

SULLIVAN COUNTY BUSINESS EDGE

JUNE 2022

Sullivan County Partnership for Economic Development ▶ Sullivan County Industrial Development Agency ▶ Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce ▶ Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association ▶ Sullivan County Democrat

Liberty seeing robust interest in new business

BY FRED STABBERT III
PHOTOS BY MATTHEW SHORTALL



Above: The Historic Village of Liberty theater continues to make progress.

Left: Town Supervisor Frank DeMayo sees good things ahead.



The Town of Liberty is seeing a renewed interest in business moving into the town, from Parksville to White Sulphur and from downtown Liberty to Old Route 17.

Supervisor Frank DeMayo is delighted by the attention his township is receiving and said the pandemic, in part, has played a role in the flurry of activity.

He said just like after 9-11, a lot of folks from the metropolitan New York City area are moving up to Sullivan County – and Liberty.

“This time around a lot of folks came up here, too,” DeMayo said, referring to the pandemic movement. “We now have to keep them here.”

What’s on the docket

One of the larger projects DeMayo

is trying to close is the million-square-foot spec building being proposed on Old Route 17, going toward Monticello. It could be utilized as a warehouse or distribution center.

“It’s before the planning board right now,” he said. “The Geiss Co. out of Ohio is the builder and the big challenge is how do we get them water?”

DeMayo said that while this area was designated as Commercial/Industrial many years ago, there were never any water and sewer pipes laid to provide the area with services.

DeMayo said the corridor is ideal because there are not many homes along Old 17 in that area and there are several exits for Route 17, which makes access easier.

“Marc [Baez, CEO of the Partnership] has been trying for years to bring new business into this area,” DeMayo said. “Moving forward we will be working on grants to assist with running water and sewer to this area, which will cost

INSIDE:

**President’s message:
Embrace the Warmth**
page 2E

**Sullivan County
businesses driving change
toward greener practices**
page 4E

**6 Ways to make your
business stand out during
a local event**
page 6E

**Balancing economy and
environment**
page 8E

**Sullivan Catskills gearing
up for a busy summer**
page 10E

**The Do’s and Please
Don’ts for the first time real
estate buyer**
page 12E

about one and a half million.

“We already have an agreement with the village to use their sewer plant, which can accommodate up to 100,000 gallons per day,” he said. “This project would provide really good ratables.”

Cannibas company

DeMayo is also very supportive of

Please see **LIBERTY** page 3E

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Embrace the Warmth

To The People

With summer in full swing and temperatures finally warming up, it seems that our economy is beginning to warm again as well.

Whether it's the general feeling that pandemic is entering a more manageable phase, the lingering desire of people to head to our hills away from uncertainty in the tristate metro area, or the demand for onshoring a growing list of critical goods and services, Sullivan County continues to draw interest from a variety of industry sectors to go along with our traditional tourism.

With the fastest job growth rate in New York State for several months, continued investment in our tourist destination sector in the form of new project development, and the number of commercial projects seeking approvals at the highest level we have seen

at any one single time, Sullivan County is poised to go on a prolonged run of economic development activity for years to come.

Of course, we must temper our reaction to these trends as overall volatility could still redirect where we are in an instant.

The war in Ukraine, continued supply chain issues, inflation, and any new covid variant can quickly muck things up.

Yet setbacks in our economy or life in general, most always create opportunities on the other side of the ledger.

Sullivan County is benefitting from recent challenges as we have become a target for those seeking a different lifestyle, a temporary getaway, and businesses seeking sites to expand or locate to, not readily available in other areas.



CEO/President Marc Baez

Still, we must take advantage of where we are now and move ahead, continuing to focus on maximizing our assets and opportunities to create a diverse economy able to increasingly withstand whatever headwinds act to veer us off course.

The more we stick to our steady efforts to grow our economy across all sectors in a balanced way, the stronger we will be to any setbacks that can arise.

So, enjoy the warm weather and embrace the warming up of our economy, it is a blessing we should not take for granted. Have a prosperous and joy filled summer.

Sincerely,

Marc Baez

President, Sullivan County Partnership



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LIBERTY

From front page

Holistic Industries, a Colorado-based company, which is trying to bring a medicinal and recreational cannabis growing company to Liberty.

"They are interested in a corner lot near Parksville," DeMayo said. "There is challenges with the [state] licensing process, but we have full [Town of Liberty] board support."

Golf Course action

One of the biggest projects the Town of Liberty is currently working on is Sullivan County Golf and Country Club's expansion.

The property was purchased by Sims Foster, according to DeMayo, and plans are for a 150-room hotel with 100 residential units around the golf course.

