



UNPACKING THE ISSUES: THE CONTROVERSY OVER GRAVEL AND TRUCKS

What's all the fuss lately about the Hudson Waterfront?

We have an extraordinary opportunity to develop our Hudson waterfront as a resource that benefits everyone in Hudson and protects our environment. This includes more access to our waterfront and improvements based on the needs of our people, not an outside industrial company. We've seen other Hudson River towns successfully improve their waterfronts and re-energize their communities. Beacon, Kingston, Catskill and even Athens, across the river, have set great examples we can learn from. It's time to develop our waterfront for the people of Hudson—something the City has wanted to do for more than two decades.

Why has this become such a big topic?

A Colarusso & Son—an industrial company in Greenport that owns waterfront property here—has several controversial proposals before the Hudson Planning Board that are causing great alarm across Hudson. The company seeks to build a two-lane truckway from its mining operation in Greenport through our protected South Bay to transport gravel to the Hudson waterfront.

The company's demand for this truck highway signals it plans to drastically increase operations and reindustrialize our waterfront—exactly the opposite of what the City is trying to do. This will increase pollution, dust, noise and overall disruption—a giant step away from a waterfront for us all. More importantly, the situation is creating a dangerous safety hazard to our residents.

This proposed new truck highway is completely unnecessary to support Colarusso's current business; it's only good for greatly expanding operations at the dock. The

company's existing road on the causeway is all that's needed to support the current volume. It's also all that's needed to remove trucks from our streets—trucks that, fully loaded, can weigh forty tons and do considerable damage to infrastructure and homes. A Colarusso & Son chooses not to use this existing road, instead running dangerous trucks from morning until night through densely populated Hudson neighborhoods, most notably Columbia and Front Streets. This is a bargaining tool A Colarusso & Son is using to force the City to agree to its demands.

But wait. So if we let Colarusso build a road through the South Bay, the company will take those dangerous trucks off our streets?

Not exactly. The proposal will remove *some* but not *all* trucks, while creating other serious problems. First, A Colarusso & Son has publicly stated that even with a new private road to haul gravel, it will still use Hudson streets. So this does not really address safety issues for pedestrians or drivers. At the same time, the increased industrialization at our waterfront limits our ability to improve the area for Hudson residents and further creates pollution, noise and safety hazards for those living near the waterfront or seeking recreation there. Reindustrialization is a big step backward for Hudson.

Then how do we get trucks off the streets?

As mentioned before, A Colarusso & Son could begin the process of pulling its heavy trucks off our streets tomorrow—with no impact to its current business. The company would rather use this issue as a pressure tactic on the City of Hudson. As people who live here, we need to push back on the company to stop using us as pawns in its dangerous game. Removing the gravel trucks would make a huge difference in Hudson.

We'd like to provide the actual numbers, but A Colarusso & Son has refused to share traffic data despite repeated requests from the Hudson Planning Board. We believe the company is making up to 120 round trips (240 total through Hudson) per working day now.

But beside the trucks from A Colarusso & Son, many other commercial vehicles use the designated truck routes through our City. Our New York State Assembly person, Didi Barrett, has secured funding for a study into redirecting trucking routes outside of Hudson altogether. That is a longer-term project, but we plan to work just as hard on that one.

Colarusso is a well-established local business. Shouldn't we cut them some slack here? The rhetoric seems so negative.

Actually, A Colarusso & Son created the current situation. The company did illegal work on the waterfront that violated our zoning code. When City officials tried to address this, A Colarusso & Son sued Hudson, with the aim of avoiding local laws and regulations as part of its strategy to reindustrialize the waterfront.

A Colarusso & Son lost the lawsuit with a particularly strongly worded judgement authorizing the city of Hudson to enforce our laws and oversee the company's Hudson waterfront operations.

Today, A Colarusso & Son is pushing a false narrative that a new private road right through our protected South Bay will solve the traffic problems that the company created in the first place. Now Hudson residents are speaking up in growing numbers. We know the narrative is false—and we know A Colarusso & Son is trying to force us to choose between our waterfront

and safe streets. As residents of a city that we all love, we know we have the right to both.

Perhaps Colarusso hasn't been completely upfront or even fair to Hudson residents. But can we really kick out a business that owns property in the city? Doesn't that set a very dangerous precedent for businesses here?

We are not advocating the removal of A Colarusso & Son from Hudson or any property that it legally owns. We are merely asking that the company follow our laws and zoning codes. Beyond that, we'd like to see the company act in good faith toward the city rather than suing us and taking a highly confrontational approach in public and at the Hudson Planning Board meetings.

By the way, A Colarusso & Son claims it owns 4.4 acres of land that actually belongs to the city of Hudson, and ought to be used to increase our access to our waterfront. While some current officials still question this, it has already been firmly established as Hudson land, and should be given back to the rightful owners—we the people—for recreational purposes.

Lastly, the development of the waterfront is not anti-business in any way. To the contrary, we see this as an opportunity to drive new business that benefits our economy by creating good jobs for our residents while protecting the beauty of our river front.

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Great. Now, who exactly are you and how do I get involved?

Our Hudson Waterfront is a grassroots group that believes the future of the Hudson Waterfront belongs to the City's people. Our waterfront is one of Hudson's greatest public and economic assets. It should be developed as an active, vibrant center for the enjoyment and opportunity for all Hudson residents.



There are many ways to get involved:

Learn more about the issues at **www.ourhudsonwaterfront.com**

Come to meetings of the Hudson Planning Board and speak your mind. The Planning Board meets monthly, every second Tuesday. You can also leave your thoughts in writing at **www.cityofhudson.org** (click Departments, then Boards and Committees, then Planning Board).

Join us!
The more of us there are, the more we'll get done. Reach us at **ourhudsonwaterfront@gmail.com**

Most importantly, get down to our amazing waterfront, enjoy the public space we have and spread the word!