

Notes from Public Forum – Business and Economic Development/ Transportation & Infrastructure

October 6, 2008

Peg Churchill, Director, Wayne County Economic Development

Marketing

- Wayne County contracts with Greater Rochester Enterprise (GRE) to carry out all marketing to companies outside of the Rochester region
- Wayne County and the Rochester region have good qualities that can be marketed to businesses:
 - Good quality of life
 - Nationally recognized educational institutions
 - Short commutes compared to other regions of the state
 - Traditionally good work force – Good work ethic, skilled laborers, low cost
 - Opportunities to increase training and education in science and math
 - Manufacturing has changed – pays more than many jobs that require a college education
 - Emphasize training and apprenticeships, 2-year programs
- Wayne County is marketed as a “Great Lakes Getaway.” Opportunities for tourism-related economic development. See Wayne County tourism website (www.waynecountytourism.com)

Infrastructure

- Lack of suitable infrastructure is challenge for economic development
- Lake Ontario offers great source of fresh water – but infrastructure needed to bring it to end users
- Studies done by the Wayne County Water and Sewer Authority (WCWSA) to investigate how to bring water from the Village of Wolcott to the Route 104 corridor in Butler

Town of Butler Comprehensive & Agricultural Protection Plan

- WCWSA issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a major hydraulic study of water infrastructure in eastern Wayne County. Options include connecting Newark and Wolcott. Priorities are serving existing industrial parks and connecting municipal systems. Interviews have been scheduled.

Fiber Optics/ Broadband

- Ontario County had funded a study, which addressed constructing a loop of “dark fiber” that could be leased by businesses. Fiber optics are needed by data-intensive businesses such as medical transcription services.
- Wayne County is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify and evaluate existing broadband and fiber optic options. The study will recommend how to connect various sources of broadband infrastructure.
- Wireless broadband is very expensive to install in a way that would cover the entire County. Data-intensive businesses cannot rely solely on wireless – they need hard wire backup

Sustainable/ Green Economic Development

- Wayne County Industrial Sustainability Park is under development. Modeled after Bob Bechtold’s plastics factory, which converts process heat into cooling and uses wind energy for a portion of the electric supply.
- Bio-gas digester will convert cow manure into methane to generate electricity
- Bio-diesel plant may be possible
- Geo-thermal and hydro-electric generation should be explored further. The Village of Wolcott is considering hydro-electric.
- Wayne County is encouraging projects that can be reproduced in multiple locations (“pods”)

Small Business Programs

- Micro-Enterprise Loan Programs provide up to \$25,000 to businesses that employ 5 or fewer people
- Main Street micro-enterprise loans are targeted to Village and hamlet downtowns
- Agricultural micro-enterprise loans are available for up to \$60,000 to support agricultural operations.

Other financial assistance programs

- Revolving Loan Program

Town of Butler Comprehensive & Agricultural Protection Plan

- Tax relief and Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTS)

Opportunities/ Challenges

- NYS Routes 104, 89 and 370 are assets. Connect Butler to greater region.
- Water supply – source is near but infrastructure needed to connect regions. Consider blending cost for water and sewer services.

Wayne County Economic Development Strategic Plan

- Identifies infrastructure development as high priority.
- Other priorities include agriculture-related businesses and environmentally sustainable initiatives
- A consultant has been retained to conduct a review of the recommended actions and to work with the agencies identified as responsible for implementing them

John Monson, Mayor, Village of Wolcott

Water Supply

- The Village's primary source of water is Yeager Springs.
- The Village of Wolcott owns and operates a water plant which was constructed in 1951 along Lake Ontario. This plant is only used to supplement the Yeager Springs source. The intake line is expensive to maintain. Divers need to clean it once/ month to remove zebra mussels.
- A third source is being considered.
- The distribution lines were initially installed in 1912. The Village has replaced many of the undersized lines.
- The Wayne County Water & Sewer Authority (WCWSA) is working on a project to extend a line to Wolcott. The Village has a contract with WCWSA to sell and buy water.
- The Village makes money selling water and charges more to out-of-Village customers. Charges are \$1.80/ 1000 gallons to the WCWSA (wholesale price), \$4.80/ 1000 to out-of-Village customers, and \$2.00/ 1000 gallons to Village customers. The Village also supplies the Butler Correctional facility and the Towns of Huron and Wolcott through the WCWSA. Residential customers in the Village pay approximately \$80/ quarter for water and sewer.
- Extension of water supplies into the Town of Butler would be handled by the WCWSA, pursuant to an agreement between the Town and the Authority.

Town of Butler Comprehensive & Agricultural Protection Plan

- The Village would support the extension of water and sewer to the Route 104 corridor, as business development in this area would benefit the Village.
- Electromark is working with the WCWSA and the Town of Huron on a joint project to extend a 12" line, which would improve water pressure for the company's sprinkler system.
- The Village has sufficient quantity of water to supply additional development along Route 104, but pressures are not adequate. The line that serves McDonald's and FastTrac is only 6-inch in diameter. The businesses along Route 104 agreed to pay \$7-8,000/ year in Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) to the Village of Wolcott in exchange for the construction of the water line.
- Replacing this with a 12" line would be expensive (\$250,000 - \$812,000, depending on the route) and the Village is not willing to pay for it. The Village would prefer that a new line be routed through the Village so that Village residents and businesses would benefit from improved pressures and would participate in a joint effort.

Sewer

- The Village's wastewater treatment plant has excess capacity. Pump stations are needed at various locations, including 6 in the Village, to pump wastewater to Whiskey Hill Road/ New Hartford Street. Wayne County explored building a treatment plant outside the Village, but the Village has excess capacity.

Wes Pettee, AICP, Planner, Stuart I. Brown Associates

Water supply issues and opportunities

- Need for water service have been identified for the Route 104 corridor, South Butler, and possibly the northwest and northeast areas of the Town.

Route 104 Corridor issues and Opportunities

- The existing 6" line along Route 104 is not sufficient.
- Alternatives include:
 - Extending a line from the Butler Correctional Facility
 - Extending a 12" pressurized line from Ridge Road in the Town of Huron
- The southeastern area regional study will explore these and other options

Water District Creation

- Process established by NYS law.

Town of Butler Comprehensive & Agricultural Protection Plan

- Town Board may commission the preparation of a map, plan and report, which includes cost estimates and a description of the benefitting area
- District may be created after a public hearing and a permissive referendum
- Alternatively, landowners may petition the Town Board to create a district

Funding Opportunities

- CDBG Small Cities program, administered by the NYS DHCR, provides competitive grants of \$400,000 to \$750,000 to projects that would correct serious health and safety problems in areas where at least 51% of the benefitting population have low or moderate incomes.
- USDA Rural Development offers loans and grants. The proportion of grant to loan is based on median household income. Assistance is capped at 45% of the project costs, or 75% in areas with lower median household incomes.
- Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) is a very competitive program that provides low interest loans.

Comments from Committee and Attendees

- Consider bringing water from the Town of Rose. A line runs along Galen Road to Marshall Farms and the High School. This line is not operated by WCWSA.

Issues/ Opportunities for business/ industrial development

- Route 104 corridor offers visibility, good highway access
- Working with WCWSA allows Town to benefit from blended rate and bulk purchases
- Need to demonstrate how business development could benefit the Town fiscally
- Prison represents opportunity – jobs and customers for businesses
- Railroad is an asset
- Town-owned land on Route 104 may be suitable for industrial development
- Grocery, hotel, restaurant would be suitable businesses for the Route 104 corridor.