### Vaccines

For people who are fully vaccinated (two weeks post completion of full vaccine regime) masks and social distancing are no longer required. For those that are not fully vaccinated (for example, the person received only one of two shots; two weeks have not passed since the last shot; children are not yet eligible for a vaccine and those who choose not to get vaccinated), they are still required to wear masks, maintain social distancing and continue to hand wash and disinfect high-touch surfaces.

**Businesses and Homeowner:** Can still require masks on their premises regardless of vaccination status. However, they cannot prevent those that are not fully vaccinated from entering the premises; they can only require the use of masks/disinfectant if a party is not fully vaccinated.

**Proof of Vaccination:** Vaccination proof can be provided in two different ways: (1) physical proof in the form of a vaccine card, Excelsior Pass, digital application, etc.; or (2) self-reporting/the honor system.

### Open Houses/Showings

Open houses and showing may now resume as they were in the past. A listing agent should discuss showings with the seller/landlord and decide on what proof of vaccination they are comfortable with. For people not wearing masks, the Realtor can ask for proof of vaccination prior to entering the property. This would mean that the listing agent would need to be at the door or have someone at the door verifying vaccination status. If a homeowner is comfortable, the listing agent could require cooperating brokers to verify that all parties are fully vaccinated (including the agent). If asked, cooperating agents would be required to confirm the status of themselves and their clients (Code of Ethics Art. 1 and NYRPL requires agents to be honest and truthful and treat all parties fairly). For all individuals not providing proof of vaccination, masks must be worn and high touch surfaces or surfaces that were touched must be cleaned and disinfected. If the homeowner refuses to require proof of vaccination in an acceptable form, all parties must wear masks and maintain six feet of social distancing. **NOTE:** Those that refuse to provide proof of vaccination upon request should be treated as unvaccinated (mask/social distancing required).

### Conclusion

While the State of Emergency has been lifted, there are some regulations that are still in place which are designed to continue to keep us all safe. Continue to abide by them and act in a safe manner in the interests of safety. Respect other's rights and they will respect yours.

*Brian S. Levine, Esq. is In-House Counsel/Director of Legal Services and Professional Standards Administrator for the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors.*

# July Legislative Update: Talking Infrastructure, Eviction Ban and NYC Mayoral Primary

Congress is debating infrastructure measures. There are two proposals. One proposal deals with traditional infrastructure items such as roads, tunnels, bridges and other types of hard infrastructure. The other broader measure includes child care and other social types of issues or economic types of the country. This is partly a response to the Flint water crisis disaster which left elevated levels of lead in the city's drinking water.

The federal CDC eviction moratorium has been struck down in principle by the Supreme Court but remains in effect in practicality until the end of July. Justice Kavanaugh, from the conservative side of the court, stated that he would have ruled it unconstitutional, but since it is set to expire, and would not be extended, he would give time for tenants and landlords to get up to speed on the COVID rental aid. New York's moratorium remains in effect until at least the end of August. The rental application for aid is now available, but has been hard to navigate, and the website has been plagued with ongoing problems.

The New York City mayoral race has been decided. Eric Adams, the Brooklyn Borough President, will likely be the next mayor after he won the Democratic nomination. He won a close race over former Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia. Maya Wiley who served under Mayor DeBlasio came in third. Brad Lander defeated Corey Johnson for New York City Comptroller. Talk show host Cutis Sliwa will be the Republican nominee for mayor but stands an unlikely chance to be elected in a Democratic-dominated city.

A New York City budget has also been passed into law. The budget adds money to the reserve fund for the city, and it increases funding for fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. Cities and states across the country are now flush with cash from a recovery and aid package that the federal government has sent to the states, and localities. The money must be spent by the end of 2024. Stay tuned for updates on these issues.

## Orange County Partnership Honors Its 2021 MVP Richard Golden

Continued from page 8

in Orange County, which particularly highlighted the counsel he gave the Orange County Partnership in its prolonged legal dispute with the New York State Authorities Budget Office. Golden, a partner in the Goshen-based law firm Burke, Miele, Golden & Naughton, LLP, recognized the injustice being perpetrated on the Partnership by the ABO, which prompted him to join the fight. Due in large part to his guidance, on Nov. 20, 2019, Orange County Supreme Court Judge Robert A. Onofry ruled that the Orange County Partnership is a private not-for-profit corporation focused on pursuing economic development throughout Orange County and rejected the ABO's assertion that the Partnership was a governmental public authority under its control.

The Partnership's Halahan described Golden as "the right man at the right time" that literally ensured that the Orange County Partnership could continue to fulfill its mission of promoting economic development "with grace, honesty and dignity."

Golden has extensive experience as a federal and state trial attorney, concentrating his practice in the areas of municipal law, employment law, civil rights, commercial law, public and private bidding and construction law, land use development, zoning, and general federal and state litigation, including appeals. For decades, he has not only served as counsel to government and municipal boards throughout Orange County and the surrounding Hudson Valley, but also has represented private developers and land owners as well.

Some of his more notable assignments include serving as County Attorney for Orange County from 1994 to 2001 under former County Executive Joe Rampe where he was responsible for a wide array of municipal, civil rights, construction and procurement, transactional and employment issues. In the late 1990s, he won court approval of one of the first Project Labor Agreements with the construction trades on the construction of the Orange County Courthouse.

He also crafted a law at the bequest of then Orange County Executive Rampe to allow for a public/private partnership for wastewater treatment plants in Orange County. It took two years to get the law passed and it still stands today. Most recently, as Attorney for the Town of Goshen, he successfully represented the town's interests in the approval process for LEGOLAND New York.

In his acceptance speech, Golden humbly accepted the MVP award and offered some hopeful advice to the assembled on how worthwhile projects can move forward. "There needs to be more collaboration and (projects) not be looked at as a 'zero sum state of mind,' and I think when that happens then everyone benefits including all the communities and their constituents because economic development is such an important part of having a vital community," he said.

Golden concluded his address by asking all those involved in economic development on both the government and private development side, "to look toward not just going into every meeting as sort of a new battle ground, but as an opportunity to better the project, address the necessary issues and get the project in the ground as quickly as possible."

# Welcome Home Westchester Campaign Launched To Combat Housing Shortage in Westchester County

PORT CHESTER—A host of business leaders were on hand for a press conference on June 24 to officially introduce the “Welcome Home Westchester” campaign, a multi-stakeholder effort to address the housing issue that has reached a crisis point over the past several years.

The “Welcome Home Westchester” campaign combines several companies involved in the home building and development of housing with economic leaders like the Westchester County Association and Nonprofit Westchester, academics and think tanks that have extensively examined the housing question, organizations dedicated to fighting against homelessness and supporting families in need, faith leaders and community advocates to drive forward a new conversation around housing in the county.

The campaign intends to focus on several key areas: reforming the way volunteer land use boards work and re-examining zoning to produce stronger, more resilient, and more economically dynamic communities. The campaign will also address the impact that the housing shortage has had on the economy, how it increases the difficulties in tackling climate resiliency, and how it significantly affects extremely low-income renters, people with disabilities, senior citizens, large families, and the homeless.

“When it comes to housing, inaction has costs. Outdated processes in need of reform at the municipal level have costs. “The way we’ve always done it” has costs. Right now, Westchester residents are paying for all of them,” Tim Foley, CEO and Executive Vice



Members of the “Welcome Home Westchester” coalition pose in front of the Regent Street Senior Apartments, an affordable housing unit in Port Chester.

President of the Building and Realty Institute said. “We believe that a multi-stakeholder campaign like this one can make the invisible visible, with respect to the everyday barriers to providing the housing we need, and encourage communities to make different, better choices to secure a Westchester that is welcoming to all who wish to live and work here – to our shared prosperity!”

“At the Westchester County Association, we are pleased to be working with Tim Foley and the Building and Realty Institute on its Welcome Home Westchester campaign. The WCA has identified the shortage of affordable housing as one of our region’s principal economic challenges and last year we revised our Real Estate Policy Playbook to include a separate section on this issue,” Michael Romita, president & CEO of Westchester County Association said. “Adequate housing impacts directly the availability of a skilled local workforce for our businesses and nonprofits. It is not simply that there is not enough residential real estate. It is that the cost of housing is fast becoming out of reach

for middle-class families. That threatens the long-term health of our economy. The BRI has heard the call and are helping take on this challenge.”