There will also be 30 glamping sites, DeMayo said, and an update to the clubhouse and the addition of a pool and tennis courts.

"They will also need to redesign the golf course," he said. "This project will create 100 jobs."

DeMayo said the biggest hurdle with this project will be a resolution with the Village of Liberty for sewer

service.

"All of these projects have had open dialogue with the Village officials to bring them to fruition," DeMayo said. "We also have a lot of development projects near Swan Lake."

Action in Swan Lake

A pending upgrade to the Swan Lake sewer district – to the tune of \$18 million using 0 percent interest loans – has opened the door for expansion.

"A lot of housing is going up on the southeast section of Liberty, mostly Hasidic," DeMayo said. "They prefer open space and are building on 3-acre lots. They are nice homes and nice folks."

DeMayo said the town was working with the developer on environmental studies to assess the effects on the environment.

Moving Downtown

The Liberty Theater, which is now owned by Bruce Davidson, is showing new signs of life.

"I met with Bruce a couple of weeks ago and he found contractors and they are back working.



PETRA DUFFY | DEMOCRAT

One entrance to the Parksville O&W Rail Trail includes a mural depicting the historical past while inviting guests to enjoy the present recreational opportunities.

"That project is huge," he said.

Another big project brewing in Liberty is the Brick and Tunnel Brewery, which is moving into the former Kilian Transfer building on Lake St.

"Rich Constagna, who owns Brick and Tunnel out of Maspeth, is a great

guy who brews great beer," DeMayo said.

He said the company is working on moving its operation to Liberty and plans are for a soft opening in July.

Another brewery is being planned on Sullivan Ave., just down the street from McDonald's and a micro-brewery is being discussed at the Beer Store on the east end of Mill St.

Eco is big

Liberty is also actively involved with the Rail Trail Alliance.

"It's a great program," DeMayo said. "We clearly understand how it could help local business. While they are focused in Fallsburg right now, Liberty is on the list for the next phase."

Final Thoughts

And while many communities in the Mid-Hudson continue to receive grants, Supervisor DeMayo is hoping the same comes to Liberty.

"After one business moves in, others tend to follow," DeMayo said.

"It's been a long time for Liberty and we need a shot in the arm," he said. "What about Liberty?"

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Sullivan County businesses are driving the change towards greener business practices

BY JENNIFER MENDEL

The natural beauty of the Catskills poetically predisposes it to eco-friendly behavior. Fittingly, local Sullivan County businesses continue to be at the forefront of climate-friendly practice, as ecommerce is usurped by eco-commerce.

In fact, the enhanced sustainability of small Sullivan County businesses is referred to as one of the 11 identified sectors for fiscal growth in a recent report. Since the 2017 designation of Sullivan County as a Clean Energy Community and a Bronze-Certified Climate Smart Community, local industry has been placing planet before profit in investing in eco-friendly spaces, services, and products.

Here are some ways in which SC businesses are going green.

In-house Isn't Always The Best

Reducing power usage, the amount of technological hardware purchased and housed, and the physical space a business occupies, are all ways in which to eco-fy operations.

By outsourcing data management systems to a cloud-based operator, Sullivan County businesses manage to achieve all three objectives in one. Proprietors are able to cut down on computing hardware, and reduce the floor space required to manage it.

They also experience a reduction in overall energy consumption.

There are a growing number of computer systems design and management firms that cater to businesses in SC and the surrounding areas, including Network Service LLC, Offerya LLC, and Tech Lab 2020.

They have a diverse customer base ranging from civic organizations

through to mid to large-scale private enterprises.

Keeping it Clean

The increasing number of eco-friendly cleaning services operating within Sullivan County echoes the continued environmental commitment of businesses in the area.

The use of earth-conscious cleaning products minimizes the spread of chemicals, which have a deleterious effect on both human and planet health, and supports sustainable ingredients and packaging processes.

Sullivan County is as popular with visitors as it is with residents, and proprietors in the booming vacation, Airbnb, and VRBO rental sector, along with other businesses such as retail and hospitality, generally have a high customer turnover.

Such businesses require thorough sanitization and cleaning, and prefer

the exclusion of toxic and potentially allergen triggering chemicals that can linger in the air, and on fabrics and surfaces.

Build it Better

The Sullivan County Climate Action Plan, enacted by the SC Legislature in 2014, recognized the critical role that retrofitting existing buildings and facilities plays in increasing sustainability, with all new builds also subject to close scrutiny.

