

A workshop of the Town Board of the Town of Moreau was held on August 21, 2018 in the Town of Moreau Municipal building, 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York for presentation by the Saratoga Prosperity Partnership 6:00pm.

The Supervisor called the workshop to order at 6:12 pm.

### **Town Board Members Present**

Todd Kusnierz	Supervisor
Alan VanTassel	Councilman (arrived at 6:25pm)
Gina LeClair	Councilwoman
John Hogan	Councilman

### **Town Board Members Absent**

Kyle Noonan	Councilman
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**Also present:** Jill Bennett, Deputy Town Clerk, Members of the Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership (SCPP): President Marty Vanags, Vice President Shelby Schneider, and Global Markets Advisor Mary Ryckman.

Marty Vanags introduced the members of his team, Shelby Schneider and Mary Ryckman before beginning his presentation on economic development.

The Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership (SCPP) was created to help town leaders reach goals of improving economic development and ultimately improving quality of life in their community.

The Economic Development Circle of Life flowchart:

- a) Sustainable jobs
- b) More disposable income
- c) Raises demand for Retail/Services
- d) Generates Sales Tax and other Revenue
- e) The flow of revenue creates superior “Quality of Place”
- f) Attracts new local business

“Industrial (Economic) Development mobilizes the *mental attitudes* and the physical and financial resources of a community for the attraction, *reception* and cultivation of new and expanded industry to bring about the *balanced* residential, commercial and industrial activities desired for a *steady community growth*” (American Industrial Development Council – February 6, 1961)

Challenges facing economic development:

- a) Worker shortage
- b) Infrastructure investment
- c) Affordable housing
- d) Inclusive economics
- e) Pay equity
- f) Community resiliency
- g) Technology

Business Retention is the foundation of economic development because it recognizes those who have already invested in the community. They provide existing jobs, purchase supplies and materials locally and generate good will.

What creates attraction for new businesses?

- a) A good budget
- b) Available buildings and land
- c) Infrastructure at the site of development
- d) Workforce
- c) Consistent rules
- d) Improving the approval time for new construction

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Working with Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership (SCPP) allows the advantage of:

- a) Identifying types of businesses in the surrounding areas.
- b) They go to where prospective business are – Trade shows, conferences, etc.
- c) They communicate with Site Consultants who are searching for the right place for clients.
- d) They know what resources will get the best results. Whether thru media or regional marketing.
- e) They acknowledge entrepreneurs needs. They recognize needs such as education, loans, grants, office space, land sites or better infrastructure requirements.

Next Steps:

- |                                    |                               |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a) Economic Development Survey     | by September 15 <sup>th</sup> |
| b) Asset Identification            | by September 30 <sup>th</sup> |
| c) SWOT Exercise                   | by October 15 <sup>th</sup>   |
| d) Foresight Analysis Exercise     | by October 30 <sup>th</sup>   |
| e) Final Plan and Strategy Written | by November 30 <sup>th</sup>  |
| f) Adoption and Implementation     | by December 31 <sup>st</sup>  |

### **Questions and Answers:**

Councilman Hogan asked about assistance for current business owners. Specifically, brick and mortar businesses that want to increase sales but don't know how to get started in ecommerce. Does the SCPP provide assistance and how do they approach current business owners?

Marty Vanags responded that the SCPP will contact current business owners and offer assistance with anything they might be struggling with. Depending on need the SCPP will help or they will put the owner in contact with a counselor who will guide them.

Supervisor Kusnierz thanked Marty Vanags for his overview on economic development and for outlining the principals involved in putting together a viable option for our town. Supervisor Kusinerz felt the Town Board is committed to having a formal plan built. He liked the time frame that was outlined even though he felt it's very aggressive. He stated he would rather be aggressive. He opened the questions up to the Town Board members.

Councilman VanTassel thanked the group for their presentation. He understood the "Next Steps" outlined in the presentation and the reasoning behind them. He is looking for the SCPP to provide education, give insight and guide the town leaders thru the process so they aren't "reinventing the wheel."

Marty Vanags replied the SCPP brings a wealth of knowledge, research and experience to the table and they'll provide as much guidance as needed. They also have outside resources that specialize in specific areas. The "Next Steps" process is meant to have town leaders think deeply about the town's future. Once the partnership has a better understanding of the Board's vision and the town's resources they'll make suggestions on ways to improve the process to increase our town's marketability. Mr. Vanags used the example, if the Board's vision is to develop Route 9, they are moving in the right direction with the pending sewer project.

Shelby Schneider said the first step, gathering information, is crucial. Understanding what the Town Board is looking for and what resources are available will help the group create a game plan. She gave an example of when Hannaford opened in our town. When Grand Union closed people were forced to go outside the town to purchase groceries. Attracting Hannaford was a huge part of economic development in our area. Economic developers might not have the answers to everything but they see current trends and make recommendations based on those trends. The trend right now is logistics and distribution centers. Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership is part of a larger extended network and they communicate with developers across the country.

