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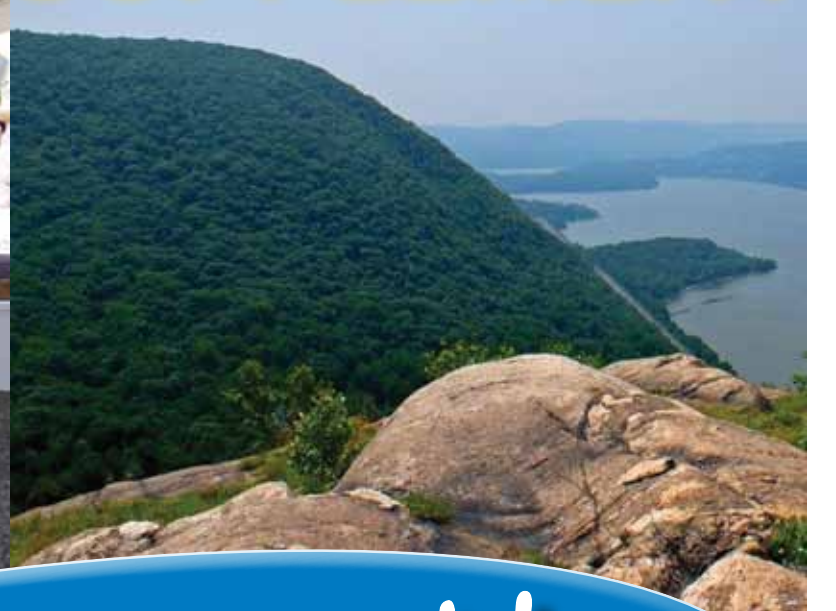
# REAL ESTATE IN-DEPTH

Official Publication of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors



# PUTNAM COUNTY SUPPLEMENT

PHOTO BY PETER MICHAELS



# A Conversation with County Executive MaryEllen Odell Updates on Tilly Foster, Envision Brewster Project, How Sewer, Water Projects Could Foster Growth



By John Jordan

CARMEL—Prior to MaryEllen Odell taking office in November 2011, the economic development efforts in Putnam County were, to put it politely, outdated and were in fact close to non-existent.

Since taking office Odell has made business attraction and retention, as well as the promotion of tourism in Putnam County a staple of her administration's core initiatives, along with stabilizing county finances and optimizing the county's assets.

Odell, who was re-elected to her second term of office in 2014, has seen a number of her major projects bear fruit, including the successful redevelopment of the county-owned Putnam County Golf Course and the storied Tilly Foster Farm into a major attraction and educational facility.

The newly elected president has also served as Chairperson for the Mid-Hudson South Transportation Coordinating

Committee (MHSTCC) and currently co-chairs the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC). Her knowledge and expertise on transit-oriented development projects has helped propel "Envision Brewster," a re-



vitalization initiative designed to attract millennials to live, work, and recreate in Putnam County.

Immediately prior to her election as County Executive, Odell served as the New York State Senate's Director of Veterans and Local Government Affairs. She first became involved in local politics in the 1990s when Carmel proposed to build a sewer plant three times too large for its service area and potentially wasting millions of taxpayer dollars. In 1995, she co-founded the Carmel Sports Association at no cost to taxpayers, and became an active member of the Hamlet of Carmel Civic Association, the Carmel Industrial Development Agency and Putnam Economic Development

Council and sat on the Executive Board for the Gold Star Mothers Statue in Putnam County Veterans Memorial Park.

In January 2006 Odell was appointed to fill a vacancy on the County Legislature. She represented District 5, which included the Hamlet of Carmel and portions of the towns of Kent and Patterson. During her five-year career as a legislator, she initiated the formation of and chaired the Fiscal Vision and Accountability Commission comprised of citizen volunteers, business leaders and elected officials. There she successfully fought to reduce unnecessary government expenditures.

*Real Estate In-Depth* recently sat down with Putnam County Executive Odell at her offices in Carmel. Odell spent 18 years in the real estate business working as a title closer prior to taking office. In September of this year, Odell was elected president of the New York State Association of Counties. She has been a member of the NYSAC Board of Director since 2013, and has served on the executive committee as Second Vice President.

**Q:** Can you give us a sense of how the Putnam County economy is performing and where do you see opportunities for growth and in turn what are the impediments to that growth?

