

# **Rutland Economy Pitch**

**February 9, 2015**

## ***Summary***

### **Otter Creek Engineering**

Mark Younstrom, Principal

- Engage with Vermont's consulting engineering firms to suggest improvements to existing permitting procedures
- Prioritize enforcement of stormwater management regulations on large pollution contributors
- Explore municipal administration of local transportation projects to expedite the process

### **Castleton State College**

Lyle Jepson, Dean of Entrepreneurial Programs

- Vermont needs a vibrant marketing plan to compete with New York; we're being "out-marketed"
- We should support rail, which is vital to the Rutland region
- Streamline the state's permitting processes

### **John A. Russell Corporation**

John Russell III, President

- Vermont's permitting process is negatively impacting businesses and oftentimes not achieving the environmental protections it's meant to
- We should create panels, independent of the legislature, to look at different parts of state government in order to assess whether or not they're being effective
  - Governor Snelling did this

### **Enman-Kesselring Consulting Engineers**

Blair Enman, Principal

- Reduce the permitting process burden for applicants
  - Every applicant for an Act 250 permit is currently subject to two hearings: one for the municipality, one for Act 250
  - Consolidate the process so that either the municipality or Act 250 has jurisdiction, but not both
- Treat all Act 250 permit applications initially as "minor permits"
  - A permit would be issued within 30 days without a public hearing (if it is compliant), but allow interested parties to request a hearing

- Currently, all applications are classified as “major” or “minor”, with “major” projects subject to a public hearing

### **Green Mountain Power**

Betsy Ide

- We need to attract the key 25-45 demographic group
- GMP is working on microgrid projects, and is using existing infrastructure more efficiently
  - GMP would like to see state policies which allow for flexibility in pursuing these types of projects

### **Omya, Inc.**

Wayne Wilmans, Plant Manager

- Permit conditions create a huge regulatory burden
  - Omya needs to maintain 500 permit conditions in order to operate in Vermont
- Vermont frequently adopts permitting standards which are more stringent than effective federal standards
  - Stringent doesn't always mean better
- Being “first” or “unique” in the nation is not always best for all Vermonters
- The costs of living and doing business are a huge deterrent
  - High electric costs
  - “When I moved from Arizona to Vermont in 2013, my personal property tax bill quadrupled.”
- Vermont is “using” businesses to raise new money for new initiatives

### **GE Aviation**

Dan DiBattista, Plant Leader

- State should facilitate the development of Rutland
  - This would help corporations recruit people into the area
- Montpelier should understand the impact of the Export-Import Bank
- Very pleased with how things turned out on single-payer

### **Paramount Theatre**

Bruce Bouchard, Executive Director

- Create tax credits for the film industry
  - From 2003-2013, North Carolina had 487 film productions, which grossed \$3.7 billion in state revenue
  - People would love to film in Vermont

- New York has a great “bring your business to New York” advertising campaign. We should create a smaller Vermont version of this
- Recreate a Vermont Film Commission

### **Vermont Farmers Food Center**

Greg Cox, President

- Vermont often defers to USDA regulations which hurt farmers
- Need to invest in infrastructure to grow small farm businesses into large farm businesses
- Reducing regulations on farmers at the state level would help
- Agriculture is one of Rutland County’s largest assets
  - It attracts many young people to the area

### **Foley Companies/Foley Distributing Corporation**

Mark Foley Jr., President

- Vermont should invest in workforce training
- We should provide more entrepreneurial support
- We should have more access to capital
- We need more predictable permitting

### **NewGrassRoots**

Ben Brown, Founder

- “Rutland is a sports team going through a rebuilding phase”
- Technology is a huge component of attracting people to the Rutland area
- Smart City Initiative (which exists in several states): leverages emerging technologies to provide the infrastructure so that many economic amenities are possible
  - The better the technology that we bring to the area, the better we can attract entrepreneurs, improve our communication, and boost our economy

### **Ryan Smith & Carbine**

John Valente, Esq., Attorney

- Revamp the Vermont brand
  - Embrace our natural and economic environment
  - Talk about our history of innovation
- Get a group of marketing people together to figure out the best ways to market Vermont

**The Bookmobile**

**Ruthellen Weston, Co-owner**

- Like New York, we should allow businesses to pay sales or withholding taxes at a time that best fits them and do filing quarterly
- Invest in public transportation, which is not prevalent in many towns throughout Vermont

**Giancola Family of Companies**

**Joe Giancola, President**

- There is limited capital available for start-up companies
- New York is a good model: they've reduced the deficit and set up a marketing campaign for businesses with tax incentives
- We've lost a number of manufacturers
- We don't have charter airplanes to bring people to Rutland

**Rutland Economic Development Corporation**

**Jamie Stewart, Executive Director**

- Industrial real estate development has ground to a halt in Vermont
- Demographic challenges create a problem for businesses
- Create enterprise zones (with streamlined permitting process and/or tax and business incentives)
- Supporting workforce training programs should be a priority