

Economic Development Committee Minutes
April 5, 2023 – 3:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman Mark Hammond; Committee Members C. Eric Butler, Joe Grasso, Jean Raymond, Kevin Tollisen, Kevin Veitch, Sandra Winney. Steve Bulger, Ridge Harris, Stephanie Hodgson, Matt Rose, Christine Rush, County Administrator; Michelle Granger, County Attorney; Jason Kemper, Kim Lambert, Planning & Economic Development; Jenniffer McCloskey, Employment & Training; Pete Bardunias, Capital Region Chamber

Chairman Hammond called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mrs. Jean Raymond, seconded by Mr. Kevin Tollisen, the minutes of the March 8, 2023 meeting were approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Kevin Veitch, seconded by Mr. Butler, approving reimbursement requests of Economic Development grants, authorizing the transfer of funds from the Economic Development Reserve Fund and amending the 2023 County Budget. Unanimous.

The following grant reimbursement requests were approved by the committee.

2021 City of Saratoga Springs - \$7100

2022 Town of Waterford - \$14,200

2022 Town of Clifton Park - \$14,200

2022 Town of Moreau - \$14,200

Mr. Kemper gave a brief overview of the current grants.

The transfer of funds from the Reserve Fund is in the amount of \$49,700.

Mr. Bardunias from the Capital Region Chamber distributed a handout and provided a brief overview of the 2023 Community Development Program to date.

Mr. Bardunias distributed a handout regarding a potential upgrade to the Clifton Park Information Center to add an exhibit focused on businesses and attractions between Exits 11-23, and coordinated Saratoga County promotion materials project. Copies of the handouts are attached to these minutes. Discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Mrs. Jean Raymond, seconded by Mr. Butler, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese M. Connolly
Clerk of the Board



THE CHAMBER OF
SOUTHERN SARATOGA
COUNTY

An Affiliate of the
Capital Region Chamber

Community Development Program 2023



Prepared by:
THE CAPITAL DISTRICT
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
2000

Prepared for:
**Saratoga County Board of
Supervisors**
March 2023



THE CHAMBER OF
SOUTHERN SARATOGA
COUNTY

An Affiliate of the
Capital Region Chamber

Community Development Plan 2023

- Maintain previous Community Development projects such as Historic Lock 19/Vischer Ferry Picnic Area, Mechanicville Gazebo/Bulletin Board, Area 3 in Halfmoon, etc.
- Operate the Visitor Center on the Northway at the Clifton Park (Exit 9) Rest Area
- Promotion of Saratoga County initiatives and events through the placement of articles supporting the business community in area publications, article and ad placement in the Maptech Cruising Guide, other local festivals and area publications
- Infrastructure Considerations: Convene meetings of stakeholders in conjunction with appropriate agencies, and provide feedback on potential remedies to Saratoga County:
 - Farm tractors on roads – aggressive drivers are making it hard for farmers to move tractors between fields, and there have been some accidents and near misses because of this
 - Canal advocacy – efforts by some groups to sever the Erie and Champlain Canals and the “double flush” program is having direct impact on water tourism and commercial marine transport to Saratoga County.
 - Farm/Marine Industry issues – generational transition, land use/transfer, solar farms, questions of highest and best use, and the integration of the next generation in both of these industries into the business community
 - Truck strikes on bridges/improper use of roads – continued monitoring of this troublesome issue that has impacted all area spans from ancient train bridges to the Twin Bridges
 - Vandalism – we noticed a surge in mischief and vandalism related events in 2022. Review the tolerance of area sites to vandalism and address where possible
- Leverage the collective regional capacity of the Capital Region Chamber and its many programs and initiatives, by communicating with villages, towns and cities throughout Saratoga County and reviewing effective, practical means of support for those communities



THE CHAMBER OF
SOUTHERN SARATOGA
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Community Development Plan 2023

To accomplish the above, we will utilize the following where applicable:

- Support local small business groups and committees
- Work with local BPAs/chambers/regional associations as partners
- Engage local corporations in community development activities, coordinate volunteers
- Develop and maximize economic benefits of community improvement projects
- Provide a status report to the county Economic Development Committee of progress on 2023 projects, goals and funding request for 2024

