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Chairman's Column

By HEDC Chairman Roger Lehmann



The **Harvard-Woodstock-McHenry County Enterprise Zone** was officially certified by the State of Illinois on December 17, 2015. The new zone will hold a region-wide event sometime this spring.

The HEDC will follow up with its own event for Harvard area businesses in May. Stay tuned for details.

The HEDC voted to retain the same slate of officers for another year. **Verne Sisson** of Harvard Savings serves as Vice Chair, **Mark Stricker** of Arrowhead Industrial Park as Treasurer, Harvard City Administrator **Dave Nelson** as Secretary, and I will continue to serve as HEDC Chair.

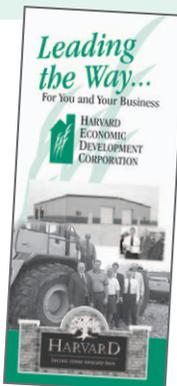
Efforts to build an interchange at Route 23 and the tollway moved forward in 2015, as the McHenry County Board added the project to its five-year transportation plan and approved nearly \$300,000 in motor fuel taxes to fund a design study for the project. Supporters hope that an interchange can be built in 2017, at the same time that the Illinois Toll Highway Authority replaces the Route 23 overpass as part of an approved road-widening plan.

The interchange, if completed, would give McHenry County its first direct tollway access and open the door to industrial development in Marengo. It would also provide a direct route north to Harvard and into Wisconsin. Having access to I-90 at two points (173 and 23) would be a very competitive benefit that should attract new industrial, commercial and residential development to Harvard.

The HEDC has added an update on the project on its website, at www.harvardedc.com.

Join us! **Become an HEDC Member**

You can learn more about the benefits of HEDC membership and to find out how you can play a role in Harvard's future at www.harvardedc.com, or call (815) 943-1036 to receive a membership kit by email or regular mail.



A YEAR OF PROGRESS

The new year looks promising for the Harvard economy, thanks to the efforts of the **Harvard Economic Development Corporation (HEDC)** during 2015.

"Progress was made toward some significant goals," according to **HEDC Chair Roger Lehmann**, who pointed to the new Enterprise Zone as the accomplishment which should have the greatest positive impact on the Harvard economy. "The application process made us more visible in the development community and the enterprise zone will make us more competitive," he noted.

As the organization nears the end of its fifteenth year (the HEDC was founded in the spring of 2001), it has a number of other recent accomplishments to point to. The HEDC commissioned a grocery study that was distributed to small chain and independent grocers and their brokers, in hopes of attracting a full service grocery store to Harvard.

A loan that the HEDC made to **Harvard Chevrolet Buick GMC** has kept the dealership in Harvard, where it continues to do well and contribute significantly to the sales tax revenues.

Harvard also has an inventory of shovel-ready industrial, commercial and residential sites available. "A developer can



get in and get started quickly in Harvard," noted **Arrowhead Industrial Park developer Mark Stricker** who is also involved in a project that has created an incubator for new businesses in Harvard.

HEDC Executive Director Charlie Eldredge has traveled the state to create stronger visibility for Harvard among government officials, developers and economic development professionals. Eldredge, who now also serves as the administrator of the new Harvard-Woodstock-McHenry County enterprise

zone, will continue promoting Harvard to new and expanding businesses.

Eldredge has also been working on the HEDC's behalf to facilitate the search for a new owner for the former Motorola campus. Vacant for more than 10 years, that facility remains in private ownership. "All we can do is try to find interested parties to bring to the table," said Eldredge. "Only the current owner can decide whether or not he really wants to sell the facility."

On the agenda for the coming year is a continued effort to attract new businesses to Harvard and new members to the organization, and a renewed effort to reach out to local businesses and community groups. The HEDC plans to host an informational event on the enterprise zone this spring and will continue to actively support the efforts of the new zone's board.

Mayor's Column *By Mayor Jay Nolan*



The Harvard Events Committee is holding a logo design contest for the first-ever **Harvard Balloon Fest**, which will be held September 2-4 in Harvard. Entries should be submitted to moller@cityofharvard.org or dropped off at City Hall, 201 W. Diggins Street in Harvard.

Entries must be submitted by 5 pm on March 14. The winning entry will be chosen on March 15. It will become the official logo of the festival and its designer will receive a festival polo shirt and a ride in a tethered hot air balloon during the 2016 event.

The HEDC is evaluating options for using solar lighting to illuminate the Welcome to Harvard sign on Route 14 at the city's southern gateway. The HEDC built the sign and the City maintains the landscaping around it.

Business Incubator Returns To Harvard

Harvard is once again home to an incubator for small businesses.

Three local businessmen, **Mark Stricker**, **Jim McConoughey** and **Jay Nolan**, have purchased the building located at 650 Chippewa in Arrowhead Industrial Park with the express intention of putting it back into its original use as an incubator for small businesses. The 7,200 square foot facility was built by the **Harvard Economic Development Corporation (HEDC)** in 2005 as an incubator and served that purpose for several years. In 2007, the building was purchased by All World Machinery, which used it as expansion space until moving out of Harvard early last year.

The finished space is ideal for office, light industrial/assembly or distribution-based businesses. "It is good, clean space for a growing company to get started in and then hopefully springboard into a larger space in Harvard," said Stricker, noting that the building is also expandable. "We could easily double its size to accommodate more businesses, or to help a single company expand quickly in Harvard."

Twenty-five percent of the building has already been committed. That leaves options for 1,800, 3,600 or 5,400 sft. available for lease, with occupancy within 30 to 45 days. Each unit has a separate entrance, a 12' overhead door and private bathroom facilities. All of the units can be reconfigured or combined to meet specific needs.

"Harvard is a great place for a business to get started and grow affordably," said McConoughey. "Arrowhead is a strong industrial community with a variety of skillsets and expertise and a solid list of companies that support new industrial growth."

"We are hoping to get small industrial uses out of their garages and into space that they can grow in," he added.

Interested businesses should contact Stricker at (815) 943-8788 for details.



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