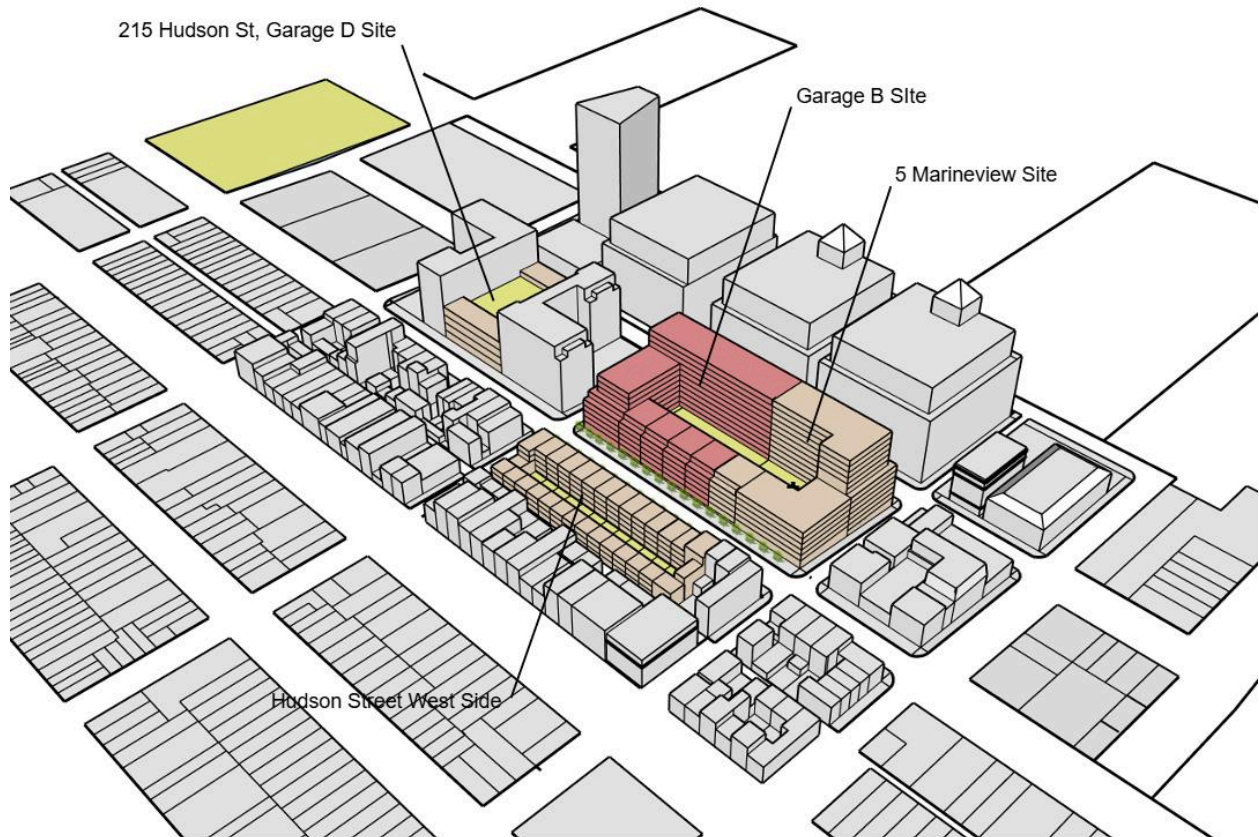


A Plan for Lower Hudson Street

An alternative proposal by Fund for a Better Waterfront

Good urban planning and design requires that a site is viewed in its entirety and within the context of what surrounds it; Hoboken needs citywide solutions to address parking, schools & affordable housing issues.



