



Highlights from the community newspaper of the Greater Fulton Area and the Oswego River Valley of Central New York



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Front Page

Officials and unions support ethanol project by Andrew Henderson

Federal and state government officials, economic-development officials, and local unions are supporting Northeast Biofuels' attempt to convert the former Miller Brewing facility into a corn-to-ethanol production plant in Volney.

Northeast Biofuels officials have received letters of support from Congressman John McHugh, state Senator Jim Wright, Oswego County Legislature Chairman Russ Johnson, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union No. 43, Oswego County Building Trades Council, Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 73, Oswego County Industrial Development Agency, and SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

Northeast Biofuels is looking to build a \$140 million ethanol-production plant at Riverview Business Park that would have the capacity to produce more than 100 million gallons per year, making it the third largest plant in the nation and the first in the northeast.

As chairman of the New York State Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee, Sen. Wright said he has witnessed the growth of ethanol as an alternate energy resource and its potential for continued prosperity in New York. He added that the local project will "bring New York into the center of the ethanol industry."

"My support for (the) project stems from the anticipated job creation during construction and operation of the plant," said Sen. Wright. "In addition, the project will provide direct economic growth for our agricultural community and trucking industry."

Congressman McHugh said he is a strong supporter of the project and is committed to working with Northeast Biofuels to ensure that the project "creates new jobs in the Fulton area and is a success."

May 8, 2004

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The proposed ethanol plant is not only a good fit for the Riverview Business Park, but it also lends itself well to the culture of Oswego County, said Chairman Johnson.

"Moreover, the plant's potential positive environmental, economic, and social impact to our community is consistent with the goals outlined in the Oswego County Comprehensive Plan," he said.

Northeast Biofuels and its partner companies, Perdue Farms and BOC Gases, will create more than 100 jobs with the potential to generate more, officials said.

Northeast Biofuels and Perdue Farms, based in Salisbury, Md., already has an agreement in principle where Perdue would be taking full responsibility for purchasing, transporting, and storing of Northeast Biofuels' corn requirements as well as marketing the distiller dried grains, one of the co-products of the ethanol manufacturing process.

Perdue has already committed to lease 20,000 square feet at the site for the expansion of its northeast livestock feed operations. It plans to provide Northeast Biofuels with 40 million bushels of corn annually.

BOC Gases and Northeast Biofuels have a letter of intent outlining a future contract for BOC Gases to purchase the carbon dioxide that is produced during ethanol production.

BOC Gases is the world's largest marketer of industrial gases and the largest marketer of carbon dioxide in the northeast.

The company plans to construct a \$15 million carbon-dioxide liquefaction plant in the business park adjacent to the proposed ethanol plant.

Local unions are pleased about the construction and renovation of the facility. The project will require about 300 construction and engineering workers. The proposed plant will occupy about 300,000 square feet in the area where much of the plant's brewing infrastructure will be reused for ethanol production.

"The project represents an investment of over \$125 million, and during the construction process hundreds of jobs will be created, including work for members of IBEW Local 43," said William Towsley, IBEW Local 43 business manager. "While we are pleased

about the construction jobs this project will create, for obvious reasons, our support is based on a larger picture. These types of projects are what is necessary to return economic stability to central New York."

The IBEW Local 43 has already made a financial investment in the project through its pension fund.

William Shannon, president of the Oswego County Building Trades Council, said the investment of \$125 million would help stimulate the central New York economy.

"With much of the central New York area being rural, both the agricultural and trucking deliveries would be positively impacted by the high demand for corn deliveries and finished product shipments," he said.

Michael J. DeCaire, business manager of Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 73 said the project is a "welcomed shot in the arm" for the county's economy.

SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and the SUNY Center for Sustainable and Renewable Energy President Cornelius Murphy said there is a strong need to produce liquid biofuels and gasoline extenders/oxygenators in New York State. The ethanol plant may help that need.

"New York State can be a strong leader in producing biofuels reducing the state's dependency on petroleum feedstocks and providing a boost to the agricultural and forest products industry in New York State," said Murphy.

The college is also committing to purchase the first 500 gallons of ethanol produced by Northeast Biofuels to help meet the liquid fuel demands on its campus.

Sen. Wright said Northeast Biofuels' partnership with SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and the SUNY Center for Sustainable and Renewable Energy will "strengthen New York's biofuel industry through joint initiatives and the ability to conduct on-site studies."

First of many steps

Earlier this week, the Volney Zoning Board of Appeals approved a variance for Northeast Biofuels,

according to Michael Hadley, chief financial officer of the Northeast Biofuels development team.

"We're one step closer but we have many steps to go," said Hadley.

The variance permits splitting Riverside Business Park into two parcels. One parcel would be the site of the ethanol-production plant while the other site would remain Riverside Business Park.