

Increased access to New Hartford Business Park on the horizon

By **BRYON ACKERMAN**

Observer-Dispatch

Posted Feb 21, 2011 @ 06:11 PM

Last update Feb 21, 2011 @ 06:12 PM

NEW HARTFORD —

New Hartford Business Park developer Larry Adler is hoping to begin construction this spring on the Route 840 access ramp and Clinton Street extension.

Once formal approvals are given, it wouldn't take long to complete the road construction work, and it would take about eight months to build the 87-room Hampton Inn & Suites hotel planned for the park, Adler said.

"We're trying to advance the project and get it started as soon as possible," he said.

The state Department of Transportation is scheduled to vote this week on whether to approve the town's plan to create access from Route 840 to the business park, DOT spokesman Anthony Ilacqua said.

Meanwhile, the town is in the process of finalizing the paperwork to use eminent domain to take land owned by the Twin Orchards Farm in order to connect Clinton Street to the park, town Attorney Herb Cully said.

'Additional interest'

The only tenant currently in the business park is The Hartford Financial Services Group, but Adler and town officials believe that moving forward with the project will draw others to the area.

Adler said the plan for the rest of the business park is to primarily have mixed-use offices and maybe some service users. No other tenants have committed to the site yet, he said.

"We're kind of taking it one step at a time," Adler said. "Once we get the hotel going, I think it will spur additional interest."

The fact that the town is making progress on additional access to the park has already resulted in other businesses approaching the town about the possibility of developing land adjacent to the park, town Supervisor Patrick Tyksinski said, declining to provide details of any companies that talked to him.

Tyksinski said he has always seen the business park as the catalyst to drive development in that area of the town. The increased access to the park plays a large role in the overall plan, he said.

"Probably without that there, nobody would even be looking at it," Tyksinski said.

Project costs

Tyksinski has estimated the Clinton Street extension would cost \$200,000 to \$300,000 and the Route 840 project would cost \$800,000.

The construction work for the access will be paid for primarily by the town bonding for it, Tyksinski said. But the payment-in-lieu-of-taxes agreements for the park businesses will cover the costs of paying off the bonding and also likely will result in some surplus money for the town, he said. Mitigation fees from developers also will contribute toward the construction costs, he said.

The PILOT for the hotel would be for 10 years, and the hotel would pay 100 percent of what the taxes normally would be, Adler said. The PILOT would direct the money to be used to pay off the bonding for the construction work, he said.

Mohawk Valley EDGE has requested that the town, Oneida County and school district write letters of support for the hotel's PILOT, Tyksinski said.

County Executive Anthony Picente said he sent the letter of support after talking the issue over with some county legislators including the ones from New Hartford.

The New Hartford Board of Education referred the issue to the school attorney and its Budget and Finance Committee, and a decision hasn't been made yet, Superintendent Robert Nole said.

The New Hartford Town Board recently voted 4-1 in support of the PILOT – with only Councilman Donald Backman voting against it.

Backman said he has concerns about the PILOT because the town is essentially lending money for the work to be done and allowing the PILOT money to be directed to help the park.

"I'm not going to ask First Ward residents to put 5 cents more into the business park out of their property taxes," he said.

Backman believes the business park can be a positive force of development for the town, but at this point, he thinks it needs to succeed on its own, he said.

Councilman David Reynolds said he is in favor of creating the access to the park as long as the costs are covered through the PILOT.

"I support the business park as a concept," he said. "I think that's where growth should take place."

Read more: <http://www.uticaod.com/news/x320401979/Increased-access-to-New-Hartford-Business-Park-on-the-horizon#ixzz2cqS2XVln>