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JAN 19 2012

TOWN OF SCHODACK
PLANNING & ZONING

RENSSELAER COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
NED PATTISON GOVERNMENT CENTER
TROY, NEW YORK 12180

Kathleen M. Jimino
County Executive

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January 19, 2012

Dear Concerned Residents:

Thank you sharing your concerns with me regarding the proposed Dollar Tree distribution center project. While I can appreciate your concerns as neighbors of this property and residents of the Town of Schodack, it is my understanding that the parcel that is being considered for this project is zoned commercial. Further, the Town and the property owner are interested in pursuing the project.

From the County's perspective, we too are interested in this project because of the jobs it would create here and the increase in the property tax base that would result.

However, the County's support does not mean that the concerns raised by residents and neighbors should go unheeded, and that you should not continue to raise the concerns that you have expressed regarding the impact of this project so that the County, Town and developer can take these concerns into account when evaluating the feasibility of this project. As well, if the project was to move forward, we would all want to be sure that the final plans work to mitigate any issues to the degree possible.

To support the County's view, allow me to say that unemployment in Rensselaer County is a major concern and the lack of jobs remains a problem for many who have lost employment as a result of the recession. While the jobs which would be offered by the Dollar Tree are not as high paying as some of the high tech jobs we have seen come into the county and the region, the wages are higher than minimum wage and come with health benefits. Thus these jobs would provide a lifeline for some people who now rely on government benefits to sustain themselves and may not have the education and experience to apply to Global Foundries.

Like you, I recognize that another major concern in Rensselaer County and all of New York State is that property taxes are too high. And as you may be aware, the county budget is facing serious challenges based on the growing cost of state mandated programs coupled with a newly imposed tax cap. While we support controlling and even reducing the high burden of property taxes in this state, capping taxes without capping the state mandated spending will inevitably result in a reduction in non-mandated, local services that our residents rely on including maintaining and patrolling our roads and highways and providing senior and veteran services to name a few. In fact our 2012 budget originally proposed to begin reducing some of those services on April 1. Thanks to a recently negotiated contract with our largest employee union that included concessions on health care, we have been able to stave off those cuts for another nine months.

With the release of the Governor's budget proposal Tuesday, I find myself disappointed there is not provision for the meaningful mandate relief that we have called for in the short term. This means that we will be facing the same difficult choices of raising taxes and cutting local services for the 2013 county budget unless our state legislators work to provide the meaningful relief we so desperately need.

With all this in mind I find it imperative to expand our tax base to spread out the cost of government over a broader base. Even with a payment in lieu of taxes agreement proposed for this project, it is my understanding that the property taxes paid on the Dollar Tree project would be in excess of \$700,000 annually compared to the less than \$20,000 paid now. That additional revenue can lessen the impact of any proposed tax increase on your property and lessen the likelihood that critical local services will have to be cut.

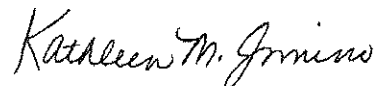
In light of the compelling need for jobs and increased tax base, we in the County have expressed our support for this project

Since I have become County Executive I have encouraged the municipalities of the County to develop or update their master plans and zoning so that our economic developers know where the municipalities would like to see commercial growth, residential growth, open space, farmland, etc. When a municipality asks for our help in bringing in a business that they feel is in sync with their master plan and zoning, we will do what we can to support them and grow our tax base. Some may see this as a diminishment of their quality of life and that is why we encourage people to bring forth their concerns so that they can be considered and addressed where possible.

However, if we as a County do not grow our tax base, the impact on our collective quality of life will be much worse as the existing tax base has to deal with ever increasing taxes to pay for state mandates and ever diminishing local services.

Thank you for your letter and I hope I have been forthcoming in outlining the County's perspective, while at the same time recognizing your right to be heard. That is not only your right but also your responsibility.

Sincerely,



Kathleen M. Jimino
Rensselaer County Executive

cc: Dennis Dowds, Supervisor, Town of Schodack
Schodack Town Board Members
Nadine Fuda, Director, Planning & Zoning, Town of Schodack
Schodack Planning Board Members
Rensselaer County District 4 Legislators
Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin
Senator Roy McDonald