

*Curtis Carter 2-11-14*

GBIC is the regional development corporation for Chittenden County. We are one of twelve RDC's supported in part by the state to provide economic development assistance to business. GBIC focusses on value added companies that export goods and/or services out of the state, bringing dollar one into our economy.

Prior to GBIC I worked for many years in the Vt Dept. Of Economic Development. From 1985 to 1992 I administered an initiative for the State called the "Job Development Zone" program. It was a pilot program to encourage economic development activity in three zones within the state, Although the program was not extended, one of the lessons learned was that in order to influence behavior, incentives had to be significant.

The proposed "enterprise zone" concept is similar to the JDZ program that can be found in VT statutes.

GBIC in the late 1980's developed the Catamount Industrial Park in Milton. The park received an Act 250 permit and, while it was received prior to the "master plan" Act 250 permits currently allowed by rule, it acts very similarly to a "master Plan" permit. All natural resource and historic impacts were addressed and capacity limits were set for water, sewer, and traffic. The park also has a set of protective covenants that specifies how the park is to be developed and establishes a design review committee. Each lot as it is built upon is still required to apply for an Act 250 amendment. This is in addition to the individual state specific permits for water and waste water and stormwater. While not onerous to obtain, each Act 250 amendment delays construction in that it is not issued until all of the state specific permits are obtained. The cost of these permits is not insignificant as well. In addition to the cost of engineering, the application fees for the last two projects in the park totaled over \$52,500. For each construction project, we obviously go to the town for their approval and the Development Review Board with their professional staff does an excellent review.

An Act 250 exemption for the development of lots within the park would be a significant incentive. It would be a marketing tool and would facilitate the commencement of construction to meet the needs of business.

In Chittenden County it looks like we will run out of industrial lots within 5 years. We do not foresee new industrial parks being developed. Currently we are looking to facilitate the further development of both the IBM and Husky campus. Being adjacent to village areas, properly zoned and supplied by infrastructure we see this as smart growth. Each of these sites have already been through significant local and state permit reviews. GBIC just completed a draft master plan for the IBM campus in conjunction with the county's rewrite of the regional plan and development of its comprehensive economic development strategy. A next step will hopefully be permitting.

I participated in the growth center working groups this past summer and fall. While Industrial uses were recommended to be included in all five designation programs, it appeared that a 6<sup>th</sup> specific program for industrial parks was fraught with too many complications.

It is critical however to provide for the growth of businesses within the manufacturing and commerce sectors that provide our best paying jobs. A separate economic development incentive program, such as you are discussing here, makes more sense.

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Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation

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