**Odell:** Well, let's talk real estate first. From what I understand from my former colleagues and my friends in the real property real estate industry, there is an inventory problem (in the residential market), which says to me that it is a seller's market, which is a good sign. The latest conversations I had in Syracuse after being sworn in as the New York State Association of Counties' Presi-

dent this week were regarding the SALT (state and local tax) implications on the \$50,000 to \$250,000 income bracket. So, how is that going to play out? If SALT is removed then you lose that property tax deduction, which is going to have a tremendous impact on second homeownership. So those communities that have lake homes or vacation homes, which we have a substantial amount, that could in fact impact the real estate industry. So, real estate here is holding steady.

We have the "Envision Brewster"



project, which we are looking at as a tool to help retain the millennial population due to their spending power and their importance to the family unit. The Danbury, CT-Brewster (Town of South-east) sewer connection project—the Task Force has met twice and both meetings have been very positive. (Danbury) Mayor (Mark) Boughton had a little

Continued on next page

## County Exec. Odell Unveils \$155M Putnam Cty. Budget

MAHOPAC—Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell presented the \$155.3-million proposed 2018 county budget to the Putnam County Legislature at the Putnam County Golf Course on Oct. 6.

The proposed budget, which is within the New York State imposed tax cap, calls for a net increase of \$2.3 million over the 2017 adopted budget, which reflects a 1.5% spending increase.

"It is a challenge every year to develop a budget that keeps within the Albany imposed tax cap while delivering mandated services, providing the quality of life needs of the residents as well as the needs of our employees and retirees; and planning for a fiscally secure future," County Executive Odell said. "However, because of the efforts this administration puts forth each day we continue to be able to meet that challenge."

Based on the proposed budget, the average taxpayer whose property is assessed at \$277,000 will pay \$984 in county taxes in 2018, an increase of \$22.

Property taxes will make up only 27%, or \$42.3 million, of the county's revenue to balance the 2018 proposed budget. Sales tax will be the largest contributor at 38% or \$58.5 million. The county departments are expected to generate \$26.8 million, or 17%, and state and federal reimbursements will make up \$27.7 million or 18%.

"County Executive MaryEllen Odell unveiled the 2018 tentative budget and once again she did not disappoint," said Ginny Nacerino, chairwoman of the Put-



Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell delivered her budget address at the Putnam County Golf Course on Oct. 6th.

nam County Legislature. "For the sixth consecutive year, she has delivered a fiscally sound budget and stayed within the cap. In addition to fiscal accountability, she places a high priority on social responsibilities, which encompasses all the departments and agencies that contribute to our wonderful quality of life here in Putnam County."

She added, "Based on the last five years, I do not anticipate any dramatic changes. The county is in good shape and that speaks volumes to County Executive MaryEllen Odell's leadership."

The proposed budget includes: a \$1.3-million increase in employee and

retiree health insurance costs; a \$1.1-million increase in personnel costs; a \$753,000-increase in early intervention/preschool education program and a \$350,000 increase in debt service costs. The budget also reflects a \$2.4-million decrease in New York State Pension Expense due to amortization pay off, which resulted in an interest cost savings of \$773,000 for the county.

"What this administration does not do is 'kick the can down the road,' we develop a plan," County Executive Odell said. "Since Dec. 31, 2011, our administration, in partnership with the Legislature, has implemented sound debt

management practices which reduced county debt."

The county executive anticipates that the budget will allow Putnam to continue to earn its Moody's Aa2 bond rating. Odell also noted that the county has reduced its long-term debt by 15% since she came into office in 2011. It has also eliminated its short-term debt of \$17.2 million completely.

Seventy percent of the proposed budget, or \$107.6 million, consists of the more than 200 mandated programs, which are set by the federal or state governments with no or very limited input from Putnam County. The other \$47.7 million, or 30% of the proposed budget, is made up of quality of life costs, which include: Sheriff Department's road patrol, Office of Senior Resources, retiree health benefits, emergency services, parks and recreation, PART system, and outside agencies.

County Executive Odell unveiled a plan to find potential cost savings for the county while being able to provide the same or improved services to the county's retiree health benefits. The county is offering an alternative to the New York State Health Insurance Program through Benistar that eligible retirees can voluntarily switch to. Benistar offers a low option and a high option for both individuals and families that cost equal to or less than the current insurance plan. The savings will be shared by the county and the retirees proportional to the contribution. The estimated total savings by offering the Benistar options is \$182,181.