“Economic inequality in income and wealth has continued to widen since the Great Recession of 2009. With home equity accounting for nearly 30% of household wealth, affordable housing and home ownership must be a priority and legislative objective for communities committed to realizing opportunity for all people,” stated Jan Fisher, executive director of Nonprofit Westchester. “This will begin to address the life-limiting issues in health care, education and other critical areas resulting from systemic racism. We are proud to collaborate with BRI, government partners and other stakeholders in advancing affordable housing in Westchester.”

“There is no amount of taxpayer subsidy that will solve the problem without adequate supply of affordable housing. And the key to that is allowing the free market to operate without the discriminatory local zoning that has discouraged less expensive housing models,”

Alexander Roberts, former CEO and co-founder of Community Housing Innovations (CHI) said.

The location of the press conference, South Regent Senior Apartments, was chosen as an example of the type of high-quality housing options that the county needs more of, particularly for seniors, millennials, those needing supportive housing services, and working families. The senior housing building was a joint venture between developers Lou Larriza and Michael Martino and the nonprofit organization Housing Action Council. Both partners have extensive affordable housing experience. The Village of Port Chester supported the funding applications and expedited the land use process providing the fundamental approvals, making this development a reality.

Members of the “Welcome Home Westchester” coalition hope that this campaign will help steer the conversation on housing in Westchester County and create more opportunities for conversation and positive change around this issue. Through public education of the low-hanging fruit of revitalizing underutilized downtown areas and the “new Rust Belt” of unused office parks and commercial spaces, inspiration and education of grassroots activists and volunteers, and dialogue around the extensive policy recommendations made by the Westchester County Association’s Policy Playbook and the Westchester County Housing Needs Assessment, the “Welcome Home Westchester” campaign will help place Westchester at the forefront of the discussion on affordable housing and zoning reform, coalition officials, stated.



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# Houlihan Lawrence CT Office Posts Record More Than \$1B in Sales in First Half of 2021



23 Smith Road, Greenwich, CT

GREENWICH, CT—In what the brokerage firm says is a new record for the company, Houlihan Lawrence reported that its Greenwich and Riverside offices surpassed \$1 billion in sales volume in the first six months of this year. Last year, it took 11 months for the firm's Connecticut offices to reach the \$1-billion mark.

"Achieving this incredible milestone within six months is a new record at Houlihan Lawrence, and a testament to the amazing network of agents throughout our Greenwich and Riverside offices," said David Haffenreffer, brokerage manager of the Greenwich office.

The 10 highest prices sold in the Greenwich/Riverside market in the first half of this year were:

•23 Smith Road, Greenwich

\$27,750,000  
 •465 Field Point Road, Greenwich \$11,450,000  
 •118 Glenwood Drive, Greenwich \$11,325,000  
 •1 Harbor Drive, Greenwich \$10,000,000  
 •272 Round Hill Road, Greenwich \$9,500,000  
 •18 Red Top Road, Riverside \$7,800,000  
 •201 Otter Rock Drive, Greenwich \$7,500,000  
 •751 Lake Avenue, Greenwich \$7,495,000  
 •65 Clapboard Ridge Road, Greenwich \$7,495,000  
 •27 Khakum Wood Road, Greenwich \$6,880,000

The top transaction thus far in 2021, 23 Smith Road is a Belle Haven peninsula waterfront estate encompassing more than five acres on a private road with an extensive 681 feet of shoreline on Greenwich Harbor. It was the highest waterfront selling price so far this year in the Greenwich market. Houlihan Lawrence's Sally Maloney was the exclusive

listing agent of the property.

Houlihan Lawrence, which was founded in Bronxville in 1888, has 30 offices and more than 1,300 agents serving Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Columbia, Ulster and Orange counties in New York and Fairfield County in Connecticut.

## Fear and Blame in the Real Estate Culture

Continued from page 4

shoulders as we can be and are blamed for just about everything real or imagined. Sometimes we have to be the bearers of bad news and as the messengers we get blamed. All of this can contribute to an environment of a lack of accountability, trust and diminished professionalism, thus performance.

In March 2017, Liz Ryan wrote the article, "Ten Unmistakable Signs of a Fear-Based Workplace" for *Forbes* magazine. When I read the article, I was shocked at how many of those signs applied to the real estate industry. I'm going to share all of them and some are adjusted from employee to worker language to broker to agent language.

1. In a fear-based workplace, everyone is focused on their daily goals. They have to be because if they miss a goal, they could lose money. You won't get collaboration or innovation out of people who are scared to death!

2. In a fear-based culture, managers and staff people specialize in assigning leads, measuring results, punishing infractions and maintaining order. In a healthy culture, managers and staff people specialize in listening to agents, problem-solving with them, celebrating successes and envisioning even greater successes!

3. In a fear-based environment, agents are afraid to tell the truth because they already know no one wants to hear it.

4. In a fear-based agency, people talk incessantly about who's up and who's down in their numbers and deals. The rumor mill is more credible than official communication. In a healthy company, managers and agents talk about sticky topics. They don't avoid them just because they are awkward to address.

5. In a fear-based company, agents wonder whether they'll still have business next week.

6. In a fear-based workplace, following rules and avoiding blame are every team's top priorities. Collaborating, experimenting and having fun do not make the list. If there is a company mission statement on the wall, no one cares about it: the only mission employees can focus on is "Don't screw up!"

7. In a fear-based environment, managers talk about collaboration and out-of-the-box thinking but no one takes them seriously. You cannot get collaboration or new ideas from beaten-down agents.

8. In a fear-based culture, agents disappear without warning. When someone disappears, people speak their names in whispers if they mention them at all.

9. In a fear-based workplace the smartest and most capable agents don't get opportunities. The people who get opportunities and leads are the ones who most wholeheartedly embrace the fear-based culture.

10. In a fear-based environment, the hardest thing to do is to stay human. When you keep your sense of humor, your warmth and your confidence despite the cloud of fear, you can expect to be labeled "unprofessional" or worse.

Now I am not writing this to be a "Debbie Downer" (no offense to any of the Debbie's of the world). Yet, I was floored at this list. How do we counteract this? Through courage and accountability. This is a paradigm shift that must be modeled and supported by our office and industry leaders. Now this is easier said than done, yet it can be done. Here are some ways we can get started:

### Be a Responder Not a Reactor

It is easy for us to let our emotions take the wheel. When problems or challenges arise in your or your agents' businesses, pause. Pose the problem to the office and let them chime in with possible solutions. Be sure not to out the person needing help as this could create a sense of feeling unsafe. That could in turn arm the fight or flight defense.

### Build Trust

Building trust requires being a "real" person and being authentic. This is not a one-shot deal. It takes time and genuine one-to-one engagement. The simplest way is to say what you mean and mean what you say, tactfully. Keep your promises. If your office has a mission statement, live it.

### Create and Maintain a Process

Systems work! If agents have a roadmap it reduces fear. Being visual could also be an added boon. Also adding a component that allows feedback can increase engagement and inclusion.

We are not going to fix this overnight, but in our new environment managing fear and blame is an asset that is not going to go out of style anytime soon. So, let's all

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## 5 Questions with Orange County Executive Steven Neuhaus

Continued from page 2

store for each one. I see (demand) off the chart. On a regular basis I am meeting with people, including in Manhattan where I have been going back about every two weeks now, meeting with big executives that are kicking the tires to come up here (mainly for back office).

If you look at some of these companies that are down in New York City, some of them are telling me they are never going back to a physical footprint. They have been working from home for so long, that their new model will be to rent a massive amount of hotel rooms quarterly and use their conference rooms to meet with their clients if they need to physically meet. They have gotten so accustomed to Zoom, it has really accelerated the transformation of our society probably by 25 years just because of COVID...

I see a lot of activity in commercial and still heavy in distribution. We are still getting demand for 500,000-square-foot to 1 million-square-foot big distribution centers with some manufacturing aspects to it. We have this big company called "Royal Wine," they are the biggest kosher wine manufacturers in the world, they are in New Jersey and they have bought the old Kikkerfrosch (now Tri-State Logistics) site in Goshen and they are moving full speed on it. They are going through the approval process right now. We also have a lot of companies, such as Top Golf, Bass Pro, things of that nature that have a recreational and tourism, aspect to them (that are looking at investing in Orange County).