Accordingly, Sullivan County provides funding opportunities for energy efficient upgrades and renewable energy installations in the private business sector.

The Catskill Brewery in Livingston Manor is a local business exemplifying the action plan's initiatives. It comprises a single story structure whose eco credentials include the use of on-site renewables to exact a 40% reduction



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in energy costs, the installation of green roofs that absorb heat and expel oxygen, and irrigation-less pavers and native plantings.

Holistic Growth and Healthy Returns

Seminary Hill Orchard & Cidery in Callicoon is another local enterprise that espouses eco-friendly principles in its building design, which is PassivHaus compliant, and also in its cider and food operations.

From orchard to bottle, the company adheres to holistic production methods that exclude pesticide and herbicide usage. Their food menu meanwhile relies on locally sourced ingredients, thus reducing the carbon costs associated with commercial food manufacture and transportation.

The infinite natural beauty of Sullivan County is unquestionable, its continued enjoyment for future generations, is. Thankfully the Sullivan County business community continues to embrace these and other eco-efficient practices, knowing there's no growth possible without a planet to protect.

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6 Ways to make your business stand out during a local event

BY JAIME SCHMEISER
PRESIDENT AND CEO SULLIVAN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Sullivan County hosts a myriad of local events in our towns, villages and hamlets, especially during the summer months.

Streets are closed and people are encouraged to get out and support business. These events bring large crowds and we have some suggestions on how you can make your business standout.

6 Ways to Help Get the Sale

If you have an event that will bring a lot of commerce "tourists" to your business who do a lot of visiting and not much buying, you need to change that with these ideas.

- Tell a story. While you may not

have the time to do this for everyone in the store, if you see someone eyeballing one of your items in a loving way, go up to them and tell them something interesting about the piece. You'd be surprised what may inspire a sale.

- Give a taste. If you sell food or drink, offer someone a taste before they buy. This works to create a sale in two ways: they'll (hopefully) enjoy it and want more and/or because you kindly gave them a taste (and did something for them), they will feel obligated to buy from you.

- Teach a quick skill or use for your product. Draw the crowd into a quick presentation that features a product you sell. Have several



DEMOCRAT FILE PHOTO

When the Callicoon Kiwanis Club held its Annual Holiday Party last December at Catskill Provisions in Callicoon, owner Claire Marin rolled out the Red Carpet, with tastings of her spirits and plenty of culinary samples. The event helped promote her business locally.

products to hand people who want to buy right there. Alternately, have a pro available to answer questions. For instance, a store that sells painted furniture might have an expert on hand to walk people through how to do it themselves. Don't worry that it will discourage

them from buying from you. When they realize how hard it is, they will beg you to take their money.

- Get people on your mailing list. You never know when a "tire kicker" may see something in store and decide later that week they must have it. When people are in

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your store, ask them to join your mailing list. A few days after the event, follow up with a coupon, special offer, or sales notification. That call-to-action will likely send them your way.

- Offer a freebie for that night only. If it's a special night or event, give away a little something to anyone who buys from you or offer specials for that night only.
- Create a singalong. In a crowded store, it's hard to talk to everyone but you want to make sure

people have fun and feel the energy of your business. You want them to remember you. A good way to accomplish that is by queuing up the tunes and encouraging people to sing with you. There are certain songs people just can't help but sing along with – 'Don't stop believing.' You know what I mean. If you don't, just put on Sweet Caroline and see what happens.

For a list of upcoming local events visit catskills.com.



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Communities throughout Sullivan County and the entire state are faced with difficult decisions regarding their aging and vulnerable infrastructure. The Town of Delaware is a prime example of this. Delaware Engineering (DE) has assisted the Town and local stakeholders for over a decade in developing holistic approaches to these complex issues. DE is vested in the communities in which we have the privilege to work in, and serve as not only a technical resource, but a partner to help community leaders plan and advance their projects.

The 330-mile long Delaware River supports a water-based economy of over \$21 billion dollars annually, from recreation, water quality, hunting/fishing, ecotourism, forest, agriculture, open space and port benefits. It supports over 600,000 jobs, and supplies nearly 15 million people with clean drinking water.

Given its location in the Delaware River basin, the Town of Delaware must carefully consider a myriad of issues including balancing the economy and the environment: from how to treat wastewater, improve drinking water, mitigate stormwater and flood plain concerns, to regulatory issues and permitting compliance.