Continued from previous page

bit of a health issue that turned out well, but we want to circle back with him.

**Editor's Note:** The Danbury-Brewster sewer connection is a proposed partnership between the two cities that would involve the construction of a six-mile sewer connection along the U.S. Route 6 corridor that would expand sewer service and business development opportunities along that key commercial corridor.

We also have the Route 6 Mahopac issue right now (proposed centralized public sewer service to US Route 6, Mahopac area that would extend from the Villa Barone Hilltop Manor catering hall south to the town/county line between Putnam and Westchester). Discussions are taking place between the owners of the Heritage Hills sewer plant and the developer who has purchased the (excess) capacity. So we have taken a step back.

There is an agreement with developer Paul Camarda, who bought up 300,000 gallons of capacity from the Heritage Hills, which is in Somers. So now the Somers Town Board, the owner of the plant and the developer have to figure this out. This is for the Mahopac/Route 6 connection project. What we are looking to accomplish is the removal of three aging sewer plants and the project would also benefit Route 6 and the properties along the way that we can convert into a more efficient parcel; expand the (commercial) footprint, much like the Danbury sewer line...

**Q:** *There has been a lot going on at the Tilly Foster Farm. Can you provide us an update? Also how important is this project for Putnam County going forward?*

**Odell:** The partnership with BOCES has been exemplary. They graduated their first class. The restaurant (Tilly's Table, a farm to table dining establishment) has opened and we have just tweaked our menu and are open now Friday and Saturday nights and for Sunday brunch. It is event-based. We have booked weddings, showers and last week we hosted the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council...

The whole project itself is in phases, so I look at this as phase one has been completed—the infrastructure and all those improvements, utility, water and the site plan—we have hit our mark on that. The restaurant is incredibly beautiful. It has taken everyone by surprise on actually how beautiful it is. All the credit goes to our Highways and Facilities folks who did that job—Mike McCall who GC'd the job with me. The farm is open for all our little animals. It is becoming a 'Mommy and me' destination in the summer... We have added a few Nigerian goats. We have the mini ponies; the alpacas are sort of our welcoming hosts. So Tilly phase one I believe we definitely hit our target.

Phase two will involve rehabilitating the other dwellings there and we will invite back the Putnam Art Council and some other county partners we have that provide different services to our constituents. Those providers and not-for-profits have to give us their plan, but we are ready to talk with them and as a matter of fact I had taken the discussion to them at budget. **Editor's Note:** County Executive Odell delivered her proposed \$155.3-million 2018 Executive Budget on Oct. 6 at a budget address given at the Putnam County Golf Course. See page 14.

**Q:** *Can you provide an update on the proposed sewer initiative with the City of Danbury, CT to foster commercial development along Route 6?*

**Odell:** Mayor Boughton had the health issue but bounced back immediately. We have the full support of the (Danbury) City Council. I did go and speak to the City Council, which memorialized its support (for the project)...

The Task Force that has met is basically looking at the messaging, which is critically important. We have retained an engineer (John Folchetti), who is beginning the facility/feasibility study. He is looking at the capacity that has been offered in the agreement and how it would be distributed and how the actual infrastructure would be designed and then tied into that what the cost would be and the formation of the district.

**Editor's Note:** Odell hopes to have the engineer's report completed in time for her State of the County address in March 2018 and revealed that the



county would likely apply for the federal government's TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) discretionary grant funding for the project. The County Executive hopes that if the funding becomes available and studies and other necessary work are completed, bids could go out on the construction of the connection as early as the fall of 2018.

**Q:** *The Putnam County Industrial Development Agency is being reorganized. How important is having a working IDA to Putnam County?*

**Odell:** Last Monday, they approved a resolution for Ace Endico's expansion. (See story on page 17) Teri Waivada (consultant) stayed with us through the very turbulent waters to get the IDA to function and be in compliance and get people on its Board that actually want the IDA to be a success—not a personal success for them, but a success for the county. It was really a great moment on Monday. You can tell that the people at the table were proud of their accomplishment. They did a lot of work to get that back into compliance.