Tourism is off the charts. You are going to see the county do a number of things. Our Concert series is booming at Orange County Speedway. If you are a local guy like me, 20 years ago (concerts) were hot here with all sorts of major acts. Kind of died down for a bit, but now it is emerging strong. Toby Keith, Cheap Trick, George Thorogood are headlining this year's acts, but there are many, many more. I am getting calls regularly to not only have concerts at the Fairgrounds, but also at the county parks. All of those festivals that were canceled in the Hudson Valley are almost all now (taking place) in Orange County... **Editor's Note:** County Executive said it will be doing 10 drive-thru festivals in 2021. He added that the German Festival usually held at Hunter Mountain, will be held in Orange County at county parks in September and October. He also noted that television/film production has increased significantly in the county to the point that demand for more production space has put some strain on the distribution sector of the commercial market since the production firms are also seeking warehouse and distribution type facilities in the county.

# 4

**Real Estate In-Depth:** Recently, chief officials of the Orange County Industrial Development Agency pled guilty to corruption charges and agreed to reimbursements totaling well in excess of \$1 million to the agency. Do you believe that major changes need to be made and if so, please explain? Also, do you feel that their plea deals with the District Attorney and State Comptroller should have included some jail time?

**Neuhaus:** First off, I think there should be major changes. The IDA historically has been a "Good Old Boys' Club." Its (Directors) are appointed solely by the Legislature with no input from the County Executive whereas we have a ton of other Boards—Orange County Community College, Soil & Water Boards, Agricultural Boards and Development Boards, where the County Executive makes recommendations and the Legislature confirms or denies them. I have never had any of my confirma-

tions denied since I have been in office. They have all been historically unanimous votes. The IDA is its own animal. It has been appointed by the Legislature and to me everybody that has been on it for the most part is riddled with conflicts. Whether it is the industry they work for or the industry they represent, that inherently starts off with major conflicts. Many of the members of the IDA Boards have had their personal companies benefit from them being on the IDA. That should stop. They need to pick some people without conflicts. It can be done. I did it with Orange County Community College, which was sinking financially. I put on four Board members—retired bankers, retired accountants—that knew their way around both good and bad times and they straightened it out. So, I think that could help with the IDA. Those (conflict) rules are going to be coming down sooner or later, whether it is the Legislature that is proactive and makes some of those steps themselves or whether it comes down from a higher power like the state or somewhere else.

I think those who pled guilty, in particular the \$1-million man, should have gotten jail. He was the kingpin of this and the whole thing stinks to the public of rich man's justice—you pay your money back and you don't have to go to jail. By the way, if you pay it back in a month or two, your felonies are going to be reduced to misdemeanors... When we saw this whole case portrayed to us on how blatantly they ripped off the taxpayers, because I consider it taxpayer money, some people don't, but it is, you are defraying taxes. So, I am disappointed in the sentences (plea agreements). I think the punishment does not match the crime... I think this is just a chapter that is closed. I think you are going to see a few more chapters develop over the next few months if not years as they try to really fix what happened here...

**Real Estate In-Depth:**

# 5

The New York State Department of Transportation recently held a webinar on its ongoing study of the possible expansion of Route 17. The DOT study,

which is expected to be released at the end of October, pegs the cost of the expansion at anywhere from \$245 million to as much as \$1 billion, depending upon the scope of the project. Is this project critical to the region and is it feasible considering the high cost?

**Neuhaus:** This project is critical for the State of New York, not the region. There is no region in the State of New York that has the amount of tourism value that is being developed right now than Orange County—nobody. Dinosaur Park is being done (in the Town of Wallkill), LEGOLAND New York, the largest Legoland in the world until the Chinese get theirs online (just opened). This is a prime opportunity. The same thing with Woodbury Common, which is poised to do a massive expansion. All those will benefit from the expansion of Route 17. I think there has never been a better opportunity than today. Whether it's \$1 billion, \$1.5 billion or \$500 million, whatever that number is, there will never be a better opportunity in my lifetime. There is a massive federal infrastructure bill, you have the Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer from New York State, so this is an opportune time for us. Is it guaranteed to happen for us? No. But, if there was a loud chorus of people saying, "This is the project to do. Now is the time." (If the federal infrastructure bill passes) it (the Route 17 expansion) should be the first one done in New York State. They could do what they want in New York City, they have a lot of infrastructure issues too, but this is a region that is growing. You see massive com-

mercial and residential development. Residential development in Southern Orange County is off the charts. You are going to need to match that with a transportation system that actually works. **Editor's Note:** When asked what the regional fallout might be if the Route

17 expansion project is not undertaken, the County Executive responded: "You are going to have Planning Boards that are going to say, 'We love the project, but it is just not doable with the current infrastructure.'"

## Suburban NYC Home Sales Continue Historic Run

Continued from page 1

last year sales activity was suppressed due to restrictions imposed to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

According to the OneKey MLS report, the median sales price increased in every area and continues to exceed the "bubble" prices of the 2008-2009 market. The median sale price for a single-family residential unit in Orange County rose 20.8% to \$360,000 (from \$298,000 one year ago), exceeded by an increase of 31.4% in Sullivan County to \$229,900 from \$175,000 one year ago.

The median price for single-family houses in Westchester County, increased 17.6% to \$835,000 from \$710,000 last year. The median sale price for a single-family residence in Putnam County shot up by 23.3% to \$442,000 (from \$358,400) and Rockland County's single-family median price rose by 15.8% to \$550,000 (from \$475,000) and Bronx County saw a 7.2% increase to \$565,000 (from \$527,000) as compared to the second quarter of 2020.

Sales of condominium units increased in all counties with the exception of Sullivan) and co-op sales in Westchester and the Bronx counties continued to improve.

The median sale price for a condominium in Westchester rose 3.8% to \$405,000 as compared to 2020. The median condo price in Putnam rose 28.6% to \$283,000; condo prices in Rockland shot up 24% to \$310,000; and Orange County condo prices increased 15.8% to \$220,000. The condo median sale price in the Bronx fell 6.3% to \$300,000 in the second quarter of this year.

The median sale price of a co-op in Westchester was flat at \$190,000 in the second quarter of 2021 as compared to 12 months earlier, while the Bronx co-op median rose 10.8% in the second quarter of 2021 to \$230,000.

Reaction to the latest sales and price data from the region was mostly positive, with most predicting continued heady sales activity, at least in the short term.

Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors President Crystal Hawkins Syska said market conditions throughout the region continue to show a seller's market, however, she noted that second quarter sales statistics really reflect activity generated earlier in the year.

"Right now, for the first time since we had this crazy market, I am seeing more price reductions starting to show up in different pockets and I am still seeing a major slowdown in co-op sales," she said.

Syska, who is an Associate Broker with Keller Williams NY Realty of White Plains, added that the slowdown in co-ops is particularly prevalent in one-bedroom and studio units.

Noting that the median price of a single-family home in Westchester has shot up to \$835,000, the sweet spot for the market appears to be in the \$500,000 to \$600,000, where the competition is heavy for those available homes, she noted.

Syska said that inventory is still low, but is hopeful that once homeowners read about market conditions and feel more confident about COVID vaccines and the ongoing economic recovery, they may begin to put their properties on the market in August and September.

She said she is concerned that the current escalation in home values will be a roadblock to some families to purchase homes in the region. In fact, she said that she already knows of some entry-level prospective buyers who have given up on the market at the moment.

According to Houlihan Lawrence's second quarter residential report, the brokerage firm noted that the exodus of buyers looking to leave New York City to less congested communities, which had dominated sales activity in 2020, had lessened. However, the pent-up-demand still outweighs the supply. Listings declined in the 30%-40% range year-over-year in Westchester, Putnam and Dutchess counties and pending sales increased anywhere from 25%-52%.

"While the current market is one of the best environments to list a home, buyers remain value conscious. Even in these circumstances, if a list price is perceived to be inflated, it will linger on the market until the price is perceived actionable," said Liz Nunan, president of Houlihan Lawrence.

Nunan added that while the lower and middle range priced homes have traditionally had higher demand, that is not always the case with the luxury segment. "In fact, there was an oversupply in luxury inventory in some areas for the past few years. Currently, most of our luxury markets have seen the most significant percentage increase in pending and closed sales, some in triple digits, and demand remains strong across the board," she said.

Houlihan Lawrence also reported that in every area north of New York City, the number of luxury sales was higher in the first half of 2021 versus the same period in 2019, indicating the COVID effect is still impacting the luxury markets.

The absorption rate of homes for sale north of New York City is strong, according to Houlihan Lawrence. Buyers are motivated and decisive due to limited supply, and competitive bidding is not uncommon. Approximately 30% of luxury sales closed over asking price in Westchester County since the beginning of 2021.