ECONOMIC IMPACT: The Capital Region Chamber has a proven track record of job retention and business support, and since the 1/1/2020 affiliation with the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County, the combined organization has provided COVID-19 information, individual advice, support and guidance to well over 1000 Saratoga County businesses with some 30,000 employees during very challenging economic times. COVID and other sources of funding to Saratoga County businesses has been in the millions, through programs administered by this Chamber and its affiliates. Each town and all 239,000 residents of Saratoga County can benefit from the Rest Area and other information center promotions. Development sites such as Halfmoon's Area 3 has the potential to bring \$500 million-plus in new business investment and possible common suppliers to GLOBALFOUNDRIES. DMV support aids County Clerk offices. The other initiatives primarily impact southern Saratoga County communities with a special emphasis on the River Towns and underserved communities, plus Tourism and frequent business travelers to our area. The info center at the Exit 9 Rest Area places Saratoga County information in front of 200,000-250,000 people each year. Traffic remains very high at that location, this county's only dedicated connection to the I-87 corridor.

Prepared by:

THE CAPITAL DISTRICT
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
2000

2023 Funding: \$60,000

2023 Project 1: Maintain previous Community Development projects **PLAN**

Why Maintain? The projects conducted under the Saratoga County Community Development Program have a proven record of success, and the continued maintenance has preserved the value of past investments while setting the stage for future enhancements.

The 2023 project will produce the following results/deliverables:

- Historic Lock 19 / Vischer Ferry picnic area maintenance, conduct April work parties and assess potential improvements
- Review any issues related to the Mechanicville Gazebo / waterfront Bulletin Board in conjunction with the City
- Support the Halfmoon Business and Economic Development Committee, especially the proposed Area 3 Halfmoon Intermodal Industrial Complex.
- Review the Waterford Canal Festival, and develop a plan for its future in conjunction with the Town and/or Village of Waterford
- Place “Renew Here” DMV information at the Waterford Canal Festival and other fairs/festivals where we exhibit
- Host a large tent at the Saratoga County Fair and support the Saratoga County Agricultural Society
- Maintain the MaltaNYBusiness.com website.
- Provide feedback on the above activities in periodic reports

2023 Project 1: Maintain previous Community Development projects

ACTION

The 2023 project will produce the following results/deliverables:

- **Historic Lock 19 / Vischer Ferry picnic area maintenance, conduct April work parties and assess potential improvements**
 - **Work Party scheduled for Historic Lock 19 on April 22**
- **Review any issues related to the Mechanicville Gazebo / waterfront Bulletin Board in conjunction with the City**
 - **No update – work last performed end of summer 2022, maintained site, plantings and laying down of mulch**



• **Support the Halfmoon Business and Economic Development Committee, especially the proposed Area 3 Halfmoon Intermodal Industrial Complex.**

• **Serving on the Halfmoon Comprehensive Planning Update Committee, open house held March 23, next meeting April 6**

2023 Project 1: Maintain previous Community Development projects

ACTION

The 2023 project will produce the following results/deliverables:

- Review the Waterford Canal Festival, and develop a plan for its future in conjunction with the Town and/or Village of Waterford
 - Waterford Canal and Towpath Society working with the Village of Waterford and the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County to present the 2023 Canal Festival Dates are May 20-21.
- Place “Renew Here” DMV information at the Waterford Canal Festival and other fairs/festivals where we exhibit
 - ongoing
- Host a large tent at the Saratoga County Fair and support the Saratoga County Agricultural Society
 - ongoing
- Maintain the MaltaNYBusiness.com website.
 - Discussed the website at the 4/5 MBCA/CSSC “Inside Malta” event
- Provide feedback on the above activities in periodic reports
 - ongoing

Prepared by

2023 Project 2: Operation of the Rest Area Visitor Center **PLAN**

Why Operate the Visitor Center? The Visitor Center located inside of the Clifton Park (Exit 9) Rest Area on I-87, is the only location on the lower Northway where information can be displayed and disseminated to the public in both print and electronic form, independent of the I Love NY program and other statewide initiatives. By working with the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County, information unique to our county can be distributed to support every City, Village and Town and associated events.