Taking to heart the degree to which the local economy is dependent on the Delaware River,

and recognizing the fragility of the environment that supports it, the Town of Delaware took a pledge in 2012 to become a Certified NYS Climate Smart Community (CSC). Being a CSC means that as a local government, the Town of Delaware underwent a rigorous review of concrete actions that it could take to mitigate and adapt to climate change. This designation allows the Town access to technical assistance and other NYS resources that can help save taxpayer dollars, build resiliency to the impacts of climate change, and create greater engagement with residents who care about the health and safety of their hometown.

After facing multiple significant flood events in the late 1990's through the 2010's, the Town recognized the need to take a hard look at improving the resiliency of the municipality's infrastructure. There are two strategies to accomplish this – hardening in place or relocating vulnerable infrastructure out of harm's way. Hardening in place means fortifying existing infrastructure to withstand future powerful storm events. Whereas relocation means abandoning existing infrastructure and reconstructing it in a new location less likely to be affected by storm activity. Consideration to whether or not expansion of services will be needed and comparative analysis of cost to construct also weighs in on both options.

WASTEWATER In the hamlet of Callicoon, the existing wastewater treatment plant is located in the flood plain near the convergence of the Callicoon Creek and the

Delaware River. During the 2006 flood, the wastewater treatment plant was inundated with several feet of floodwaters throughout the facility. This resulted in temporary loss of sewer service in the hamlet and damage to the facility itself.

For the past 10-years, DE has been actively working with Town officials to analyze the feasibility of hardening the existing 30-year old plant versus constructing a new plant outside of the flood plain. The Town was awarded a \$30,000 engineering planning grant from NYS DEC to support these efforts. Based on the limited life expectancy of the existing plant, its location in the floodplain, and upcoming stricter permit requirements, in 2020 the Town decided to purchase a parcel of land outside of the floodplain with the intent to construct a new facility to serve the hamlet of Callicoon's sanitary sewer treatment needs. Concurrently, an analysis to harden the existing facility in lieu of relocating is being explored. To date the Town has been awarded a \$2 million Climate Smart Grant from NYSDEC to support the project, with additional funding being sought to minimize impact to Town residents.

DRINKING WATER Town officials have been working to improve the public drinking water system. Long met with regulatory challenges and limited access to state and federal funding, the Callicoon Water Company transferred ownership to the newly formed Town Water District in 2018. Delaware Engineering assisted the Town in district formation and securing funding to make the upgrades on the 100+ year old system which were being required by NYSDOH and DRBC. The Town secured a \$2.4 million grant and \$1.6 million zero percent interest loan to support the upgrades and ensure the long-term viability of the water system for the Hamlet of Callicoon.



MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS In 2012 Delaware Engineering was hired to assist in the planning, permitting and construction of a new highway department complex. The existing highway garage and salt shed are located in the floodway of the Callicoon Creek and their replacement was identified as a high priority in the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Delaware Engineering designed an on-site stormwater facility to treat the increased run-off and prevent contamination of the nearby creek, and helped the Town secure over \$2.3 million in grant funding (including \$1.8 million from the Climate Smart Communities program) to relocate the facilities to a nearby site out of the flood plain. Extensive site work and construction of the salt shed were completed in 2021, while construction of the highway garage has been put on pause until post-COVID cost of materials and supply chain issues diffuse.





STORMWATER MANAGEMENT Though most of Delaware Engineering's work is providing design services for municipal clients, the firm also engages with private businesses. For example, when the Seminary Hill Cidery in Callicoon was starting construction, the construction manager retained DE to perform onsite stormwater inspections. These inspections were done to keep the Cidery in compliance with their Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which is prepared as part of a general permit for construction activity issued by the NYSDEC.



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Article contributed by 

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Sullivan Catskills gearing up for a busy summer

BY ISABEL BRAVERMAN
BRAND AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER SCVA

Summer is in full swing here in the Sullivan Catskills. Businesses are open, visitors are streaming in and we are back in action.

There are many events happening throughout the summer with many opportunities to get outside, see live music, enjoy a theatrical performance, or discover new thrills.

"Every week is a packed house," remarked Roberta Byron-Lockwood, President/CEO for the Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association (SCVA).

The SCVA recently launched a new app, Sullivan Catskills Go!, that will allow visitors to find restaurants, cafes, lodging, hiking trails, and so much more all from their smart-phone. They can check out events on the events calendar both on the app and on the SCVA website, www.sullivan-catskills.com.

"There's so much to do and see this summer," Byron-Lockwood said. "Our businesses are ready for you."

The ever-popular Sullivan Catskills Dove Trail features 60 dove sculptures painted by local artists located in towns, villages, and at tourism businesses. Summer is the perfect

time to take a road trip and try to locate them all, and, we will be adding eight new doves this year—stay tuned for more details as we announce their new

"nesting" sites at locations around the county.