"Some luxury homes are still sitting on the market. Sellers who want to capture the momentum are reducing their price to be more attractive to price-sensitive buyers," said Anthony P. Cutugno, senior vice president, director of private brokerage at Houlihan Lawrence. "The duality of the market—competitive bidding alongside price-sensitive buyers—appears contradictory. However, price is always a primary consideration in real estate decision making. Value has to be displayed even when supply is tight, and often, multiple offers signal to a potential buyer that strong demand now may be a precursor to future strong demand as well."

# 86th Annual Golf & Tennis Outing, Village Club of Sands Point, June 21, 2021



Standing from left, Richard Guarino, Friedman Roth Realty Services, BMNAR Past President; Anthony Corvino, Original Energy; Kneeling from left, Felix Nazario, Mount Sinai Hospital and Jim Slattery, Slattery Energy Consulting, Golf Chairman.



From left, Mark F. Engel, Langsam Property Services Corp., BMNAR Past President; David Diamond, Diamond Property Group, 2021 Humanitarian Award Recipient; Kathy Zamechansky, KZA Realty Group, BMNAR Past President; Richard Haggerty, HGAR Chief Executive Officer; and Eliezer Rodriguez, Esq., Director of Advocacy, Commercial & Legislative Issues for Bronx & Manhattan | Liaison for Bronx Chapter.



From left, Gail Fattizzi, Westchester Real Estate Inc., HGAR Immediate Past President; Vincent Buccieri, Today Realty Corp, Regional Director and Chapter Representative Bronx; Crystal Hawkins Syska, Keller Williams NY Realty, HGAR President; Eliezer Rodriguez, Esq., Director of Advocacy, Commercial & Legislative Issues for Bronx & Manhattan | Liaison for Bronx Chapter; and Christina Stevens, Laujel Realty Corp., BMNAR Past President.



Standing from left, Mark F. Engel, Langsam Property Services Corp., BMNAR Past President; John P. Sheehan Jr., Sky Line Property; John P. Sheehan Sr., Skyline Property; David Levy, Empire National Management; Steve Wolinetz, Wolinetz Management LLC; and Joe Mawad, Tekniverse. Seated from left, Michael Haledjian, Direct Energy; Greg Schwartz, Slattery Energy Consulting; and Jim Slattery, Slattery Energy Consulting, Golf Chairman.

## New Members

Continued from page 12

Paulette Galella  
Barhite & Holzinger, Inc.  
Steven H. Gold  
Refin Real Estate  
Beverly Gonzalez  
Coldwell Banker Realty, White Plains  
Marina Gudoshnikova  
LG Fairmont  
Angela Guyton-Cyril  
Century 21 Future Homes Realty, Bronx  
Trena Holmes  
Exp Realty, White Plains  
Krystal L. Holt  
Exp Realty NYC  
Khalina Houston  
Exp Realty, White Plains  
Michael C. Iuzzolino  
Keller Williams Realty, Chester  
Marina Ivanova  
Exp Realty, White Plains  
Carson Jacobs  
eRealty Advisors Inc.  
Darnell James  
Coldwell Banker Reliable  
Stanley Jean  
Keller Williams Hudson Valley, Middletown  
Michael I. Johnson  
Compass, New York  
Salih Kadric  
Keller Williams NY Realty  
Rebecca Kassirer  
Exp Realty, White Plains  
Peter Katsiitis  
Hire Realty LLC  
Lia Kenny  
Compass Greater NY, LLC, Pelham  
Rashed Khalid  
ERA Insite Realty Services, White Plains

Jannel V. King  
Houlihan Lawrence, Inc., Somers  
Paula Kupka  
Coldwell Banker Realty, Somers  
Casey Ladouceur  
Keller Williams Realty, Chester  
N'Soligne J. Lauriano  
Exp Realty, White Plains  
Avrum C. Lebrecht  
eRealty Advisors, Inc.  
Shlome Leifer  
eRealty Advisors, Inc.  
Kristen A. Lena  
Lena Family Realty LLC  
James C. Lewis  
Prime Realty Group, Inc.  
Andrew F. Lokko  
BRE Services LLC  
\*\* Austin Lopez  
Exp Realty, White Plains  
Wendong Ma  
Scarsdale Real Estate Services  
Nora I. Manzollilo  
Keller Williams Realty, Chester  
Michael A. Martell  
Willam Raveis - New York, LLC, Somers  
Marcus Martinez  
Keller Williams Hudson Valley, New City  
Elizabeth B. Maze  
Julia B Fee Sotheby's International Realty, Bronxville  
\*\* Chelsea E. McGowan  
Keller Williams Hudson Valley, Kingston  
Andrea McIntosh  
Keller Williams Realty, Chester  
Robert Medrano



From left, Vincent Buccieri, Today Realty Corp., Regional Director and Chapter Representative Bronx; Erin Diamond, Diamond Property Group; David Diamond, Diamond Property Group, 2021 Humanitarian Award Recipient; Susan Diamond, Diamond Property Group; Mark F. Engel, Langsam Property Services Corp, BMNAR Past President; Jim Slattery, Slattery Energy Consulting, Golf Chairman; and Eliezer Rodriguez, Esq., Director of Advocacy, Commercial & Legislative Issues for Bronx & Manhattan | Liaison for Bronx Chapter.

# A Woman of Many Talents

Continued from page 11

attended Drexel University in Philadelphia, where she studied engineering. But after graduating, she returned to the art world. "I never practiced engineering," she admitted. "I have a funny little mind and get bored easily, so I just went back to what I really loved."

Ironically, it was her love of the arts that eventually led her to real estate. By then, her Foxworth Gallery on East 65th Street in Manhattan was doing so well that she was looking for a new, larger space. Her location request was specific—East 57th to 79th streets between Madison and Park avenues. "The Realtors I was working with kept taking me to the West Side and were showing me second and third floor options," she recalled. Frustrated that they weren't finding what she wanted, Foxworth decided to do it herself by getting her own real estate license.

She took an accelerated course, passed the New York State exam and got her license, starting out with a smaller brokerage in the city. "I stayed only about a month and then one day, walking down the street, I saw a Coldwell Banker office on Columbus Avenue and they were having a great cocktail party inside," she remembered. "I walked in, introduced myself and shortly afterward I was working with them."

Foxworth stayed with Coldwell Banker until 2006, then opened her own firm, Foxworth Real Estate, in 2008. "It was when the bottom fell out of real estate, so it probably wasn't the best time to do this," she said. Deciding on a business location came easily when a friend suggested the New York Women's Chamber of Commerce building in Harlem. "I didn't really know Harlem, so I decided to stay for only two years," she said. "Well, I fell in love with it and I'm still here today."

Foxworth is noted for successfully helping homeowners there save their brownstone properties from foreclosure. "One should really know their community and I helped to educate people who were purchasing or already purchased homes," she said. Foxworth charged nothing for her service. "I did it for free because I wanted to let them know what to do, how to get renters for properties, how to budget and where to get financial assistance," she added.

As a result, Foxworth was honored as a "Woman of Excellence" by the New York Women's Chamber of Commerce and Real Estate Agent Advisor highlighted her as "One of the Phenomenal Women in Real Estate."

Foxworth describes her firm as a "boutique" agency that goes far beyond your typical residential properties. She's handled sales and rentals of everything from churches, to schools and spas. She also makes it a point to sponsor many local events. "Wherever you are, you need to give back to the community," she said.

Eventually, she sold the arts business, as well as a skin care line that she developed some years earlier. Foxworth got the idea after attending a fashion show in SoHo, and received a gift bag with skincare products. "I just couldn't

find them in the stores so I called the phone number on the box and ended up buying the company," she said.

Foxworth expanded the line nationally, with J.C. Penny carrying some of the products. The U.S. government even bought a shaving cream product that was sold in every commissary.

Her first introduction to FIABCI was quite by accident. While still with Coldwell Banker, she was tinkering on the computer one evening and something popped up about a FIABCI event. "It sounded interesting so I attended. After that, I was hooked, going to events at all different places, having delicious food and meeting a lot of new people," she said.

No stranger to international real estate, Foxworth has listed and sold properties globally, her first one in Acapulco, Mexico. She has traveled extensively and often says it's probably easier for her to tell people where she hasn't been yet.

Foxworth joined FIABCI in 2001 and four years later, became the local president of the tri-state area. In fact, she even credits FIABCI with helping her to start her own agency. "At one point, I had a FIABCI intern working with me and one day she actually said to me 'Why don't you just open your own company' and so I did," she quipped.

As the new FIABCI-USA president, her first goal is to get more exposure for the organization. "Very few people know about us even though we're in 65 countries," she noted. Foxworth hired a public relations firm and wants to spread the news around the globe. She is also starting a podcast that will cover all topics—not just real estate. "This is perfect timing because Diana Ross just released a new album and a lot of people think I look like her!"