The 2023 project will produce the following results/deliverables:

- Staff the Clifton Park Visitor Center as per agreement with New York State Department of Transportation
- Promote events submitted by all Saratoga County municipalities on the Clifton Park Visitor Center monitor seen by 1,000 travelers daily
- Place “Renew Here” DMV information at the Clifton Park Visitor Center
- Report on activities at the Center to the Economic Development Committee



2023 Project 2: Operation of the Rest Area Visitor Center **ACTION**

The 2023 project will produce the following results/deliverables:

- Staff the Clifton Park Visitor Center as per agreement with New York State Department of Transportation
 - Ongoing – the Center remains fully staffed and will continue to be at full operation in 2023
- Promote events submitted by all Saratoga County municipalities on the Clifton Park Visitor Center monitor seen by 1,000 travelers daily
 - Each municipality can send JPG or PDF files of events for us to post at the Center. Have posted events taking place in most Saratoga County Towns
 - Added a new graphic for Amtrak’s “Adirondack” train to coincide with its post Pandemic reopening, including a poster on the wall
- Place “Renew Here” DMV information at the Clifton Park Visitor Center
 - ongoing
- Report on activities at the Center to the Economic Development Committee
 - Update to be delivered along with this report to the Economic Development Committee, regarding possible addition to support Exits 11-13, the Town of Malta, and the Saratoga battlefield

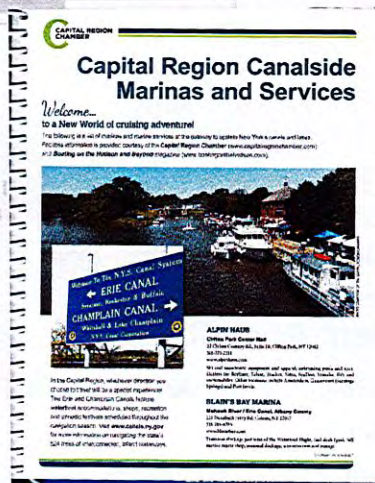
2023 Project 3: Promotion of Saratoga County initiatives and events through area fairs/festivals, Maptech Cruising Guide, and area publications

PLAN

Why Promote? Each year, the Chamber distributes a considerable amount of information about economic activity at local events and through articles in area publications. Much of this publicity supports industries based in this county that get little/no attention elsewhere.

The 2023 project will produce the following results/deliverables:

- Chamber attendance at many local festivals as warranted
- Chamber to continue the “Canal gateway” spread in the Maptech Cruising Guide
- Promotion of Saratoga County and its business community in articles, social media and other news sources
- Report on related activities to the Economic Development Committee

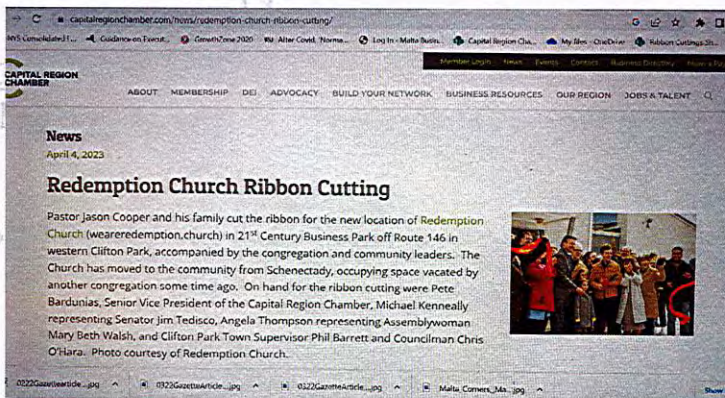


2023 Project 3: Promotion of Saratoga County initiatives and events through area fairs/festivals, Maptech Cruising Guide, and area publications

ACTION

The 2023 project will produce the following results/deliverables:

- Chamber attendance at many local festivals as warranted
 - The Chamber is continuing to support the Waterford Canal Festival, Ballston Flag Day Parade, Mechanicville Family Day, Saratoga County Fair, Galway Blueberry Festival, Village of Ballston Spa movies, concerts and Car Show, Schuylerville Cardboard Boat Festival, Waterford Tugboat Roundup, Clifton Park Farm Fest, Halfmoon Fall Festival and Celebrations events, Waterford Christmas Parade, Ballston Spa Holiday Parade, Memory Tree lightings, and farmers markets, plus others as appropriate
- Chamber to continue the “Canal gateway” spread in the Maptech Cruising Guide
 - Preparations for 2024 book (published every 2 years, last edition 2023)
- Promotion of Saratoga County and its business community in articles, social media and other news sources
 - Publication of articles continues for the support of Saratoga County business and community events. Some examples below:



- Report on related activities to the Economic Development Committee
- Additional report attached to this update, regarding coordination of activities with other visitor centers in Saratoga County

2023 Project 4: Infrastructure Considerations

PLAN

Why Review? Farms and marine businesses are facing challenges from within their communities, from state tax laws, generational problems, and more. Farmers on tractors are often in dangerous situations due to aggressive drivers. Efforts to dramatically alter the Canal System would dramatically impact area businesses. Truck strikes on bridges have done considerable damage in some instances. Vandalism at area parks and public spaces has threatened to make some of them unusable.

The 2023 project will produce the following results/deliverables:

- Attend or convene meetings of stakeholders in conjunction with appropriate agencies, and provide feedback on potential remedies and/or best practices to the EDC Committee on the following issues:
 - Farm tractors on roads – aggressive drivers are making it hard for farmers to move tractors between fields, and there have been some accidents and near misses because of this
 - Canal advocacy – efforts by some groups to sever the Erie and Champlain Canals and the “double flush” program is having direct impact on water tourism and commercial marine transport to Saratoga County.
 - Farm/Marine Industry issues – generational transition, land use/transfer, solar farms, questions of highest and best use, and the integration of the next generation in both of these industries into the business community
- Truck strikes on bridges/improper use of roads – continued monitoring of this troublesome issue that has impacted all area spans from ancient train bridges to the Twin Bridges
- Vandalism – we noticed a surge in mischief and vandalism related events in 2022. Review the tolerance of area sites to vandalism and address where possible

2023 Project 4: Infrastructure Considerations

ACTION

The 2023 project will produce the following results/deliverables:

•Attend or convene meetings of stakeholders in conjunction with appropriate agencies, and provide feedback on potential remedies and/or best practices to the EDC Committee on the following issues:

- Farm tractors on roads – aggressive drivers are making it hard for farmers to move tractors between fields, and there have been some accidents and near misses because of this

- TBD

- Canal advocacy – efforts by some groups to sever the Erie and Champlain Canals and the “double flush” program is having direct impact on water tourism and commercial marine transport to Saratoga County.

- Canal Corp stakeholders meeting to be held at the CSSC offices on April 6

- Farm/Marine Industry issues – generational transition, land use/transfer, solar farms, questions of highest and best use, and the integration of the next generation in both of these industries into the business community

- Attended Agribusiness meeting in the Town of Galway on Feb 21, supporting the comprehensive planning update for that Town and the future of the Ag industry

- Truck strikes on bridges/improper use of roads – continued monitoring of this troublesome issue that has impacted all area spans from ancient train bridges to the Twin Bridges

- TBD

- Vandalism – we noticed a surge in mischief and vandalism related events in 2022. Review the tolerance of area sites to vandalism and address where possible

- TBD

2023 Project 5: Leverage the collective regional capacity of the Capital Region Chamber and its many programs and initiatives, by communicating with villages, towns and cities throughout Saratoga County and reviewing effective, practical means of support for those communities

PLAN

Why Leverage Regional Capacity? The affiliation with the Capital Region Chamber and now the Center for Economic Growth has brought several million dollars into this County since 2020, strengthened and reinforced the local Chamber of Southern Saratoga County during the COVID-19 crisis, and made resources available to serve member and non-member businesses in this county. We have a far-stronger economic development profile with the Chamber/CEG working with the Saratoga Economic Development Corp and other such organizations

The 2023 project will produce the following results/deliverables:

- Provide resources to support the growth of existing businesses
- Visit with local community leaders to gain insight into challenges/opportunities
- Work with Saratoga County officials on economic development opportunities
- Discuss with Economic Development Committee Chair any advocacy topics which might be elevated and included in chamber legislative agendas
- Discuss with Economic Development Committee Chair potential gaps in services/products needed for economic development and provide updates on efforts to obtain such resources regionally



2023 Project 5: Leverage the collective regional capacity of the Capital Region Chamber and its many programs and initiatives, by communicating with villages, towns and cities throughout Saratoga County and reviewing effective, practical means of support for those communities

ACTION

The 2023 project will produce the following results/deliverables:

- Provide resources to support the growth of existing businesses
 - ongoing
- Visit with local community leaders to gain insight into challenges/opportunities
 - Met with Halfmoon, Clifton Park, Schuylerville, Mechanicville and Galway leaders in 1Q 2023
 - “Inside Malta” event April 6 to leverage CRC and CEG reach while maintaining local focus
- Work with Saratoga County officials on economic development opportunities
 - Reviewing possible locations for several companies with local officials in southern Saratoga County
- Discuss with Economic Development Committee Chair any advocacy topics which might be elevated and included in chamber legislative agendas
 - ongoing
- Discuss with Economic Development Committee Chair potential gaps in services/products needed for economic development and provide updates on efforts to obtain such resources regionally
 - Considerations for better utilization of area visitor centers and coordination of message to be outlined in separate report



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Community Development Program – Info Centers 2023



Prepared by:
THE CAPITAL DISTRICT
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
2000

Prepared for:
**Saratoga County Board of
Supervisors**
March 2023



Community Development Plan Exits 11-13 Promotion 2023

A potential upgrade opportunity exists for the Clifton Park Information Center, to add an exhibit focused on businesses and attractions between Exits 11-13 and entice travelers off of the Northway. Malta is the next town north of this unique and valuable information center, and yet there is little information available about this community or neighboring towns. The signage for the Saratoga Battlefield is at Exit 12, yet there is no real effort to draw tourists off the Northway to nearby venues at that Exit.

In conjunction, an effort should be made to have coordinated electronic material on display at the various visitor centers (for example using same images for Hudson Crossing Park at the Gateway VC and Clifton Park Info Center)

An additional option (requiring an additional investment TBD) would be to consider making rack cards, electronic promotion material and/or the creation of an “app” to help travelers and newcomers find the various visitor centers located in Saratoga County, both large and small: Clifton Park Info Center, Gateway Visitor Center, Mechanicville city docks bulletin board, Saratoga Springs Visitor Center, Stillwater Blockhouse Visitor Center, Waterford Harbor Visitor Center and others

ECONOMIC IMPACT: The info center at the Exit 9 Rest Area places Saratoga County information in front of 200,000-250,000 people each year. Traffic remains very high at that location, this county’s only dedicated connection to the I-87 corridor. The Saratoga Battlefield is accessible through Exit 12 and is one of our national historic treasures and a revenue generator for our communities and County.

Funding Request: \$8,000* (additional may be required if other options are considered)

Visitor Center update – Malta/Exits 11-13 exhibit

PLAN

There is a hole in the wall....

We can add an exhibit to this valuable space with sufficient financial support to maintain it.

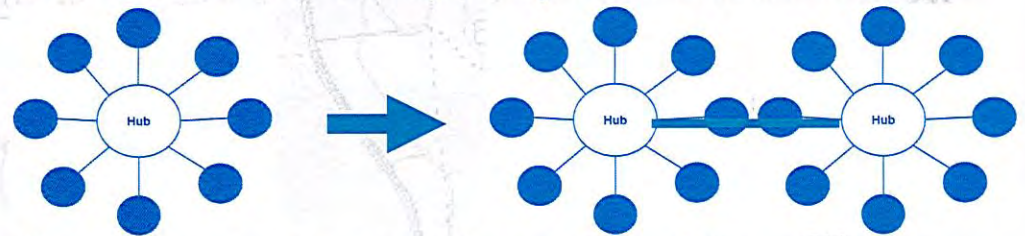
A rack with literature, coordinated with the electronic display would be best suited for this location.

Exhibit will also allow for adaptation to support the 250th Anniversary of the Battle of Saratoga along with electronic display updates and other upgrades.



New, coordinated Saratoga County promotion materials **PLAN**

It is a stated priority that area visitor centers such as the new Gateway Visitor Center in Schuylerville are designed along the hub/spoke model to direct visitors out into the various communities. An expansion of this idea would be to join the hubs and spokes together, similar to the trucks on a train undercarriage. With coordination across visitor centers, common information can be shared across the county, so that if one finds one of our visitor centers, they find them all.



Several possible options to consider

Rack cards and brochures promoting all visitor centers in Saratoga County

Updated, coordinated electronic display materials on TVs at visitor centers.

Possible central control and updating of displays

Possibly a **downloadable app** to list all visitor centers and info displays large and small, mapped throughout Saratoga County, with

24/7/365 exposure:

(Funding needs TBD)