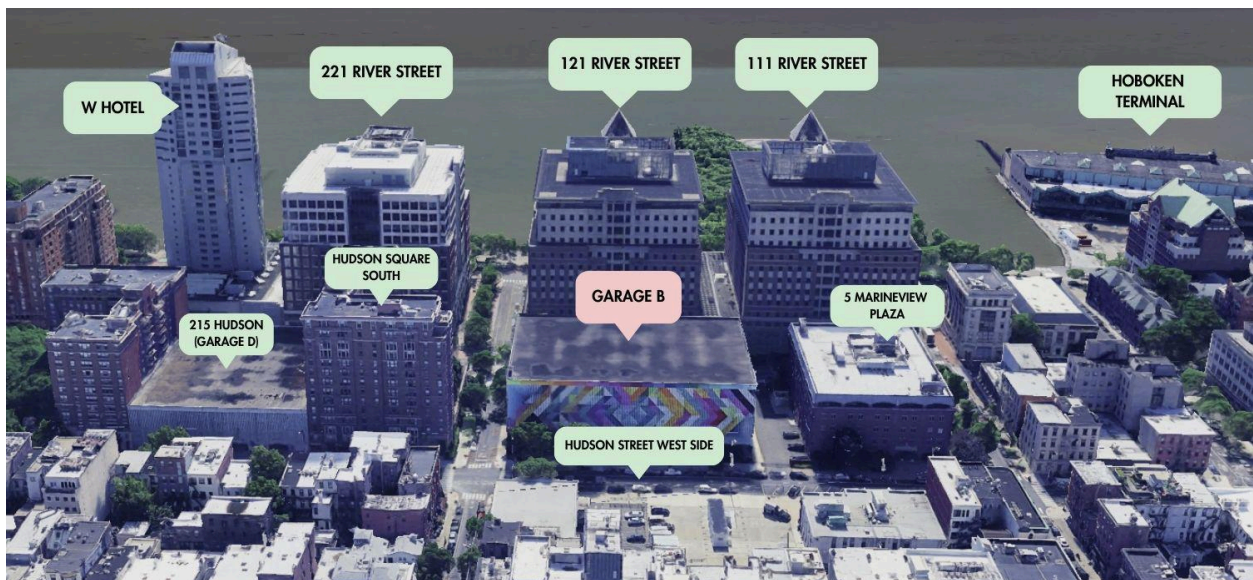
FBW Plan for Lower Hudson Street that includes most of the areas declared in need of redevelopment. (red depicts the City-owned Garage B site). Piers A and C depicted in outline form as they originally existed in 1990.

Fund for a Better Waterfront's (FBW) Plan for Lower Hudson Street is based on the following goals: 1) create a comprehensive plan based on sound planning and thoughtful urban design; 2) respect the human scale and neighborhood character of Hoboken; 3) build a project that is in harmony with its neighboring buildings; and 4) fulfill the promise of a transit-oriented development. To address parking, schools and affordable housing issues, the City needs to adopt city-wide strategies that can be put into effect promptly.

A comprehensive plan

In November 2022, the Hoboken City Council adopted a resolution designating a number of parcels in the southeast corner of Hoboken, as an “area in need of redevelopment.” Most of the parcels, all on lower Hudson Street, are City-owned. In order to integrate the scattered sites into a cohesive whole, FBW’s plan encompasses nearly all of these properties.

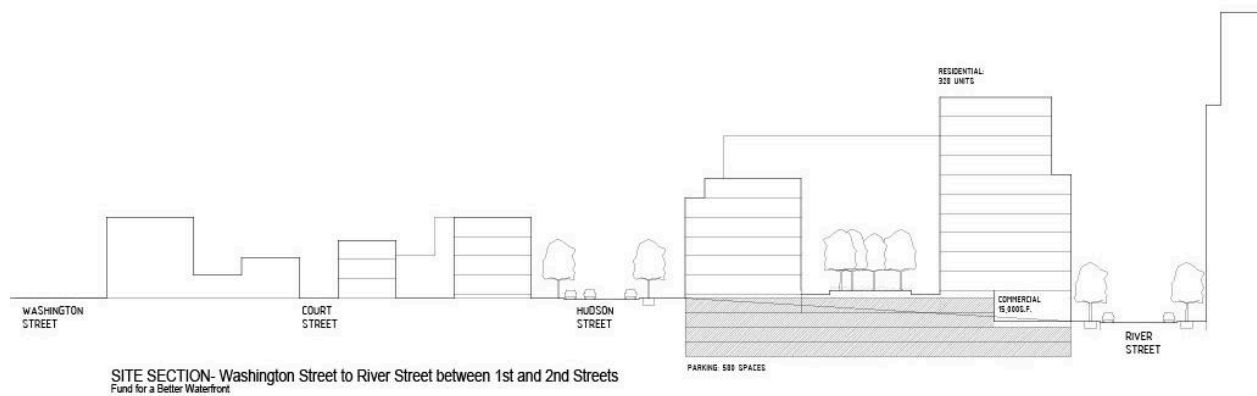
FBW is proposing 1.17 million square feet of development spread out over 3.42 acres vs. the City’s plan for 800,000 square feet on 1.18 acres. In addition to the Garage B site, the FBW plan includes 5 Marineview Plaza (First Street between Hudson and River Streets), the municipal garage site at 215 Hudson (between Second and Third Streets), and Hudson Street Westside to Court Street (including the former Bank of America property at Second Street and 1 Police Plaza between First and Second Streets). To maintain an appropriate scale, much of the parking is located underground and the elementary school is relocated to 215 Hudson. The City’s Garage B Redevelopment Plan, on the other hand, is focused solely on the Garage B site (depicted above in red).