Founded in 1951 in Paris, FIABCI has provided access and opportunities for real estate professionals interested in gaining knowledge, sharing information and conducting international business with each other. "One aspect of our work is affordable housing and I want to go beyond the minimal percentage of affordable housing that a city may allocate," she explained. In addition, FIABCI offers scholarship opportunities to universities. "I'd like to focus on the smaller colleges and universities because that's where we'll find students pursuing real estate or architecture degrees, and will take what they've learned back to their communities to help them rebuild."

Foxworth also serves on several boards related to the real estate industry. In 2019, she was recognized as a "Woman of Courage" by the *Harlem Community News* and Health First. New York State Assembly Member Inez E. Dickens and Gale A. Brewer, the Manhattan Borough president, also honored Foxworth with certificates of recognition for her dedication and service.

When she's enjoying some limited free time, you'll find Foxworth in art galleries and museums, as well as the opera, ballet and jazz clubs. "I have everything I need right here—the theater, fine wine and of course, champagne."



HOULIHAN LAWRENCE  
COMMERCIAL



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FOR SALE | Civic Center Plaza | Poughkeepsie Listed by Steven Salomone & Don Minichino | \$13,000,000



## MIXED-USE PROPERTY W/ AUTO BODY | 2 APTS & HAIR SALON

FOR SALE | 844-852 Midland Avenue | Yonkers Listed by Bryan Lanza | \$3,299,000



## 8,200 SF MIXED-USE BUILDING WITH 24+ CAR LOT ZONED - B3

FOR SALE | 467-477 Central Park Ave. | White Plains Listed by Bryan Lanza | \$1,900,000



## FULLY APPROVED SHOVEL READY DEVELOPEMENT SITE AVAILABLE

FOR SALE | 155 North High Street | Mount Vernon Listed by Garry Klein | \$1,650,000



## FULLY APPROVED SHOVEL READY 4 LOT SUBDIVISION

FOR SALE | 575 King Street | Port Chester Listed by Garry Klein | \$1,200,000



## 2-STORY BUILDING | OCCUPIED BY JOHN 3:16 CHRISTIAN CENTER

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## PROFESSIONAL | MEDICAL CONDO ACROSS FROM CAREMOUNT BLDG

FOR SALE | 101 S Bedford Road, Ste. 401 & 402 | Mount Kisco | Listed by Jared Stone | \$529,000



## HIGHLY VISIBLE PROFESSIONAL BUILDING WITH GREAT EXPOSURE

FOR SALE | 2124 Central Park Avenue | Yonkers Listed by Thomas Hennessy | \$475,000

## RETAIL SPACE LOCATED DIRECTLY ACROSS FROM SILVER LAKE PARK

FOR LEASE | 85 Lake Street | West Harrison Listed by Mike Rackenberg | \$50 PSF Modified Gross

## GHOST KITCHEN CATERING BUSINESS ON MAMARONECK AVE

FOR SALE | 257 Mamaroneck Ave. | Mamaroneck Listed by Silvio Cangiani & Peter Chen | Call for price

## 1,271 SF TURNKEY MEDICAL OFFICE AVAILABLE IN WHITE PLAINS

FOR SUBLEASE | 12 Greenridge Avenue | White Plains Listed by Abbye Suskin | Pricing available upon request

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FOR LEASE | 69 Elm Street | Ardsley Listed by Garry Klein | \$9.50/ SF (incl base year RE Taxes)

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FOR LEASE | 5591 Broadway/252nd Street | Bronx Listed by Marc Luchansky | Please call for pricing

## GREAT RETAIL SPACE STEPS FROM GETTY SQUARE IN YONKERS

FOR LEASE | 29 South Broadway | Yonkers Listed by Jared Stone | \$21 PSF Modified Gross

## NEWLY RENOVATED OFFICE SPACES IN PROFESSIONAL BUILDING

FOR LEASE | 110 Washington Avenue | Pleasantville Listed by Kim Galton | \$30 PSF Full Service Gross

## 13,000 SF IMMACULATE INDUSTRIAL ZONE / WALK TO TRAINS

FOR LEASE | 325 Fayette Avenue | Mamaroneck Listed by Andy Grossman | Please call for pricing

## FORMER MONTESSORI PRE-SCHOOL AVAILABLE W/ AMPLE PARKING

FOR LEASE | 2405 Crompond Rd. | Yorktown Heights Listed by Garry Klein | \$5,750 Per Month

## RENOVATED OFFICE SPACE IN PRIME LOCATION AVAILABLE

FOR LEASE | 2229 Crompond Rd. | Cortlandt Manor Listed by Kim Galton | \$2,000 Month Mod. Gross

## NEWLY REHABBED FLEX SPACE ALONG NYS ROUTE 9

FOR LEASE | 3665 Albany Post Road | Yonkers Listed by Bill Flood & Don Minichino | \$17.00 NNN

## WAREHOUSE ON BUSY ROUTE 9G PLENTY OF ONSITE PARKING

FOR LEASE | 457 Violet Avenue | Harrison Listed by Bill Flood & Don Minichino | \$12.50 MG

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# Building Trades Cry Foul Over Westchester IDA's Approval of Gateway II Project Modifications

By John Jordan

WHITE PLAINS—Earlier this year, the Westchester County Industrial Development Agency approved new workplace regulations requiring applicants seeking incentives to hire more local workers and enroll in apprentice programs. On June 24, voting on the first project that would fall under those rules, the IDA Board in a 6-1 vote granted the developer some relief from those newly imposed rules.

Shortly, after the IDA Board's vote to preliminarily induce the \$275-million Gateway II mixed-use project in Downtown White Plains, Edward Doyle, president of the Building & Construction Trades Council of Westchester and Putnam Counties Inc. said the terms proposed by the developer (Greystar Real Estate Partners and the Alaska Permanent Fund) were "totally unacceptable." He said the council's Executive Board was planning to send a letter detailing its objections to the developer's revised terms to the Westchester County IDA.

The IDA Board's vote approving the preliminary inducement of the project qualifies the developer to receive \$5.36 million in sales tax exemptions and \$1.65 million in mortgage recording tax exemptions. The PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) agreement reached with the City of White Plains and the White Plains School District is valued at \$27,183,162, according to documents filed with the Westchester County IDA.

The Gateway II project is to be developed by GS White Plains Owner, LLC, which is led by Greystar Real Estate Partners and the Alaska Permanent Fund. The developer asked for modi-



A rendering of the Gateway II project that will feature 500 apartments and 19,000 square feet of retail space in the heart of Downtown White Plains.

fications easing some of the newly imposed workforce regulations approved earlier this year based on negotiations between Westchester County and the county's building trades. Labor representative on the IDA Board, Richard McSpedon voted against the incentives due in part to the workforce modifications.

Representatives of the developer, Eon Nichols, Esq., an attorney with Cuddy & Feder LLP of White Plains and Ryan Souls, vice president of Greystar Real Estate Partners, told the IDA that if it were to comply with the recently enacted workforce rules, the project cost would increase by 20% or by \$37.9 mil-

lion. The developer spelled out the cost overruns in a June 23rd letter that was first given to IDA Board members at the session held on June 24.

Both the IDA's McSpedon and Doyle of the Building Trades Council, questioned those labor cost estimates.

Greystar's Souls in the letter stated, "By way of this correspondence, the Applicant is requesting, in writing, a relaxation of two of the Labor Policies relating to the Project, namely the Local Hire Labor Policy and the Apprenticeship Program Policy. To be clear, the Applicant is not seeking to brook an exception from complying with Labor Policies in their entirety. Instead, the Applicant is proposing a number of good faith, alternative means of achieving the spirit of the Labor Policies, which is to promote an important IDA corporate purpose, namely job creation for residents of Westchester County and the lower Hudson Valley."

The developer stated in the letter that it would engage in best efforts by its Construction Manager (LRC Construction, LLC of White Plains) to hire up to 85% construction workers from the local labor markets (Bronx, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Westchester and Albany counties) with a minimum of 50% local labor from these markets, subject to available workers. Applicant will also request best efforts by the Construction Manager to hire 30% of the above workforce solely from Westchester County.

The new workforce rules require Applicants receiving IDA benefits shall utilize at least 85% local labor (Bronx, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland and Westchester) for their approved projects; 35% of which must be Westchester County residents.

