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Business to business and development take center stage at Plymouth Area Business Expo on March 17

January 27, 2011 - Spotlights

Plymouth commercial and residential developments and business to business activity will be kicking off 2011 in a big way in March at the Plymouth Radisson Hotel. With just a few weeks behind us in 2011 plans are already underway to jumpstart 2011 for regional businesses and the development community. The Plymouth Area Business Expo will not only be a business to business exhibit as well as a business to consumer show, it will also cater to those looking to start a business in Plymouth as well as developers seeking assistance. The Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce with the town of Plymouth and the Plymouth Regional Economic Development Foundation will be providing professional assistance and information on streamlined permitting, site location and any other development related questions at the Plymouth Area Business Expo, March 17. Plymouth has much to offer for development of existing structures or for new developments.

Lee Hartman, director of planning for the town of Plymouth explained that this effort will help to connect businesses to the municipality while also reinforcing the partnership between business, developers and the community on local projects. "We want Plymouth to be perceived as a pro-business environment when it comes to development projects both commercially and residentially".

This show typically sells out within a few weeks so for those interested in participating you better jump on board quickly. Admission is free so join us even if you don't have a booth. In addition to the economic development partners attending you will also find many resource partners for small business counseling, financing, and other support organizations. The Plymouth Area Business Expo draws from a wide demographic market including Cape Cod, the South Coast as well as Metro Boston.

Plymouth continues to be one of the fastest rebounding areas of the Commonwealth coming out of what was pegged the "Great Recession". Although some industries remain sluggish, you can hardly tell that with Plymouth seeing a number of key developments under construction. The town of Plymouth is completing the development of a new \$100 million high school and senior center. On the private sector side, AutoFair Honda is underway with a new car dealership, Atlantic Properties is completing site work for a new office complex, and the Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce itself is doing its part with plans to construct a brand new 23,000 s/f Museum and Cultural Center. In addition a number of other substantial commercial projects are already planned for 2011 with permitting and zoning already in the works.

In addition to being a great development area Plymouth also has its historical and recreational assets which draw visitors from across the Commonwealth and around the globe. After all, there is only one Plymouth Rock. 2010 was a tremendous year for the "staycation" and unique day trips to the area. Tourism calculations showed that Plymouth tourist visitation was up from 2009 by about

12% despite the recession. Spending during that period increased as well with almost a 9% increase. For many local vendors and merchants that resulted in a tremendous boost for the local economy.

For recreational activity many think the Berkshires or our neighbors to the north, but Plymouth continues to grow in popularity with recreational enthusiasts. With 360 ponds and lakes, several hundred miles of biking, hiking and other trails as well as 30 miles of scenic coastlines, Plymouth has defined itself as a vacation paradise for recreational folks. Summer population expands from June to September by 30,000 temporary residents. Much of this activity continues to be the bread and butter for area restaurants, cafes and small retailers who settle in one of Plymouth's five quaint villages. Plymouthoutdoors.com is a local resource for recreational resources provided by the Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce.

In 2010 the Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce also made a significant investment in small business activity and infrastructure with the lease/purchase of 132 and 134 Court St. in Plymouth. This former local cable access TV property owned by the Town has now been transformed into a home for the Chamber of Commerce administrative staff, tourism staff, as well as a new business education center catering to small business and entrepreneur programming. In just seven months over 1,200 businesses and employees attended small business workshops at the new center. Over 300 small businesses received one-on-one free counseling from SCORE and the Mass. Small Business Development Center. The success of this new business center has been extraordinary. It has truly evolved into a regional center for business and industry with support also coming from our higher education partners.

In closing we hope that you peruse our websites and learn more about the region and all the offerings through our organization and partners.

www.plymouthbusiness.org

www.plymouthchamber.com

www.plymouthareabusinescenter.com

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