Monday night that signing (with Ace Endico) opened I am not going to say a new chapter, but a whole new book on the Putnam County Industrial Development Agency and the partnership with local business. Ace Endico to us is like Amazon. We would love to have Amazon, which is looking for about a million square feet, but Ace Endico's future and their vision (is important to Putnam County). They are working with us on Tilly Foster Farm...

I think that in fairness to anyone who is looking to invest serious dollars in a county, they want to make sure that the entities they will be dealing with, which would be the PEDC (Putnam Economic Development Corp.) and the IDA would be ready to go. And (until recently) we could not say that. We could not say that because the IDA that was here when I came here was broke and out of compliance (with New York State Comptroller) and they quite frankly had a very adversarial relationship with Putnam County government. Without the perseverance of Bill Nulk and Teri Waivada, I am not sure where we would have been. (Not having an IDA) would that have boxed us out? Absolutely. This deal we were able to put together with Ace Endico retained 325 jobs and there is job growth down the road; they have phases of future development as well. We are building a good strong economic growth

base with that partnership.

**Q:** *Have you started any negotiations with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection on a new watershed agreement?*

**Odell:** That will never happen and according to our legal research the agreement that was signed was in perpetuity that there was never going to be a revisit—what was done was done. I am not sure why people were under the perception that there would be a renegotiation, but when you look through the 1996 Book of Proceedings it was never going to be renegotiated.

What we can do is we negotiate one-on-one with the DEP, which we have a wonderful relationship with... Where we go from here is really one-on-one. Everything that we come to the table with we have agreed to disagree, but we have agreed to compromise and move forward on a whole host of projects—the Putnam County Golf Course, Tilly Foster is another example and Envision Brewster...

Anything that we do that is going to protect the New York City water supply they are 100% on our side and that's a team. We are a team together. It is not one or the other. Just by example, with the Envision Brewster project to get the parking garage we have to have a land swap and are working very closely (with NYCDEP) on that. As a result, ancillary projects come up but we are always talking to each other. There is no adversarial relationship any longer. This administration and the DEP have done great things for the public benefit...

**Q:** *Tourism is a big part of the Putnam County economy. Can the promotion of tourism in Putnam foster economic growth?*

**Odell:** We are seeing a 6% growth in tourism, according to a New York State report... Bruce Conklin, a native

of Putnam County, has come back here to lead us (as executive director of the Putnam County Visitors Bureau Inc.) He is here to promote Putnam County. As far as individual events and supporting them with projects, I think he's doing a great job in learning who needs help and where he can be best served. I have 100% confidence that he will continue that upward trend in visitors in Putnam County. The one thing we keep striving for is the hotel component. We have some projects in abeyance. We have capital investors interested. Hopefully now with the IDA being in compliance and operating and with its terrific Board in place, perhaps the confidence level of our investors has risen enough that we can have that conversation.



We have a terrific Board at the Putnam Economic Development Corp. They are wonderful, committed and passionate people about Putnam County and its growth. Jill (Varricchio, PEDC President) is in her second year here. She has assisted us in the Consolidated Funding Application process. The Board has confidence in her abilities. It is all really starting to come together nicely.

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# 101<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL

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**8:30 – 11:30 am • Grand Ballroom**

**FAIR AND ETHICAL HOUSING** Leon Cameron, HGAR Director of Legal Services, and Leah Caro, HGMLS Director, present real-life scenarios for complying with federal, state and local rules for Fair Housing and Ethics. No CE Credit: FREE for HGAR members (satisfies NAR's REALTOR® Ethics two-year training) CE Credit (3 hrs): \$25 for HGAR members (satisfies NYS DOS three-hour Fair Housing CE requirement and NAR's REALTOR® Ethics two-year training requirement. Full attendance required for both NAR and DOS requirements.



**9:30 – 10:15am • Westchester Ballroom**

#### "REALTOR® SAFETY" WITH CARL CARTER

Carl Carter is the son of Beverly Carter, an Executive Broker in North Little Rock, Arkansas, who was kidnapped and murdered in 2014 while showing a house. Carl later founded the Beverly Carter Foundation, to provide safety support for REALTORS®.

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**3:30 – 5:00pm • Grand Ballroom**

#### HGAR ANNUAL MEETING

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# Work Begins on Putnam Hospital Emergency Room Project

By John Jordan

CARMEL—Putnam Hospital Center recently broke ground on a major capital project—the expansion and refurbishment of its emergency department.

to the emergency room a year.

