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Rocky Hill business community prospers and plans have emerged for continued growth

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Location, Location, Location. Rocky Hill sits only 8 miles south of the city of Hartford and the new Convention Center. Trinity College, St. Joseph's College, UCONN Law School, the University of Hartford, Rensselaer College, and Central Connecticut State University are all within a 20 minute commute. Cultural and entertainment venues such as the PGA Traveler's Open, the Bushnell Theater, the Wadsworth Atheneum, (the oldest, museum in the country), The Hartford Stage Company, the Hartford Opera, the Hartford Ballet, and the Mark Twain House are literally minutes away.

Rocky Hill is a fantastic location for families and business. Most of our success can be attributed to three basic factors: our central location both in Connecticut and the northeast region; our direct access to exits 23 and 24 off I-91; and our business friendly and business responsive governmental organization. Through prudent management, our administration has been able to retain a low tax rate (29.2 mills - 2008) attractive to business and focus our commitment on retaining and attracting business, while maintaining our exemplary education system. As a result, Rocky Hill has experienced consistent growth in our non-residential grand list, averaging almost 2½% per year since 2003. A recent Tapestry Segment demographic study indicated that more than a third of Rocky Hill's population is classified in the "In Style" segment with an additional 13% classified in the "Exurbanite" segment; indicators of a ripe retail market potential.

During the past year, the Rocky Hill business community has prospered and plans have emerged for continued growth through the ebb and flow of our economy. Specifically, Burriss Refrigerated Logistics is nearing completion of phase I of their 256,000 s/f refrigerated warehouse and northeast distribution facility located on Brook St. Once in full operation, phase I will employ 200 people. The Connecticut Lottery recently moved into their newly renovated 96,000 s/f office and warehouse facility on Brook St. This move will bring over 100 additional employees to the Brook St. neighborhood. Late this past spring, Aldi Foods opened their doors to their new 17,000 s/f store located in Kohl's plaza. On the horizon, we anticipate the construction of two 75,415 s/f, Class A office buildings by Farley White, located in Corporate Ridge Business Park, the redevelopment of the former Ames headquarters property located in the center of town and the approved rehabilitation of another vacant, downtown Ames property into a retail and up-scale restaurant space.

In an effort to strive for continuous improvement, the town has funded, with state grant money, phase I of the Silas Deane Highway Streetscape project and the Silas Deane Highway Façade Improvement Grant Program for all Silas Deane Hwy. businesses. Phase I of the Streetscape is currently being designed by BL Companies for the town center and will be ready to go out to bid in October 2008. The Silas Deane Façade Program has resulted in the renovation of seven properties with three properties pending renovation. The town has so far funded 17 renderings in all.

We anticipate funding many more facade projects in the coming year.

As you can see, Rocky Hill is a community that has a plan for the future of business. Business and industry desiring a central New England location with access from two highway exits and a major national business focus, should contact the economic development director at carpentino@ci.rocky-hill.ct.us.

Ray Carpentino is economic development director for the Town of Rocky Hill.

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