

**Watertown Empire Zone
Joint Informational Meeting With Watertown City Council and Town Board of
Watertown**

March 10, 2004

EZB Members Present: Chairman Peter Clough, Joseph Butler, Jr., Robert Lawlor,
Dave Cheney

City of Watertown Officials Present: Mayor Jeffrey Graham, Councilman Timothy
LaBouf, City Manager Mary Corriveau

Town of Watertown Officials Present: Supervisor Joel Bartlett, Council Members:
Stephen Rich, David Prosser, Town Clerk Catherine Rich

Camoin Representatives Present: Zone Coordinator Andrew Davis

Excused: Phillip Gaffney, Lori Foster-Nortz

Mr. Davis opened the meeting for any comments or questions concerning the draft policy that had been prepared based on suggestions and comments made at the previous meeting.

Comments included the fact that there has to be a specific number of jobs, not just “significant”.

Mayor Graham commented that there is no vested interest in inducing these projects to go up to Theresa. We should be concentrating on the City and Town of Watertown. He also referred to the State Comptroller’s report which indicated that there are many problems with these zones across the state.

Supervisor Bartlett remarked that we can’t tell them where to locate. He stated that he would like to see the administrative board stay away from dictating where they can locate. He stated that he would rather have the market determine it. He stated that there are areas of the City that are still in the zone and are not being utilized which means that they lose a lot of designated acreage.

Mayor Graham responded that while he agrees to a point, the Council and board represent the people of the City and Town. Each of these bullets is not so site specific that they have to be in a certain spot.

Supervisor Bartlett referred to the Gilco, located in the Town of Orleans and the fact that they expanded on their own property.

Mayor Graham responded that the JCIDA want to regionalize the program. Most of these things, including Gilco expansion, probably would have happened anyway. He stated that

the City and Town representatives sell their constituents short if they don't stress having the development in their own municipalities.

Referring to the zone being out in the other townships, Chairman Clough commented on the fact that there has been no response from them concerning helping pay administration costs. He commented that the first priority should be the City and Town.

Discussion centered on the integrity of what the application states. Mr. Davis commented that a lot is based on the honor code. Mrs. Corriveau suggested that it be in written format with a signed certification of the data supplied.

Supervisor Bartlett commented that he is not happy with the 60 day cut off.

Mr. Davis responded that 60 days is more than enough time.

Discussion was held as to the number of votes required to certify a business that has not met the requirements. It was agreed that a super majority (3/4 of the seats on the board) would be used.

Supervisor Bartlett asked why the Town couldn't have 25% of the representatives on the board, instead of just one representative.

Mr. Davis explained that there is only one City representative as well.

Supervisor Bartlett responded that the Town would like the opportunity to appoint.

Chairman Clough remarked that this would be up to the board.

Mrs. Corriveau commented that this might require state approval. Mr. Davis will research it.

Changes to the Draft

Discussion centered on the second bullet under **Industry/Business Development**. It was agreed that the wording for this should be "Tourism businesses, specifically those associated with the Black River, or other appropriate projects in the City and Town, are an industry that the Watertown Empire Zone supports."

The fourth bullet was changed to read, "Agriculture has always been a staple in the rural country of Watertown. Therefore, agricultural related facilities will be a focus of the Watertown Empire Zone."

Under **Business Certification and Monitoring Process** the second bullet was changed to read "Any existing business applying for Empire Zone certification must project at least a 10% increase of its current Watertown "employee base" and \$10,000 in investment over the next two years on its application for certification, form EZ-1."

The fourth bullet was changed to read “ In certain cases, specifically where extenuating, unusual and uncontrollable circumstances take place, a business that has not met the requirements above may still receive Empire Zone certification with a super majority of the Zone Administrative Board.

Under Decertification Standards the first bullet was changed to read “Once local Empire zone certification has been designated for a business, the Zone Coordinator will send the appropriate business representative a form that will request employment and investment projections for December 31st of the following year. This form will require the signature of the business representative. Businesses that do not supply this information within a timely manner to the Zone Coordinator will be subject to denial of state certification.

Under Boundary Amendment Inclusion Standards the fourth bullet was moved to become the second paragraph before the process listing.

The second bullet under process was changed to read, “All applications postmarked within 60 days of the public notice and received in a reasonable amount of time will be considered for boundary inclusion.

The third bullet under process was changed to read, “Any applications postmarked after the 60-day period will not be accepted. They will be returned to the appropriate contact for the business with a letter explaining the reasons for denial.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.