Existing Conditions: Google Earth image from City’s Garage B Redevelopment Plan. Note: The building labeled as Marineview Apartments is actually Hudson Square South.

Building heights step down from River to Court Street

FBW proposes a project that considers the building height of the area. Directly to the north is the 14-story residential building, Hudson Square South. To the east is 111 River, a 12-story commercial building (also known as the Wiley Building). FBW proposes an 11-story building on River Street, somewhat lower than 111 River, that would step down all the way to Court Street. Buildings on the east-side of Hudson would be 6 to 7 stories and on the west-side, 4 stories. Historic Court Street would be lined with 3-story townhouses.



The current lot sizes between Hudson and Court Street (25 feet wide and 100 feet deep) would be maintained to further reflect the scale and character of Hoboken. As a result, FBW’s plan blends with Hoboken’s new development, as well as the historic turn-of-the-20th-century buildings to the south and west that create Hoboken’s urban village ambience.

FBW’s plan includes the privately owned 5 Marineview Plaza, a commercial building. The increased density on that site provides an incentive for the owner to build a new residential project with ground floor commercial space. FBW’s plan would integrate seamlessly with the new residential development on the Garage B site. The owner of 5 Marineview Plaza has an air-right easement over Garage B. The redevelopment of 5 Marineview would give the City leverage to resolve that easement issue.



By moving the proposed 75,000 square-foot school to 215 Hudson (the site of Garage D), the 4-story school structure would stand alone, facing Hudson Street between Hudson Square North and Hudson Square South. The rebuilt parking garage would face River Street with two levels underground and six above. 4,000 square feet of retail space facing River Street would help to animate that streetscape. This site, consisting of fewer distinct elements, could be completed faster than the City/Skylight overly complex proposal for Garage B.



This newly developed block at Liberty Harbor North in Jersey City provides an example of what a Hudson Street Westside development could look like.

The City and its potential designated developer propose a plan with Manhattan densities and an 11-story parking garage

In March 2025, in the face of strong opposition, the City Council adopted the Garage B Redevelopment Plan that pertains just to the one garage site, comprising 1.18 acres. The City accepted a proposal from Skylight Real Estate Partners to develop the property and is negotiating an agreement to designate Skylight as the developer. In October, this real estate group unveiled its proposal for a massive 24-story, 800,000 square foot project.

The City's Redevelopment Plan and Skylight's development proposal contain a number of serious flaws. First, the 24-story building heights are far in excess of the building heights surrounding the Garage B block. Second, the proposed 800,000 square foot development -- including an 11-story 880-car garage, 400 residential units, 31,700 square feet of commercial space and a 75,000 square foot public school -- attempts to pack far too much onto a relatively small site. The density, as measured by its floor area ratio (FAR), is close to 15, exceeding the cap in Manhattan's highest density residential districts that is set at 12. In Hoboken, a typical 5-story walkup apartment building with 50% lot coverage has an FAR of 2.5.

	A Plan for Lower Hudson Street <i>An FBW Alternative Plan</i>	Skylight
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	<i>Garage B</i>	<i>5 Marineview Plaza</i>	<i>215 Hudson (Garage D)</i>	<i>Hudson St. Westside</i>	<i>total</i>	<i>Garage B</i>
acres	1.18	.77	.65	.82	3.42	1.18
stories	6 to 11	6 to 11	4 to 6	3 to 4	-	24
FAR (density)	6.9	7	5.75	2.77	-	15.6
residential units	380	245	0	49	674	410
residential sq ft	338,000	218,880	0	94,000	650,880	
commercial sq ft	15,000	15,500	4,000	0	34,500	31,700
public school sq ft	-	-	75,000	-	75,000	75,000
parking sq ft	167,435	113,640	130,000	0	411,075	
total square feet	520,435	348,020	209,000	94,000	1,171,455	800,000
parking spaces	515	350	400	0	1,265	880

Developing a rational municipal parking strategy

All four existing municipal garages are coming to the end of their useful lives and must be rebuilt. The automated municipal garage at 916 Garden is currently inoperable. The City of Hoboken urgently needs to adopt a city-wide, comprehensive parking strategy. New garages need to be built before existing ones are demolished. Otherwise, Hoboken residents and business owners will face serious hardships.