The emergency department will be fully operational during the two-year, \$9-million project. Kelly explained



Putnam Hospital Center officials turned the first dirt on the emergency room expansion project on Sept. 28th.

The project, which will take about two years to complete, was necessary due to the increased patient load at the emergency room. Putnam Hospital Center President Peter Kelly, in an interview with *Real Estate In-Depth*, said that the emergency department had 27,115 patient visits last year and the department is expected to treat close to 28,000 by the end of 2017.

The project will almost double the size of the existing emergency department at Putnam Hospital Center. The existing emergency department was last renovated in 2005 and was designed to accommodate 17,000 patient visits a year, he noted. In the next three to five years the hospital estimates it will see between 30,000 to 32,000 patient visits

that the project, designed by Steffian Bradley Architects, will involve the addition of 8,400 square feet of space that will include 11 additional treatment bays, a new nurses station, along with separate ambulance and pedestrian entrances to improve safety and flow. The emergency department will also have enhanced triage treatment areas, a new results-pending room, enlarged ambulance bays for better access, interior modifications to the existing unit and parking improvements. Once work on the addition is completed, the emergency department will move to the new space so that improvements can then be made on the existing emergency department space. In the end, patients will be treated “in one large contiguous

well-designed emergency room,” Kelly added.

Putnam Hospital Center held a groundbreaking ceremony for the project on Sept. 28 that was attended by approximately 100 community members, local leaders, hospital employees, members of the Health Quest and Putnam Hospital Center boards of trustees, the Putnam Hospital Center Foundation and Putnam Hospital Center Auxiliary. HealthQuest is the parent company of Putnam Hospital Center that also owns and operates Northern Dutchess Hospital in Rhinebeck, Vassar Medical Center in Poughkeepsie and Sharon Hospital in Sharon, CT, which joined the network in August 2017.

The 161-bed Putnam Hospital Center, which is the only full-service hospital in Putnam County, has more than 1,000 employees, including more than 900 full-time workers. The hospital also serves patients in Northern Westchester and Southern Dutchess counties.

“As a physician in the Putnam Hospital Center community since 2007, I am proud and excited to be involved with the expansion,” Emergency Department Medical Director Dr. Keyur Ajbani said at the ceremony. “The commitment of resources this endeavor requires truly signifies the hospital’s commitment to providing Putnam County residents and neighboring communities with state-of-the-art medical facilities so they can experience medical care at its best. We strive for excellence in our emergency department, and this expansion will provide us with the platform to deliver that care.”

“This project is a reaffirmation of Putnam Hospital Center’s commitment to provide accessible and convenient

high-quality medical services to the residents of Putnam County and beyond,” Kelly added.

He noted that while the additional space is important, the design of the space is also significant. In fact when Kelly first joined the hospital in August 2016, he was not pleased with the project design process and solicited the assistance of more than 20 doctors, nurses, environmental service workers, EMTs and other staff to ascertain their needs that in the end improved the design and “rebooted the project in early 2017.”

“We feel that the outcome (design) was one that will be extremely user friendly, meaning both to the providers and the patients, because we really designed it really with patient access, patient safety and patient comfort in mind also,” Kelly said.

He offered high praise to the County Executive, Deputy County Executive and other county departments, as well as local officials that assisted the hospital in securing the necessary approvals to begin construction.

“The support from the Putnam County leadership in terms of working through the systems to secure approvals was extremely cooperative because they understand we are an important resource,” Kelly said.

The enhancements and renovations are paid in part by contributions made by the auxiliary and other fundraising efforts. Putnam Hospital Center and HealthQuest are providing the funding for the project. The fully expanded and refurbished emergency department is expected to be open for patient care in late 2019.

## Ace Endico to Expand Thanks To Putnam County IDA Help

By John Jordan

BREWSTER—Last month, the Putnam County economy and business community got two shots in the arm that will provide significant benefits for years to come.

On Sept 11, the newly reorganized Putnam County Industrial Development Agency approved granting incentives in the form of a Payment in Lieu of Taxes agreement, as well as sales tax and mortgage tax abatements that will assist the growing food service provider Ace Endico to significantly expand its operations in the Town of Southeast. The \$14-million project will involve the company building an approximately 70,000-square-foot expansion to its existing space at 80 International Blvd. and increase parking at the complex.