In terms of the apprenticeship requirements, the developer is proposing an apprenticeship program through the Business Council of Westchester, whereby the Construction Manager has agreed to join with BOCES in enrolling apprentices into both classroom studies of 144 hours minimum as well as hiring for the project for field experience and practical training immediately upon enrollment into the BOCES or other New York State Department of Labor courses. The Construction Manager expects to offer enrollment to 30 apprentices which will be up to 15% of the project's 200 workers at the project site.

Doyle said he also objected the modifications to the apprenticeship requirements. He told *Real Estate In-Depth* that he was first contacted by the Construction Manager, Louis Cappelli of LRC Construction on June 23 to discuss

workforce specifics of the Gateway II projects.

In its letter, Greystar stated it intended to hire union workers on the project. Specifically, the firm stated it would hire Local 456 Teamsters for all concrete deliveries; Local 137 Operating Engineers on the excavation equipment, as well as assisting on cranes, tower cranes, and high-rise building hoist car operations; Local 279 Interior Carpenters for studs, finished trim, and cabinet/millwork installation; Local 46 Lathers for post-tension cable installation on high-rise section of building superstructure and Local 60 Laborers for general cleanup on debris of the high-rise building.

IDA Chairman Joan McDonald, prior to the vote, said in explaining her support for the preliminary inducement of the project, noted that the Gateway II developer is looking to begin construction in August. "I think what has been negotiated with the developer regarding the apprenticeship program—enrolling a minimum of 30 apprentices in an apprenticeship training program—is a very positive first step," she said.

McDonald said she also factored into her decision the project's economic impact, as well as the fact that the developer had recently held discussions in good faith with the building trades and has committed to the IDA to use local labor and in particular members of the building trades, which is not a requirement. McDonald noted that if the developer failed to comply with the terms of its deal with the IDA, there are claw back provisions in place.

## Project Details

The proposed Gateway II project seeks to redevelop an existing surface parking at 25 North Lexington Ave. into a 500-unit, 25-story residential apartment building. The project includes 19,000 square feet of ground floor retail and 755 parking spaces (626 serving the project and 129 spaces dedicated to the adjacent Gateway One office building, which is owned by the Alaska Permanent Fund.

The proposed residential building encompassing 500 apartment units includes a 25-story tower portion paralleling North Lexington Avenue to the East and an intersecting 16-story tower running westerly from North Lexington to Ferris Avenue. The residential lobby will be located with access on both Lexington Avenue and Hamilton Avenue. The residential building will also include both indoor and outdoor amenities serving residential tenants.

The mix of apartment units includes 167 studio units, 208 one-bedroom units, 117 two-bedroom units, and eight three-bedroom units. A total of 15 on-site units will be classified as affordable in compliance with the city's Affordable Rental Housing Program Regulations in addition to a \$3.8-million contribution to the City of White Plains' affordable housing contribution fund.

The ground floor of the project will include 19,000 square feet of retail designed to activate the Hamilton Avenue frontage.

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# Pattern for Progress CEO to Retire at End of 2021



**Pattern for Progress President and CEO Jonathan Drapkin**

NEWBURGH—Jonathan Drapkin, the longtime president and CEO of Pattern for Progress, will be leaving the regional think tank at the end of this year.

Drapkin's departure was announced on July 8th by Suzanne Loughlin, Pattern Board Chair and Founder of CrisisRisk Strategies, LLC, who said, "Our longtime leader, Jonathan Drapkin, will step down from his role as President and CEO at the end of the year, allowing him to explore passions and interests beyond Pattern."

Drapkin joined Pattern in December 2006 and under his leadership Pattern has become well known as the region's public policy think tank and a leading strategic planning organization.

"Throughout the Hudson Valley and New York State, Jonathan's insight and guidance was often sought after. With the support of his talented staff, Pattern's influence was felt in shaping the delivery of government services, the realization of downtown revitalization, understanding regional demographics, housing and so much more," Loughlin added.

Drapkin's career experience in government and the private sector helped him earn the trust of New York State administrations, serving as a member of two commissions focused on the restructuring of local government. Since its inception, he also served on the Executive Committee of the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council. During the COVID-19 pandemic he was a member of the Mid-Hudson's Regional Control Room. Through these engagements, Pattern developed relationships with many county and municipal leaders to support strategic thinking regarding the delivery of government services.

"I wish to thank all of the board and staff—past and present—who I have had the privilege to work with. I have always considered being the CEO and President of Pattern to be the best job in the Hudson Valley," said Drapkin, "I look forward to continuing to be a part of the regional dialogue and I know the Pattern team will continue to do good work for our community."

Among the more notable Pattern programs launched during Drapkin's tenure include the Urban Action Agenda to assist municipalities with their pathway forward; the Pattern Fellows, a mid-career training program on regionalism; Community Rebuilders, which assists residents in bringing ideas to fruition on how to better their communities; and the newest program, the Board Institute, which will create a pathway from the community to board service for under-represented people.

Pattern's numerous research reports, such as Out of Alignment in 2019 and The Pathway Forward in June 2021, helped spark discussion and debate

throughout the Valley on a host of key issues facing the region.

Drapkin also helped create regional dialogs between County Executives, Mid-Hudson mayors, and planning commissioners. Most recently, known as the "Job Connection Task Force," Pattern brought together economic and workforce development leaders to form a regional approach to look at the relationship between economic development and the region's workforce in the changing post Pandemic world, Pattern officials stated.

Incoming Pattern Board Chair and Vice President of Customer Services and Gas Operations at Central Hudson Anthony Campagiorni said, "Jonathan always brought a passion for the region and he will be missed. Looking ahead we will build on Jonathan's legacy, continuing to address and bring visibility to the region's most pressing issues in order to ensure a growing economy and vibrant quality of life for all of the residents of the Hudson Valley."

A search committee of the board has been formed and has begun the pro-

cess of finding Drapkin's replacement.

During his tenure at Pattern the policy, planning, advocacy and research non-profit organization has been recognized on numerous occasions including Orange county Association of Realtors Excellence in Innovation Award (2008), President's Award for analysis and leadership on the MTA Payroll Tax from the Orange County Chamber of Commerce (2009), President's Award for Service to the Rockland Business Association for analysis of the County's finances (2013) and Hudson River Housing's Community Builder Award (2014).

Prior to joining Pattern, Drapkin served as executive director of the Gerry Foundation in Sullivan County from 2000 to 2006, where he guided the creation of the Bethel Woods performing arts center at the site of the 1969 Woodstock Festival. Prior to that, he was county manager of Sullivan County. He was awarded the Sullivan County Partnership's Distinguished Service Award (2006), the Walter Rhulen Award as Businessman of the Year (2001), the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce's

Distinguished Service Award (2000), and the American Society for Public Administration's Award for Outstanding Administrator for the New York Metropolitan Chapter (1996).

Drapkin spent his earlier years in New York City where he worked in the administration of Mayor Ed Koch and as Director of the New York City Council's Office of Oversight and Investigation.

He also served as a member of two governors' commissions focusing on the restructuring of local government and currently serves on the executive committee of the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council. Drapkin has also taught government efficiency and effectiveness in Baruch College's Master's Degree in Public Administration.

Drapkin graduated from Washington University, after completing a year abroad at Durham University in Northern England; he then earned a Master's degree in economics from Long Island University, and a law degree from Benjamin Cardozo School of Law.

# Yonkers Mayor Spano Vetoes Boost in Affordable Housing Requirement



**Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano after vetoing the amended Affordable Housing Ordinance said he would submit a revised plan to the city Council.**

YONKERS—After the Yonkers City Council approved an amended Affordable Housing Ordinance late last month that would increase the affordable housing requirement for new development projects from 10% to 20%, Mayor Mike Spano vetoed the measure on July 7th saying it is infeasible without significant public subsidy.

The mayor cited an independent report conducted by HR&A Advisors, Inc. in his veto message, which stated that the proposed amended AHO will result in a halt to new market rate housing construction absent a city tax subsidy that would be double that of which is currently granted to market rate developers. HR&A issued and presented the comprehensive analysis, which included feedback from community stakeholders and developers, to the Yonkers City Council before its vote in June.

"While I support enhancing our affordable housing stock, the ordinance passed by the council fails to address the fiscal concerns raised by the report, such as what means are available to increase public subsidies necessitated by the AHO," Mayor Spano stated in his veto message. "The council also presented no alternative analysis or narrative that disagreed with HR&A's findings, nor did they prepare an analysis regarding the potential effects on the

city if it was to significantly increase the tax subsidy to developers."

