

5 Terms as Mayor

CLARA LOU GOULD: DOULA OF BEACON'S REBIRTH

THIRTY YEARS AGO, BEACON HAD A HUGE DEBT LOAD, A DRUG PROBLEM, AND A LOT OF BOARDED-UP BUILDINGS. ONE EVENING, CLARA LOU CAME HOME FROM PLAYING CARDS AND HER HUSBAND GREETED HER WITH THIS MESSAGE:



The Republican Party called
They want you to run
for Mayor.

HA-HA,
HA-HA,
HA-HA
HA...HMM.

AFTER SOME THOUGHT, SHE DECIDED TO RUN.



I'd better register
Republican.

ONE TERM LATER, THIS LETTER
SHOWS UP IN THE ARCHIVES.

Letter to the Editor from the Commissioner
of Finance
When Mayor Gould came into office,
the city was in financial distress...had
exhausted its constitutional taxing limit...
reports not filed...even more bad things.
By the end of her first year, the finances
were straightened out...an "A" bond rating...
\$100,000 saved...even more good things.

TO COMBAT THE DRUG ISSUE, MAYOR GOULD
REACTIVATED A CITIZENS' COMMITTEE,
DECLARED 1,000-FOOT DRUG-FREE ZONES
AROUND THE SCHOOLS, AND INSTITUTED
A HOTLINE TO REPORT DRUG DEALS.
SHE CALLED IT ONCE HERSELF.

AS FOR THE BUILDINGS, PETER FORMAN (FORMER CITY ATTORNEY) SAYS:



We revamped the antiquated ordinances.
The waterfront was rezoned from heavy
industrial. First floor apartments on Main
Street were zoned out. We encouraged
single family homes and discouraged over-
density [in not-quite-legal boarding houses.]

I got people
involved.

SHE WAS RE-ELECTED AND RE-ELECTED.

I feel I've been able to
communicate with my
constituents. I feel
people are competent
and make good and fair
judgments over all.



Don't
mind
the
sign.

SCENIC HUDSON PRESERVED LAND ON
FISHKILL RIDGE, MT. BEACON, AND CREEKSIDE.
CLARA LOU SAW THAT TRAILS WOULD MAKE OPEN SPACE ACCESSIBLE
FOR RESIDENTS, BUT THAT IT WOULD ALSO BRING IN HIKERS.



SHE SAW THE POSSIBILITIES WHEN DEA
INQUIRED ABOUT A FORMER FACTORY.
SHE TOLD THE NEW YORK TIMES:

Art is a catalyst. People
like to be around artists.

THE LONGED-FOR DEVELOPERS SHOWED
UP. SOME CAME THROUGH, SOME
OVER-PROMISED. AS FORMER
CITY ADMINISTRATOR JOE
BRAUN SAYS, "THE PROOF
IS THERE TO SEE."



PROBLEMS WITH THE BEACON POLICE SURFACED. LAWSUITS WERE FILED
FOR POLICE BRUTALITY. THE FEDS CAME IN. MAYOR GOULD CHARGED
THE CHIEF WITH "GROSS MISCONDUCT." FEDERAL OVERSIGHT CONTINUED
UNTIL 2016.

HER FAVORITE PART OF THE JOB WAS THIS:

Every year,
I talked to
the fifth graders
about our
government.



Can a
boy be
Mayor?

By
Dee Fube