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Mary Ryckman added that on the international front some companies aren't interested in exporting materials due to the cost. She's found companies today have many questions and are nervous about recent government changes. The SCPP has the expertise to answer certain questions and if they don't have answers they have outside connections to obtain answers.

Shelby Schneider added that companies like Ames Goldsmith, a local supplier of silver nitrate products and refining services, sell their products around the world. A big part of economic development research is understanding what local companies manufacture and who purchases their finished product. The SCPP looks for companies that use local products to relocate closer to the source and eliminate shipping costs.

Mary Ryckman added that companies in our area might not know what's out there, such as ecommerce. They're busy doing business and in many cases they don't have time to research ways to expand their market. The SCPP can provide that guidance to help them grow.

Councilman VanTassel asked if the majority of companies are looking for existing buildings or are they interested in building new buildings. The town doesn't have a large supply of existing commercial space available.

Marty Vanags answered that most companies are looking for commercial space that will accommodate their needs in the quickest timeframe. Keeping an inventory of available commercial space within the town will help prospective businesses identify space that fits their needs. There are a couple other options but they are contingent on availability of town funds. The first option is called Virtual Building. The town will identify a site and say this is where we're going to build a 100,000 sq. ft. manufacturing building. They process all of the approvals as if there was someone in front of them purchasing the property. The foundation is poured and all electrical and appliances are complete. This process attracts prospective companies that want a new building within a short span of time. The second option is developing a spec building. Right now National Grid will fund up to \$100,000.00 to help design spec buildings for economic development.

Shelby Schneider added the Chase Bag building is 250,000 sq. ft. of space mainly used for start-up companies. The building is rough and needs work but many new companies have incubated there. When those companies grow out of the space they sometimes go to other communities because there isn't inventory in our town that meets their needs.

Councilman VanTassel asked where he could find the TIP Report

Marty Vanags said it's on the Saratoga County website but they will forward it to the Board.

Councilman VanTassel asked about long term goals. The longevity of Town Board members is unknown. How does the town develop a long term economic development plan when Town Board members come and go?

Marty Vanags replied that the SCPP is available to assist the Town with long term economic planning goals as long as they desire. If there comes a time when new Board members decide they no longer require the SCPP's assistance the group will honor their wishes.

Councilman VanTassel asked Marty Vanags to go over how the SCPP is paid.

Marty Vanags explained that presently the SCPP runs on a \$750,000 to \$775,000 yearly budget. Around 50% of the funding comes from the Hotel/Motel Occupancy Tax. The remaining balance comes out of Saratoga County's General Fund. A good portion of the SCPP's funding is spent on travel. A necessary part of their job is meeting people face-to-face.

Mary Ryckman added that input from the private sector is an essential part of the partnership in economic development.

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Councilman VanTassel made a comment that the timeline is very aggressive and the Town Board is going to have to work hard to gather the required information.

Marty Vanags commented that the difficult part of gathering information is the asset identification. He suggested that they rely on consultants they've worked with in the past such as Laberge Group. He requested the Town Board be as transparent as possible so they can catalogue the information.

Councilwoman LeClair requested the SCPP have a conversation with Jim Martin.

Supervisor Kusnierz questioned if the SCPP would review the Town Codes and offer suggestions where changes might be.

Councilman VanTassel asked if our Zoning Ordinances would be an obstacle for new companies coming in.

Marty Vanags said the SCPP would review all information that would affect future economic development.

Councilman VanTassel asked if the Board should budget money for marketing in the upcoming year.

Marty Vanags said he would only market our Parks and Recreation. A nice brochure would be good for that. Otherwise the SCPP will take care of marketing.

Councilman VanTassel asked what we, as the Town Board, need to do to put Moreau at the top of the SCPP's list for places to recommend to companies looking to relocate.

Shelby Schneider stated it's all about mindset. The Town of Moreau should be constantly looking for ways to improve the approval process and infrastructure things that will make the town more appealing.

Marty Vanags said that he's worked with towns that say they're ready for economic development but their infrastructure isn't ready and their approval process takes too long.

Councilman VanTassel added that his fear is that the Town of Moreau has a negative reputation and he feels we need to work on that.

Marty Vanags suggested using a private sector lean management consultant that will review and help clean up the approval process.

Supervisor Kusnierz agreed that we need to streamline the approval process. It became clear to him that improvements were needed while working with T-Mobile recently.

Councilwoman LeClair wanted to know if the Town Board would be advised to use an outside consultant in time to budget the expense in November's budget deadline.

Shelby Schneider said even though we might not be able to budget everything by the deadline there are ways to use current funds as leverage.

Councilwoman LeClair asked what would happen once the "Next Steps" process was done. Would the town be left on their own to make changes that were suggested?

Marty Vanags answered that the SCPP and the Town Board will work together to create goals and timelines. The SCPP will stay in contact with Town Leaders to offer assistance. The partnership between the Town of Moreau and the Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership will continue until the Town Leaders decide it's no longer needed.

Supervisor Kusnierz thanked the Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership group for coming. He was happy with the information presented. He and the Town Board are looking forward to working with them.

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Supervisor Kusnierz closed the workshop at 7:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Bennett  
Deputy Town Clerk