Putnam Economic Development Corp. President Jill Varricchio noted that the Sept. 11th session was noteworthy because Putnam County now has a fully operational Industrial Development Agency that is once again in compliance with the New York State Comptroller and can now serve as a key part of the county’s economic development efforts to provide assistance to companies looking to relocate, expand or simply remain doing business in Putnam County.

Varricchio testified on behalf of the PEDC in support of Ace Endico’s application for benefits, stating that the benefits offered to the firm “will be a ‘win-win’ for Ace Endico and the taxpayers and residents of Putnam County.” The approved benefits was the first action taken by the re-launched IDA chaired by William Nulk. Other members of the IDA Board include: Dr. Stephen J. Baranowski, Joseph Downey and Putnam County Finance Commissioner William Carlin.

The PEDC President told *Real Estate In-Depth* that Ace Endico is part of a significant manufacturing base in Putnam County that includes such firms as Brewster Transit Mix, Fyer Machine Systems Inc., Putnam Precision, Vista Labs, and Dunmore to name just a few that all have operations and provide good paying jobs in Putnam County.

IDA Chairman Nulk, who also serves as the president of the Putnam Chamber of Commerce, told *Real Estate In-Depth* that he joined the IDA Board in 2014. However, after some political and financial struggles, the IDA Board, including Nulk, resigned in mass in January 2016. Some months later the Putnam County Legislature asked Nulk and others to try and re-establish the IDA and bring it into compliance with state regulations. The IDA retained consultant Teri Waivada, a former executive director with the Westchester County Industrial Development Agency, in helping the agency be designed in compliance with state regulations.

Nulk said that the Putnam County IDA was notified by the State Comptroller’s Office that it was in compliance with state regulations in September of this year, just in time to provide assistance to Ace Endico.

He added that the IDA made sure it did not begin operations until it received notification of compliance by the New York State Comptroller and as it was “approaching the finish line” was approached by Ace Endico concerning its expansion project.

Continued on page 18



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# Putnam County Visitors Bureau Launches New Website

CARMEL—The Putnam County Visitors Bureau went live in September with a re-launched and much improved website at [visitputnam.org](http://visitputnam.org) that features a host of new tools for visitors to take advantage of to plug into the many destinations and events taking place year-round in Putnam County.

Bruce Conklin, executive director of the Putnam County Visitors Bureau, explained that the new website is much more user friendly for site visitors as well as owners of tourism-related businesses to update and have more control over their listings on the website.

"It is also easier for event promoters to list their events. The goal of the website is to become the countywide resource for event information for travelers and visitors of Putnam County," Conklin related. "It's very visually pleasing and we are currently featuring a lot of art events and expositions going on right now in the county."

The site in addition to offering a list of Upcoming Events on the home page, the site also provides links to the bureau's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter feeds and extensive information under headings: Things to Do, Events, Dining, Lodging. If that were not enough a website visitor with a click can scan the latest under the Shop, Dine, Stay, Outdoors, Arts and History sections.

## Rail Trails Provide Recreation Along With Economic Benefits

In addition to the website, one of the bureau's initiatives has been promoting the expansive rail trails in Putnam County and the economic benefits they provide.

During the late 1800s, the construction of the Harlem and the Putnam Rail Lines put Brewster on the map as the "Hub of the Harlem Valley." More recently, with the construction of I-84 and

I-684, Brewster has not only maintained, but has expanded its status as a hub for transportation and commerce. Looking into the future, repurposing the old rail lines into rail trails has Brewster rising up once again as a new hub for recreation and tourism.

Within the Village of Brewster, biking and walking enthusiasts will have access to the new rail trails from several points: North Main Street, Wells Park, Peaceable Hill Road and Allview Avenue. The new and proposed trails will allow for travel south to New York City, west into Dutchess County and the Walkway Over the Hudson, to Beacon and Cold Spring and east to the Danbury Rail Museum, connecting south from Danbury down to Norwalk. These trails will offer links between the Hudson, Harlem and New Haven lines of Metro-North, according to real estate broker and resident of the Village of Brewster, Kevin Callahan.