The SCVA staff and team has been busy as well! After

being postponed due to the Covid pandemic, travel trade shows are back and SCVA has been attending shows all over the country, from New York City to Orlando. These



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Sullivan Speaks podcast features member businesses. Pictured are Myriam López, left, founder of Catskills Pilates, and Isabel Braverman, SCVA Brand and Communications Manager.

The Sullivan Catskills Dove Trail commemorates the 50th anniversary of the 1969 Woodstock festival and is a collection of 60 dove sculptures perched in villages, towns, and at several tourism businesses.

There are many events happening all over Sullivan County this summer, such as the first annual Upper Delaware Shad Fest, which was held at Fort Delaware in Narrowsburg

shows are a great way to market the Sullivan Catskills as a travel destination and highlight our assets, from the great outdoors to world-class lodging, to farm-to-table dining, and put our information in the hands of thousands of travelers.

Our social media numbers continue to grow across all channels, including the number of followers and engagement. The Sullivan Speaks podcast is a great way to go in-depth on our members and their stories; find them on our Facebook page here: www.facebook.com/SullivanCatskills/videos.

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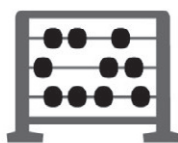
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The Do's and Please Don'ts for the first time real estate buyer

BY JONATHAN SUNSHINE
ASSOCIATE BROKER,
THE SUNSHINE GROUP
REAL ESTATE CORP.
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD,
SULLIVAN COUNTY
BOARD OF REALTORS

Real Estate Brokers and Agents are in the service business and sometimes that service is social work.

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Once you begin working with an agent who has become familiar with your criteria such as the location, style, amenities, number of bedrooms and bathrooms, etc., and with whom you feel comfortable – stay with that agent.

It's best not to call several agents to show you different properties.

MLS agents can show you all homes on the market, so there is no need to complicate things.

Our job doesn't end there. We also attend second and sometimes third showings, inspections, appraisals, final walk-throughs and finally attend closings with you.

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Helpful hints

Be truthful with the agent you choose to work with. Tell he or she everything that will help them

find you the best property. Not sharing your criteria, and real likes and dislikes will not only prolong and hinder the search – certainly making it longer or more difficult – but might lose you the perfect property.

Disclose anything that may affect or prevent you from buying a property. Your agent can explain "in general" what monies will be necessary before you get to far into your search.

Get "Pre-Qualified" or better yet Pre-Approved. Cash buyers, please have documents to prove "Proof of Funds". Make sure the documents do not have any personal information such as account or social security numbers and all documents

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should be current. Sellers want to know that a buyer can actually afford to buy, so it is common that a POF or Pre-Qual or Approval is requested before the showing

appointment is confirmed.

Appointments are crucial

Keep in touch with your agent as you travel to your appointment, so everyone arrives together. If you must cancel an appointment, try to give as much notice as possible so your agent can notify all parties involved and your agent may be able to accommodate another client in that time slot.

We make appointments just like doctors, attorneys, and other professionals. A canceled appointment means a lost day of work and potential income.

When looking at properties bring everyone with you that will have any input on that purchase.

Don't make appointments, look at properties, decide on one and then tell your agent that you have to come back with your wife, husband, mother, second cousin and both Aunt Edith, who sold real

estate for five minutes in 1978, and Uncle Tony who has a hammer and a screwdriver but has no idea on how to use either but has to come along to make sure there's nothing wrong with the house and you're getting a good deal.

Asking an agent (post Covid) to go out to a property and facetime or video it for you because you're too busy and just don't have the time is unfair. A video isn't a fair representation of a property. In person is really the only way to assess whether the property is right for you.

Take the time out of your schedule and see the property in person. Agents will inform their seller that you didn't see the property, and your offer will not be taken seriously. Many deals went sideways after the buyer who saw a video or facetimes, made an offer which was accepted.

When they finally physically saw

the property, they pulled out of the deal.

Give your agent enough notice to make appointments. Calling at eight o'clock at night on a Saturday to see properties the next day is unfair. Even if the agent answers the phone, he or she will probably not be able to reach the listing agent to confirm if the property is even available to show.

Give all the parties involved in a showing enough time to respond to the request in a timely fashion.

Final thoughts

This article is intended as a guideline and not carved in stone. Buying a home is a huge decision and probably the most expensive purchase of anyone's life.

It can be a daunting experience but finding the right agent can make it easier, exciting, and certainly less stressful and sometimes even fun.

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