Mayor Spano added, "Ultimately, my decision to veto this amendment is because the council's proposal will either shut down our market rate residential construction entirely, or else cost the local property taxpayers millions annually in additional subsidies."

The veto message also cited the Yonkers Planning Board's opposition to the amended AHO. The Planning Board

stated that the council neglected to address the detailed comments issued by the board and failed to send the amended version back the board for review.

The city also received several amendment opposition letters and statements from The Business Council of Westchester, the Westchester County Association and affordable housing developer Westhab.

Continued on page 23



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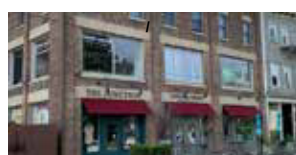
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# The Latest on Windows 11, Converting an Old PC Into A Chromebook and Sharing Webpages Without Ads

## TECH TALK

By John Vrooman  
john@johnvrooman.com



Back on June 24th, 2021, Microsoft unveiled its next operating system "Windows 11." Although this new operating system is not scheduled to become available until this fall, Microsoft has announced the minimum computer hardware specifications/requirements for this new version of Windows. As I am writing this, Microsoft has not yet formally released its "PC Health Check" app that when run will test a computer system to see if it's compatible with Windows 11's new hardware requirements. Although I have come across some websites that provide a link to a version of the PC Health Check app that is supposed to accomplish the goal, the link to the tool from this web page [www.tinyurl.com/yz7qqy3b](http://www.tinyurl.com/yz7qqy3b) is not yet active [7/7/2021]. Tip: The link is (will be) located about three-quarters of the way down the above webpage.

In the meantime, an alternative software tool called "WhyNotWin11" can be used for the same purpose and is available (for free) from the following web page...[www.tinyurl.com/3zeuwwkn](http://www.tinyurl.com/3zeuwwkn)

If you are not interested in using a software tool to determine whether a computer is Windows 11 compatible, the following Microsoft.com article titled "Find Windows 11 specs, features, and computer requirements" offers a detailed list of Windows 11 computer specifications and requirements...[www.tinyurl.com/ttp6e53m](http://www.tinyurl.com/ttp6e53m)

You can watch the Microsoft Event where Windows 11 was announced and see some of its new features demonstrated by visiting the following webpage...[www.tinyurl.com/73pur7v2](http://www.tinyurl.com/73pur7v2)

If you discover that your current computer is not compatible with Windows 11, you might want to review a techpp.com article titled "How to Install Windows 11 on Unsupported PCs without TPM 2.0 [Detailed Guide]." Although the article is geared towards more advanced Windows users, it may be something that can help you get Windows 11 installed on some initially incompatible computers and help you avoid having to get a new one for a while. Here is a link to the article...[www.tinyurl.com/umsr6ss2](http://www.tinyurl.com/umsr6ss2)

Another (similar) article titled "How to install Windows 11 previews on unsupported PCs" can be reviewed at the following [webpureinfotech.com](http://webpureinfotech.com) webpage...[www.tinyurl.com/3vmn8use](http://www.tinyurl.com/3vmn8use)

### Want to Convert an Old PC into a Chromebook?

If you would be interested in converting an old PC into a Chromebook (for free), check out Neverware.com's "CloudReady Home Edition." Before installing the software, I would recommend that you first browse through Neverware.com's website to learn more about the product (especially the "Resources," "Support," and "Company" areas of the website). FYI: Neverware and CloudReady are now part of Google and the Chrome OS team. When you are ready to learn more, here is a courtesy link to the site...[www.neverware.com](http://www.neverware.com)

### iOS Tip: How to Share Webpages Without Ads

Sharing webpages with others is a common practice. Unfortunately, ads are often included along with the shared articles. Fortunately, there is a way to share articles without also sharing ads (in many situations) if you use the Safari web browser and its built-in "Reader View" feature/capability! How? For step-by-step instructions, please visit [iphonelife.com](http://iphonelife.com) and review the blog post titled "How to Share Web Articles without Ads on iPhone or iPad with Reader View." Here is a courtesy link to the article...[www.tinyurl.com/23hfrs9m](http://www.tinyurl.com/23hfrs9m)

### iPhone and Mac Photo/Video Size Tips

Are you running out of file storage space on your iPhone or Mac? If so, you are not alone. Fortunately, there are some things that you can do to help you to 1) better manage your remaining storage space, and 2) reclaim some currently used file storage space. If this topic interests you, I suggest that you visit and review the following two [idownloadblog.com](http://idownloadblog.com) blog posts.

1) "How to reduce video size on iPhone and Mac." Here is a link to this article...[www.tinyurl.com/hyu3ukv3](http://www.tinyurl.com/hyu3ukv3)

2) "How to reduce photo size on iPhone and Mac." Here is a link to this article...[www.tinyurl.com/3xs2924h](http://www.tinyurl.com/3xs2924h)

### Voice-to-Text Dictation Developments

Not that long ago I covered some voice-to-text (dictation) solutions in this column. Since then, some new developments have occurred and I want to direct your attention to them. The first development that I want you to be aware of is that Microsoft Dictation is now available on iOS! To learn more, check out the following Microsoft.com blog post titled "Introducing Microsoft Dictation for iOS"...[www.tinyurl.com/hjrffcw](http://www.tinyurl.com/hjrffcw)

If you use Microsoft Outlook and want to learn about dictating e-mails within the app, check out this article titled "Dictate your e-mails in Outlook"...[www.tinyurl.com/vfhzj28](http://www.tinyurl.com/vfhzj28)

If you use Microsoft 365, an article titled "Dictate in Microsoft 365" offers dictation help for several Microsoft 365 products. If this sounds like a topic you want to explore further, simply visit...[www.tinyurl.com/5b6vn5jt](http://www.tinyurl.com/5b6vn5jt)

The following link leads to an article titled "Three new voice features for Outlook mobile—now on iOS, and coming soon to Android." The article highlights three new features that are discussed and briefly demonstrated via a short video that is embedded within the article. To get to the article and video, visit the following link...[www.tinyurl.com/55pa3bnp](http://www.tinyurl.com/55pa3bnp)

### Yes, You Can Access and Use Apps While Talking on Your iPhone

I know that many Smartphone users know that you can access and use other apps on your phone while on a call. However, I also know that many people either

don't know that or are reluctant to try accessing other apps while on a call. To help address this situation, I found a helpful [iphonelife.com](http://iphonelife.com) article titled "How to Use Another App While on a Phone Call with Your iPhone" that addresses the issue quite nicely. Here's a link to the article...[www.tinyurl.com/azewa3j8](http://www.tinyurl.com/azewa3j8)

### Reminders

This column (and many earlier ones) is made available for your viewing convenience at...[www.realestateindepth.com/technology](http://www.realestateindepth.com/technology)

If you have any comments, suggestions, tips, or questions, you can e-mail John at [john@johnvrooman.com](mailto:john@johnvrooman.com).

*John Vrooman keeps an eye out for cool new hardware, software, apps, gadgets; SaaS solutions; social media developments, trends, and personal/SMB productivity and related solutions. He gathers information for his column from a diverse range of resources and he enjoys sharing his discoveries with others. John has been authoring this column since August 2000 and welcomes feedback from his readers.*

### New Members

Continued from page 18

Damico Group Real Estate  
Elena Michalak  
Pure Realty LLC  
Hrisoula Mihelis  
Keller Williams Hudson Valley, Middletown  
Kathryn Miles  
Nestedge Realty  
\*\* Brett Miller  
K. Fortuna Realty, Inc.  
Melissa J. Miller  
Redfin Real Estate  
Shaleema Mitchell  
Exp Realty, White Plains  
Nicholas J. Molinaro  
Keller Williams Realty Partner, Baldwin Place  
Stanley P. Montfort  
Exp Realty NYC  
Gentian Nikqi  
Link NY Realty  
Tim G. Nilsen  
RE/MAX Classic Realty  
\*\* Laurie Noble  
Green Team New York Realty  
Monique F. Noel-Gunter  
Astor Lane Realty  
\*\* Yunhui Olman  
Century 21 Geba Realty  
Jayne Packard  
William Raveis Real Estate, Armonk  
Lauralee Pagan  
Grand Lux Realty Cerrone Inc.  
William Palumbo  
Turn Key Realty Group  
\*\* Eunice Park  
Coldwell Banker Realty, New City  
\*\* Rodger Parker  
Abbott & Caserta Realtors  
Frank M. Pastirchak  
Scope Realty Bx  
Triscan Pemberton  
Keller Williams Realty NYC Group  
Mary C. Pennington  
Keller Williams Hudson Valley, Middletown  
Stephen O. Perez  
Mar RE Group LLC  
Walkenia J. Perez  
Halo Realty Properties LLC  
Douglas J. Perlson  
Zillow Inc.  
\*\* Christian Perry  
Sotheby's International Realty  
David Petraccone  
Keller Williams Realty Partner, Baldwin Place  
Serena Pitt  
Julia B Fee Sothebys International Realty, Irvington  
Jonnie Potter  
Creative Wave Realty Group LLC  
Giovanni Prendi  
Keller Williams NY Realty  
Marzenna A. Przybylska Rall  
Marcin P. Zola  
Elena Pymm  
Keller Williams Hudson Valley, New City  
Martha Randazzo  
Howard Hanna Rand Realty, Goshen  
Christian Riegler  
Julia B Fee Sothebys International Realty, Rye  
Brook Rodriguez  
Keller Williams Hudson Valley, Middletown  
\*\* Robert Rozman  
Keller Williams Realty, Ridgefield, CT  
Rebecca M. Saberon

