



NEWS FROM  
**ULSTER COUNTY**  
County Executive Jen Metzger

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**Contact:** Amberly Jane Campbell, Assistant Deputy County Executive  
(845) 340-3800 x8958 / [acam@co.ulster.ny.us](mailto:acam@co.ulster.ny.us)

## **Ulster County Successfully Secures \$1.6M for Pine Hill to Restore Historic Hotel**

**KINGSTON, NY** - Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger today announced that the County has received a \$1.6 million Restore New York grant for the restoration and adaptive reuse of the historic Wellington Hotel in the hamlet of Pine Hill, in the Town of Shandaken's state-certified historic district at 310 Main Street. The project, which is being developed by RUPCO, will create 10 affordable residential units, a café, and a food market for the area.

Returning the former 12,000 square foot Ulster Park/Wellington Hotel to productive use is a major priority of the community, and plans for its adaptive reuse fills vital needs for housing in an underserved area and for food-related services for residents and visitors within an area characterized as a "food desert."

In December 2022, Wellington Blueberry, a multi-member LLC representing a diverse array of Pine Hill community members, raised sufficient equity to purchase and start the process of redevelopment of The Wellington Hotel. Built in 1882, it is a three-story Italianate structure on almost an acre, with a cupola that can be seen throughout the hamlet. Other preserved features include a wide wrap-around porch, parquet floors, elegant staircase, and historic paneled doors and woodwork; it is architecturally consistent with other notable adjacent properties. In 2002, the property was added to the National Registry of Historic Places. In 2010, it became part of Pine Hill's Historic District, which encompasses all of Main Street and Pine Hill's central business district. But the property, neglected for decades, was a source of serious blight on Main Street.

Since its purchase, dozens of community members have volunteered to help Wellington Blueberry LLC members with outdoor clean up days, filling 30 dumpsters paid for by the LLC. The LLC has further invested almost \$200,000 in soft costs, including architectural drawings,

structural reports, and minor stabilization repairs to the building. The group also applied for a Catskill Watershed Corporation flood mitigation study, which was completed in 2023.

“As a County government, we are committed to helping our Catskills communities thrive, and the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the beloved Wellington Hotel will restore this historic building as an economic and community anchor while providing much needed affordable housing,” **said Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger.** “I want to thank Governor Hochul and Empire State Development for this award, and the team at Ulster County Economic Development for its work with the Shandaken community on this successful application. I also want to congratulate the Town of Shandaken, Jan Jaffe and Wellington Blueberry LLC, and RUPCO for their visionary plan for this building and their commitment to making it happen.”

“I’m so proud of the hard work and recognition the Wellington community has brought to the Town of Shandaken and Pine Hill,” **said Supervisor Peter DiSclafani.** “This project is fantastic!”

“With most of Shandaken’s land publicly owned, this is just one example of the many things the Town and the community are doing right now to show that appropriate scale-development is possible here,” **said Jan Jaffe, president of the Wellington LLC board and volunteer community engagement coordinator for Shandaken.** “It’s delicate work, hard work and mostly volunteer work. This award gets the Wellington closer to its goal of increasing Shandaken's affordable housing stock by almost 3% with 10 affordable housing units and a market. It demonstrates that Ulster County and New York State back the power of a small town to make a big impact.”

“The former Wellington Hotel project is a fabulous opportunity to join forces with Ulster County and a group of committed, local volunteers led by Jan Jaffe to repurpose an abandoned, historic building that will provide affordable housing in the rural hamlet of Pine Hill, situated at the foot of Belleayre Mountain,” **said Kevin O'Connor, RUPCO CEO.** “We are grateful to Governor Hochul for her leadership on the importance of housing, including rural areas, and providing Restore funds to support the project.”

"The Department of Economic Development is thrilled to see our State partners in the Empire State Development Corporation and the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council recognize the exponential impacts of these investments in our rural Main Streets by awarding this deserving project,” **said Joshua Stratton-Rayner, Department of Economic Development Deputy Director.** “The preservation and adaptive reuse of this historic

property that anchors the Pine Hill corridor will add needed affordable housing density in a place with the infrastructure to support it, and the daytime commercial presence to service locals and visitors alike. We anticipate that this will catalyze further successes for the citizens of Shandaken who have already shown incredible tenacity in their belief that civic organizing can create the conditions for a flourishing community."

Ulster County is also undertaking a rail trail project in connection with Pine Hill that will further contribute to the local economy and community quality of life. For more information on the rail trail project, visit: <https://participate.ulstercountyny.gov/shandaken-rail-trail>.

The Restore New York Communities Initiative provides financial assistance to municipalities for revitalizing commercial and residential properties. Administered by Empire State Development, the program aims to eliminate blight, grow local housing, encourage community growth and revitalization, and boost local economies by revitalizing properties and increasing the local tax base. In addition to the award to Ulster County, the City of Kingston was awarded 550,000 for Kingston Standard Brewing Company, which is making improvements to green its operations and achieve net-zero emissions greenhouse gasses. In New Paltz, the Village was awarded \$425,000 for the restoration of the historic Ann Oliver House, which will serve as the home of the Dr. Margaret Wade-Lewis Black History Cultural Center.

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