The City has an agreement with a developer at the North End Redevelopment Area to build a new 275-car municipal parking garage. This is a good first step. An additional garage at the south end of town, capturing cars before they spill onto city streets, is a logical next step.

There is tremendous parking capacity in the six-block area between Hudson, Sinatra, First and Fourth Streets including a 1,805 car capacity in the three municipal garages and another 1,890 privately managed parking garages. 70% of Hoboken’s municipal garage capacity exists on lower Hudson Street. Shifting several municipal garages to the perimeter of town would encourage a more transit-oriented development with lowered parking requirements near Hoboken’s regional mass-transit hub.

The Skylight proposal increased the Garage B capacity of 829 cars to 880. The top floor of the garage is on the 11th floor. With lower levels full, driving to the upper floors to park is a highly unusual and impractical proposal. FBW proposes four levels of parking for the entire block. The parking can be situated below street level on Hudson Street and set back from River Street, thus preserving an active streetscape for the entire block with front doors and retail facing the street, also a goal of the City's Redevelopment Plan. FBW's plan would accommodate 515 cars on the Garage B site and 350 cars on the 5 Marineview property.

Workforce/Affordable housing

The City of Hoboken has proposed 100% workforce and affordable housing at the Garage B site. This is a laudable goal but neither the City nor the prospective developer have laid out a feasible plan for how this will be achieved. Since 1988, the City of Hoboken has required development projects of ten units or more to set aside 10% of the units for low and moderate households. The market rate units make this a viable strategy. The promise of 100% workforce/affordable housing will be impossible to fulfill without substantial government housing subsidies that currently do not exist.

Redevelopment plans in Hoboken typically take 12 to 20 years to come to fruition. To address the affordable housing crisis, the City should consider city-wide measures that could be implemented in the near future. The 10% provision is the minimum level that most New Jersey municipalities require. A number of municipalities have set the percentage of affordable units higher, some as high as 20%, including Jersey City, Newark, Princeton and Montville Township.

In FBW's plan, selling the valuable City-owned lots west of Hudson to individual developers could generate a revenue stream to help fund the affordable/workforce units on the Garage B block.

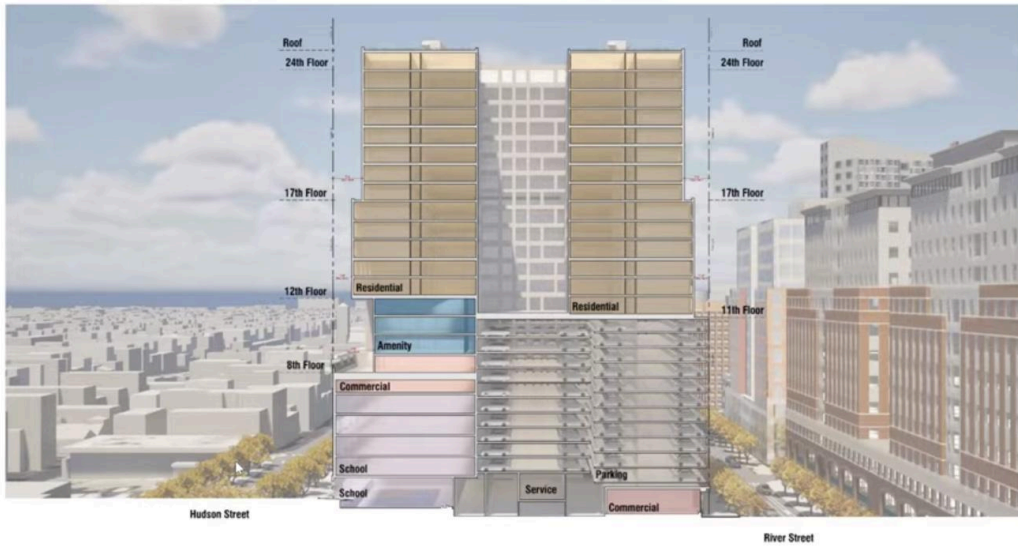
Fund for a Better Waterfront

FBW is a 35-year old Hoboken-based nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that advocates for sound urban planning and long-range thinking on public policy. FBW's 1990 *Plan for the Hoboken Waterfront* and subsequent years of advocacy have shaped the development of Hoboken's waterfront and established a continuous, public park at the water's edge.

Appendix A: Skylight's Renderings



Site looking North on Hudson Street



Project Site Section ¹⁹