Corcoran Group  
Thomas Sandusky  
William Raveis Real Estate, Scarsdale  
Krystle Samuels  
Douglas Elliman Real Estate, Bronx  
Stephany M. Sanchez  
J.D. Station Plaza Realty Inc.  
Valerio Santucci  
Link NY Realty  
Kateri L. Schappert  
RE/MAX Classic Realty  
Ross B. Schector  
R New York  
Joseph Scherer  
Limited Editions Realty, Inc.  
Axel Schiefer  
Compass Greater NY, LLC, Scarsdale  
Edward Scully  
ARC Realty 1 in Sales  
Carmen Solis  
Z Wisdom Realty Inc.  
Maritza Soto  
Exp Realty, White Plains  
David P. Sparano  
Julia B Fee Sothebys International Realty, Bronxville  
George E. Stevens  
Laujel Realty Corp.  
\*\* Stroh Kelly  
Houlihan Lawrence, Inc., East Fishkill  
Shatrice Stukes  
Exit Realty Premium  
Suleidy Tejeda  
Keller Williams Hudson Valley, New City  
Adalgisa Toro  
Berashith Realty  
Samantha A. Torres  
Laujel Realty Corp.  
\*\* Nicole A. Van Alstyne  
Coldwell Banker Realty, Somers  
Angelika Vasquez  
Weichert Realtors, Monroe  
Leslie A. Vasquez  
Charles Rutenberg Realty, Inc., Plainview  
Ervin Velez  
Go Real Estate Inc.  
Michael J. Venuto  
Link NY Realty  
\*\* Richard Vizzini  
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Devon Walker  
Exp Realty, Yonkers  
James Walters  
Keller Williams NY Realty  
Gabrielle Washburn  
Monroe Realty Center  
Salomon Weiss  
Kind Realty  
Elizabeth Whitman  
Renwick Real Estate  
Keith A. Williams  
Besmatch Real Estate  
John Wysocki  
Corcoran Group  
Jena Young  
The Maxx Group LLC  
Elana Zimmerman  
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\*Indicates current member who opened an office as a broker.

\*\*Secondary Member

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## PUTNAM POSTING

By Jennifer Maher



# Change is Coming and With it Opportunity

With the Putnam County real estate market booming for the past 15 months, I am excited for what I predict the impact will be. With new inventory down nearly 15% year-to-date over last year, sales volume up 31% and the average sales price grew by more than 18% to a whopping \$483,201 up from \$409,017. With this kind of influx of new people, there has to be some changes coming down the line.

The most obvious tangible change is the diversity. With the well-attended Pride and Cultural festivals, and rallies of all sorts held recently, alone we also see a shift towards inclusivity to a broader range of cultures. It is obvious there is a shift trending towards a much more diverse population growing here in Putnam County—not only in culture but in financial class, with many also buying second homes. Putnam is now home to some higher net worth people.

As local journalist Doug Cunningham put it, “People buying half million-dollar houses are going to be solid contributors to the local economy. They will need services and carpet and paint and lawn care. We can find a way to meet their needs—or our competitor will.”

Change is a wonderful opportunity for all.

So how does diversity impact the Main Street community? Well, for one there is potential for a more diverse workforce. A diverse workforce could broaden and improve customer experiences. Businesses and Realtors too should really be adjusting to who may be your new target consumer. Diversity in the workplace could bring in new markets to your business. You could potentially be serving people you don’t understand, you don’t interact with regularly and diverse hiring can help attract the new potential markets to you.

As well as maintain relationships

Only upside and no down side exists in new opportunities, if you know how to find it. Sometimes a change in perspective is needed. Having a diverse workforce for a potentially more diverse consumer is the sure way to ensure you are capturing all your potential markets.

Having a diverse workplace allows organizations to more effectively market, serve and communicate to consumer groups from different cultures, races and religious backgrounds, which

in turn may lead to increased sales and profits and again, allow access to a more diverse market.

There are so many reasons we can come up with on why diversity is a wonderful thing, I figure just pointing out the potential for those in business is a really fine place to start.

*Jennifer Maher is the founding chairwoman of the Putnam County Business Council and is COO of J. Philip Real Estate.*

## Spano Vetoes

Continued from page 21

Mayor Spano said, “Yonkers represents 20% of Westchester County’s population, yet we already house over 40% of its subsidized housing stock. I agree we need to revisit our AHO, but we need to be smart about our next steps.

He said that he would be submitting a revised plan to the council that would propose “the best affordable housing ordinance in Westchester and address the needs of our community, while still allowing for investors to continue building in Yonkers.”

In 2013, Mayor Spano and the Yonkers City Council passed the city’s first-ever Affordable Housing Ordinance, ordering 10% of housing units in newly constructed large developments (100 units or more) to be made available to families earning between 40%-100% of Westchester County’s Area Median Income (AMI). In medium-sized developments (between 75 and 99 units), two units are set aside and in small developments (between 21 and 74 units), one unit is set aside. The law does not apply to developments with 20 units or less.

# HGAR Hires Freddy Garcia As New Diversity, Equity And Inclusion Officer



Freddimir “Freddy” Garcia

WHITE PLAINS—The Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors recently welcomed Freddimir “Freddy” Garcia, of Poughkeepsie as its new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Officer. In this newly created role, Garcia will lead the association’s efforts in developing and executing HGAR’s diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and initiatives. He will be working out of HGAR’s White Plains and Goshen offices.

The DEI Officer will also develop, implement, and promote proactive and integrative policies, strategies and practices that lead to a more inclusive work culture, and create an array of dynamic and innovative learning tools to ensure that its DEI goals are met. In addition, the DEI Officer will support HGAR’s staff, its leadership team, and its membership to ensure that HGAR’s programming, outreach and engagements reflect and promote HGAR’s DEI goals.

“We are happy and excited to welcome Freddy to our association, and we look forward to working with him,” said HGAR Chief Executive Officer Richard Haggerty. “He brings a wealth of business and community service experience, and will be a tremendous asset to our organization.”

Prior to joining HGAR, Garcia served

as the Northern Regional Director for Diversity, Inclusion, & Community Engagement for the Westchester Medical Center Health Network for the past two years. While there, he oversaw diversity, inclusion, and community engagement for a workforce of 1,300 employees and a community covering Ulster and Dutchess counties.

Garcia previously acted as Special Assistant to the President for Diversity, Inclusion, & Community Engagement for Marist College in Poughkeepsie. This inaugural cabinet-level role involved managing all diversity and inclusion initiatives for an institution of more than 5,500 students and about 1,000 staff members. He has served in several other capacities with Marist College since 2010.

An active member of the local community, Garcia is a current board member of Rhinebeck Bank, Family Services, Inc., RUPCO, Inc., Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress, and was a recent member of the Dutchess County Commission on Human Rights.

Garcia holds a Diversity and Inclusion Professionals Certificate from Cornell University, ILR School in Manhattan, and is a two-time Marist College graduate holding an MBA with a concentration in Financial Management, and a B.S. in Business Marketing.

He was also honored with the New York’s Latino “Forty Under 40 Rising Star Award” by The Hispanic Coalition of NY, Inc.; the “Forty Under 40 Shaker Award” by the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the “Hispanic Heritage Award” by The Exempt Fireman Association.

The Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors is a not-for-profit trade association representing more than 13,000 real estate professionals doing business in Westchester, Putnam, Rockland, and Orange counties, as well as the Bronx and Manhattan. It is the second largest Realtor Association in New York, and one of the largest in the country.



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