Several economic impact studies have recently revealed the economic benefits behind these rail trail developments, as not only a tourism asset but also an economic driver to communities. Benefits include an increase in value of nearby properties as well as growth in spending at local businesses such as restaurants and retail shops. Longer rail trails could also increase a major sector of hospitality in hotels and bed and breakfasts.

Along the trail, there is a potential for new business opportunities, such as restaurants for example that will seize the opportunity to establish a new clientele of tourists and biking enthusiasts, as well as bike shops that will benefit from the increase in riders. B&Bs could take advantage of the rail trails by offering bike rentals and tours. These rail trails could potentially transform Brewster into a place where millennials will want to live and work.

According to the Business Council



of New York State, a study of Maryland's Northern Central Rail Trail found the state received \$303,000 a year in trail-related tax income while the trail's management and maintenance costs were \$192,000 a year. Rail trails can also have more than one purpose, nationwide 40% of rail trails do double duty as utility corridors. The Town of Lloyd in the

Hudson Valley, for example, received \$400,000 to allow fiber optic cable to be laid under its five-mile rail-trail.

Putnam County officials noted that the newly renovated Wells Point and Brewster Farmer's Market will connect the recreation of the rail trail to shoppers and families with children from Putnam County and elsewhere.

## PEDC's Alliance for Balanced Growth Delves Into Issues Impacting Economic Development

CARMEL—The Alliance for Balanced Growth, a standing committee of the Putnam County Economic Development Corp., has been engaged in tackling key issues affecting economic development in Putnam County.

The ABG celebrated its one-year anniversary on May 12th. Since its inception it has been holding regularly scheduled informative sessions on key business trends and topics that can either foster or impede growth in Putnam County.

The mission of the Alliance for Balance Growth is to "create a unified voice for responsible development and quality construction. Our market is industrial/commercial development and office facilities. We rely on Putnam County's quality of life assets to attract companies to expand and locate here. We work with local, county, and state governments as well as our business community to advance our message and goals."

Launched by PCEDC President Jill Varricchio, the ABG has held highly informative presentations on topics such as: business incubators, national franchising trends, environmental engineering, form-based zoning, the impact of broadband, presentations on a sustainable wastewater and storm water treatment solution called Renewage and Advanced Resilient Technology that creates a stream of revenue from thermo conversion of energy to name just a few.

Recently, Michael B. Carr, senior geologist and compliance and environmental regional manager for American Petroleum Equipment & Construction Co., discussed environmental regulations in the tri-state region and the potential high cost of the cleanup of leaking underground storage tanks to business.

Committee Chairman Jim Bates of Ecological Analysis said, "Putnam's ABG committee has been bridging gaps in understanding of issues concerning the land use and business community to help bring new, and help current, businesses in Putnam County."

Varricchio also noted the PCEDC's 2017 on-going pro-active plan called "Ready2Go" the formation of a task force to identify suitable privately held, vacant parcels in Putnam County zoned "Commercial/Industrial" with a potential for project development.

For anyone interested in attending ABG sessions, please call the Putnam Economic Development Corp. at (845) 808-1021.

## Ace Endico to Expand

Continued from page 17

Founded in 1982 in Mount Vernon, by William A. Endico and Murray Hertzberg, Ace Endico is the largest food distributor in Westchester and Putnam counties servicing the tri-state area. The firm moved to Putnam County in October 2005 from facilities in Elmsford and has grown considerably since then and currently employs approximately 324 workers.

He recalled his son Michael (a vice president with the firm) initially recommended Putnam County as a headquarters site for the growing firm, but Endico admitted he was skeptical. However, after reviewing the site and learning that Putnam was at the crossroads of I-84 and I-684, he realized the county could serve the company as a "great distribution hub."

He added, "It has worked out. Putnam was a great choice."

The company's state-of-the-art facility houses an all-encompassing inventory featuring dairy, produce, meats, seafood, fine imported specialty products, paper, canned goods and everything in between and operates hundreds of trucks to transport their goods to food establishments throughout the region.

Endico said that the company grew its existing 100,000-square-foot building on International Boulevard by approximately 5,000 square feet a year after it moved in and added another 25,000 square feet about three or four years ago.

The latest expansion project will add at least 50 employees to its workforce in the next five years. "We are pretty aggressive. We are acquiring companies, we are hiring workers from other companies, so we are really on the move here. We are growing," Endico said.

