

Sullivan – Wawarsing

RURAL ECONOMIC AREA

PARTNERSHIP

Government Center • 100 North Street • Monticello, NY 12701 • 845-807-0527

June 1, 2014

Ms. Gail P. Thorpe
Supervisor of Contract Administration
New York State Gaming Commission
Contracts Office
One Broadway Center
Schenectady, NY12301-7500

Dear Ms. Thorpe:

On behalf of the Board of Directors for the Sullivan-Wawarsing Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP), I am writing in support of the casino applications for the Catskill region. The board feels that two Resort Destination projects in the REAP Zone boundaries will foster community and economic opportunities that are desperately needed in the REAP Zone. We believe that the many diverse offerings the projects are comprised of will bring positive impacts to our distressed region.

The REAP Zone initiative was established in partnership with the U.S. Congress to address critical issues in rural communities. Many rural areas, including Sullivan County and the Town of Wawarsing, face economic and community development issues of a very different character than communities whose needs are mainly defined by poverty. These issues include stagnant or declining employment, low-density settlement patterns, geographic isolation and disconnection from markets and centers of finance, population loss and economic distress. In response, Sullivan-Wawarsing REAP seeks to stimulate economic and community development by facilitating citizens' efforts to design and implement their own community development strategies in such areas as agriculture, cultural preservation, healthcare, housing, infrastructure, recreation, telecommunications and youth activities.

We understand the project will be made up of a broad spectrum of outdoor recreational activities, wellness venues, entertainment options, and lodging facilities, as well as a casino component. This diverse make up will ensure long-term sustainability in our community, as the job opportunities will be just as diverse and plentiful. As stated before the REAP Zone began as a tool to help foster development and provide opportunities for the region. This application will truly bring the best value to the Sullivan-Wawarsing REAP Zone and to the underserved population which is located at the heart of the Upstate Catskill region, where jobs are critically needed.

This type of economic development is essential to the mission of REAP, and this project meets several of REAP's benchmark goals, especially the following:

- Benchmark 10, "Successful linking to appropriate markets will result in more profitable and numerous farms in the region."
- Benchmark 11, "Formation of new cooperatives and other marketing associations."
- Benchmark 12, "Identify, evaluate feasibility of, and develop facilities for regional value added product lines."
- Benchmark 15: "Improve education and job training opportunities by creating a seamless continuum of vocational and educational opportunities"
- Benchmark 17: "To increase the number and quality of rental units for households of all incomes and Size"

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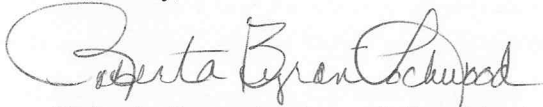
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- Benchmark 20: "Increase the availability of affordable single family homes (\$110-112K average)"
- Benchmark 22: "Regionalize and expand sewer districts among towns and villages to create greater efficiencies, to maximize use of federal and state funding and add capacity"
- Benchmark 23: Create business development programs and attract new businesses with brochures, develop classes and workshops, assist new business development i.e. Kohls"
- Benchmark 30: "Regionalize and expand underserved water districts"
- Benchmark 31: "Improve education and job training opportunities by creating B seamless continuum of vocational and educational opportunities"
- Benchmark 34: "Seek funding for professional staff and facilities that can sustain lively and engaging programming, preserve and interpret our heritage, and support the work of artists in all disciplines."
- Benchmark 35: "Enrich cultural resources by encouraging larger, more engaged, and more diversified audiences in the REAP Zone."
- Benchmark 38: "Address the problems facing children/youth in order to break the cycle of poverty, financially and morally: drugs, violence, teenager pregnancy, anti-academic attitudes, and peer pressure."
- Benchmark 39: "Create businesses that provide jobs as well as recreation for locals."
- Benchmark 44: "Improve and expand upon sewer and water infrastructure serving areas of planned economic and housing growth"
- Benchmark 45: "Through this new capacity-building initiative, we propose to improve the capacity and ability of the recipients to undertake local community and economic development projects by providing them with the tools and the information needed to conduct a self-assessment of local conditions, identify what specific activities should be undertaken, and secure financing for implementation of those activities where needed"

We respectfully request your favorable review of this application. Your favorable review of this application will have an extraordinary impact on our community by providing the financial opportunities for families to improve their standard of living, live more fruitful lives, and bring positive change to an area that most desperately needs it. We ask that you grant two gaming licenses within the Sullivan-Wawarsing REAP zone to begin improving the lives of Upstate New Yorkers for years to come. If there is any assistance that the REAP Board can render, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at (845) 807-1687. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Roberta Byron-Lockwood, President