

# Looking Ahead, 2022

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## Message from Our New HRH Board President Thea Burgess

Beth Jones is a force of nature. Her natural inclination is to jump in and do, something she has done for the last 16 years for the Friends of Elmendorph and Historic Red Hook. Beth became a board member in 2006, then president of the Friends of the Elmendorph until 2013 when she helped drive its merger with the Egbert Benson Historical Society. Since then, she has served as Historic Red Hook's treasurer and most recently its president in 2021, a role she took on when former president Claudine Klose's term expired. Beth would do this for a year, she said, despite her responsibilities running her Upper Red Hook-based life and wealth planning firm, Third Eye Associates, Ltd. through the surge and ebb and surge of the pandemic, trying times for us all. As usual Beth stepped up for Historic Red Hook.

The Elmendorph Inn is what first connected Beth to Historic Red Hook. As a newcomer to town in 2004, she would drive by the building and want to see it lit up and full of activity and energy and fun. Beth was instrumental in making that vision a reality, evidenced by our tavern nights, holiday open houses, and soup and chili nights. It is fitting that we concluded our capital campaign with Beth at the helm. She was a key partner in putting us on the road to our sound financial footing. Beth, through Third Eye Associates, has managed our investment reserves and is always looking toward our bottom line, initiating fundraising activities such as our annual gala auction and benefit.

Beth lives and breathes Historic Red Hook, and now, as Claudine Klose, who fully understands the energy needed to keep the organization growing, described it, Beth deserves a breather. When Beth announced her resignation from the board, she assured us that she is still close by and will be there when we need her. We're holding her to that promise. We know Historic Red Hook will miss her, but, as many others have done for Historic Red Hook, Beth is leaving us in a stronger place than when she joined. We thank you, Beth.

And this is where I come in as the current President. My goal is to emulate both Beth's and Claudine's service. I also will lean heavily on the competence of Elisabeth Tatum, our executive director. Our executive committee of Vice President Emily Majer, Treasurer Jim Haskin, and Secretary Claudine Klose—alongside fellow Trustees Amanda Bodian, Elliott Bristol, and Doug Strawinski—ensures Historic Red Hook is in good hands. We welcome Dillon Streifeneder as our newest trustee. He's a Red Hook native, a Ph.D. candidate in American history, a former Marine, and a graduate of Red Hook High School. Our accomplishments would not be possible without the essential work of volunteers, committee members, and supporters and donors. All of us play a role.

At our annual retreat, conducted for a second year via Zoom, the trustees reviewed what we had achieved in 2021, considered where we needed to step up our game, and looked forward to the years ahead. In my mind, most of our priorities keep coming back to the word “community.” We are all part of the Red Hook community, whether we have been born here, work here, put down roots here, moved here, and maybe moved on from here to return in some form. Just as Red Hook has made its mark on us, we make our mark on the town. Historic Red Hook connects all of us—past, present, and future. We want you to continue to be part of our shared community here, based at the Elmendorph Inn and beyond.

 —Thea Burgess, HRH Board President

## **Strategic Priorities for 2022**

The Historic Red Hook Board of Trustees met on January 8th to update last year’s strategic priorities to carry the organization through to 2023. After considering Historic Red Hook’s past goals, examining our accomplishments in 2021, and considering the organization’s immediate needs, the Trustees agreed upon the following priorities:

### **Expanding community engagement both physically and virtually. Examples include:**

- Work towards making the Elmendorph Green a shared community space by adding features such as a community charging station, benches, lighting, and trash and recycling receptacles,
- Strengthen our connections with other local organizations, and
- Create programming that appeals to a broad range of people.

### **Being an accessible and recognized resource for meeting community needs such as**

- Continue publishing blog entries highlighting diverse aspects of Red Hook’s past,
- Expand the number of research resources available,
- Create accessible histories of Red Hook’s iconic historic sites and personalities, and
- Provide educational material to the local schools.

### **Continuing to develop as a self-sustaining organization as we**

- Recruit new board trustees and committee members,
- Expand our overall number of members, and
- Achieve increased recognition in the town and regional community as the home for Red Hook’s history.

### **Increasing the robustness of our financial position when we**

- Identify and pursue grant opportunities to support programming and other projects,
- Develop our relationships with local businesses that interface with Red Hook’s past and present, and
- Broaden our income base.

### **Continuing in our mission to preserve and promote Red Hook history as we**

- Launch new oral history program to capture the memories of local residents,
- Continue accepting donations of historically-significant local material, and

- Move the collections to a more accessible space with better climate control.

**Enjoying ourselves and taking pride in our organization when we**

- Continue popular programming including the summer concert series and October Cemetery Crawl,
- Introduce new ways to engage with local history in a fun fashion, and
- Promote Red Hook to the region and beyond.