He praised both the PEDC and the IDA for their assistance for the expansion project that he added was a necessity due to its strong growth. Once the expansion project is complete, the building will total approximately 200,000 square feet. The property at full build-out could accommodate another approximately 90,000 square feet.

The company, in addition to added parking, could build another 100,000-square-foot building as well on property it owns across the street from its existing facility.

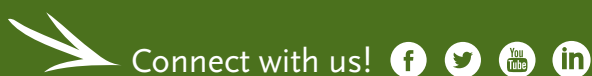


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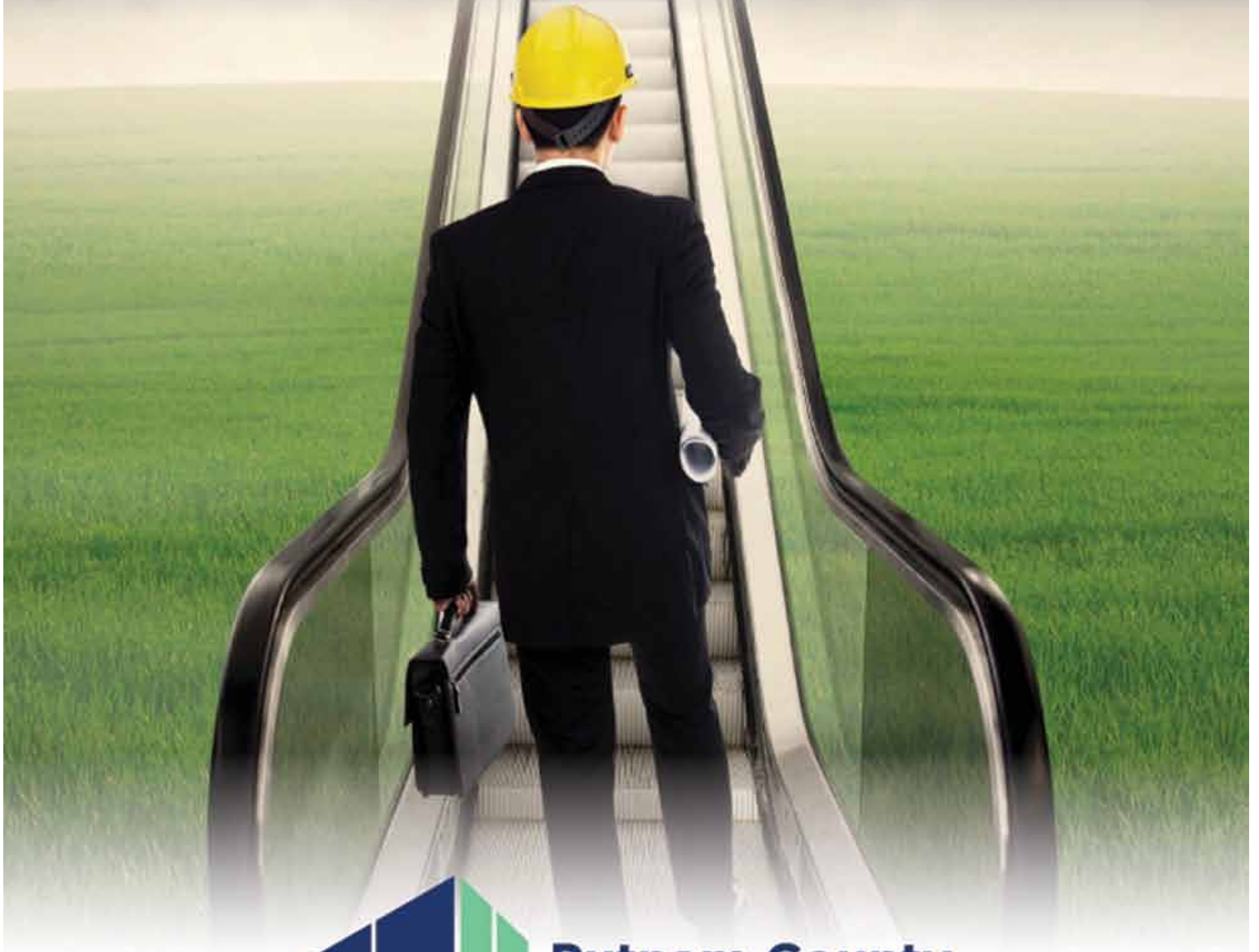
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