

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

November 5, 2008 – 4:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Daly; Supervisors Connelly, A. Johnson, Peck, Richardson, Veitch; David Wickerham, Co. Administrator; Mark Rider, Co. Attorney; Shelby Schneider, SEDC; Matt Jones, Attorney; Greg Dixon, Saratoga Chamber of Commerce; David Zunker, Saratoga Convention & Tourism Bureau; Press

Chairman Daly called the meeting to order.

On a motion by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Richardson, the minutes of the meeting of October 7th were approved unanimously.

Mr. Zunker gave out luggage tags which state “Experience Saratoga.”

Mr. Dixon said it was a good, but not a great year. Attendance figures at the track were down. With regard to occupancy, the County Treasurer reported that everything looks pretty solid, he said. He mentioned the 4th quarter will not be the strongest. Our inquiries are up 22%. People are looking for destinations closer to home and making a decision based on price, and that trend will continue in 2009, he stated.

Mr. Zunker stated they are in the business of promoting the Saratoga area to groups. We want to put butts in seats, he said. He said they are seeing similar numbers. With occupancy, one of the concerning factors for the future is attrition with the groups coming here, but they are not coming in with the large numbers they have guaranteed. We saw a slight dip in occupancy in September and probably in October, but August was strong, he said. We added more rooms – 123 at the Hampton Inn and 100 at the Hyatt. They became more competitive, he said. Our revenue may be down slightly compared to last year, he said. He said there is a lot of interest in Saratoga as a destination, as we are primarily a drive market. We work with planners and bring them into the community, he said. We are working the affinity markets – those uniquely in Saratoga. We built a hometown heroes program where we reach out to people in the community to see how they are connected to associations, etc., that could give us a starting point to bring groups in, he said. He stated the Chamber and the Convention & Tourism Bureau work very well together.

Mr. Zunker said they have specifically gone out to agricultural groups. They meet in the winter, and we want those groups, he said. He said they made a presentation to the Saratoga Hospital Foundation. He stated 10 – 15 people in that room were serving on committees or boards for regional or national organizations. Chairman Daly asked how they determine who they will approach. Mr. Zunker stated 75% of their business comes from New York State. School Administrators will be here in 2009 and 2010, he said. The beauty of Saratoga is that we are competing with Rochester, Binghamton and Syracuse. People want to come here, he said. We make frequent trips to New York City to call on corporate groups, and we go into New Jersey, he said. I cannot tell you if there is a trend developing, he stated.

Chairman Daly said SPAC plans on cutting ballet programs by one week. What impact will that have, she asked. Mr. Dixon said he is not informed enough to know what percentage of their business is not from the immediate area, but he believes it will have an impact. Mr. Richardson said he assumes they will fill that week. Mr. Zunker said they met with Marcia White, of SPAC, and her staff yesterday, and they did say they will fill that week. I am encouraged by the fact that she did reach out, he said. He stated Spa State Park had a meeting two weeks ago, and they are looking at marketing it as a true resort destination. They want to reach out to the Convention & Tourism Bureau, as it is a very attractive walkable option for groups, he said.

Mr. Zunker distributed copies of the Saratoga Meeting & Event Planner.

Chairman Daly stated we need to recertify the new entity that AMD has come forward with. The company will be larger with more jobs, she said. Our purpose is to advance the certification process for AMD Fab Technologies US, Inc., and we will seek to pass a resolution to introduce a Local Law. All of this is being done in a shortened time frame than we originally proposed, she said. She stated they need to have all of their certifications in place prior to their closing. Once we certify them, the paperwork has to go to Albany to Empire State Development.

Mrs. Schneider introduced Matt Jones who represents AMD. She said we are certifying this new entity with AMD's new acronym AFT. The company needs to close, and they will not do that unless all of their benefits are agreed to, she stated. She distributed copies of the proposed Local Law "approving the allocation of zone lands for the proposed expansion of AMD Fab

Technologies US, Inc. manufacturing project as a regionally significant project of the Saratoga County Empire Zone.” She said for AMD Fab Technologies US., Inc., their Federal I.D. number will remain the same, but the name is subject to change. She pointed out if they change their name again, language has been included in this Local Law that references that.

Chairman Daly said this proposed Local Law will go to the Law & Finance Committee next Wednesday. At that time, the County will set the date and time for a public hearing, and that will tentatively be scheduled for December 3rd at 5:00 p.m., she said. Also on that day, there will be a public hearing on the County Budget, she added. She mentioned the Empire Zone Board will meet after the County passes this Local Law.

Mr. Richardson moved to set December 3rd at 5:00 p.m. as the date and time for a public hearing on the Empire Zone certification for AMD Fab Technologies US, Inc.’s designation as a regionally significant project. Mr. Connelly seconded. Unanimous.

On a motion by Mr. Peck, seconded by Mr. Johnson, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann