

# Economic development remains highest priority

From door-to-door visits with constituents to exit polls of voters throughout the country, economic development is the top priority. Voters expect their elected officials to work across branches of government and party lines to achieve results. Private-sector investments and partnerships with government are just as key to achieving success.

Erie County's future is dependent on an economically healthy and efficient place to live and work. I reached out to County Executive Chris Collins to forge a plan on Erie County policies regarding economic development. Given the importance of sound, measurable economic development policies, it is appropriate for the Erie County Industrial Development Agency to restate and redefine its overall guidelines for determining the granting of incentives.

It is also worth our collective effort to quickly identify, prioritize and implement county-related economic development policies and projects. In our member roles as ECIDA Board of Directors, the

county executive and I reviewed these priorities to foster a policy decision-making framework:

1. Merging of economic development agencies, particularly Amherst and Erie County.
2. Prioritizing the assistance for high potential industrial or service-sector job growth (information technologies, biomedical, cultural tourism and waterfront commercialization).
3. Assisting with new jobs for existing companies and job retention, as well as small business expansion, particularly Buffalo-based firms.
4. Monitoring and routine reporting of individual project-funded job creation.
5. Collaborating and partnering with the Empire State Development Corporation.
6. Creating a shared agenda with workforce development areas, including Erie Community College and the Buffalo & Erie County Workforce Investment Board.

7. Determining county capital projects and investments in regional infrastructure.

With Gov. Eliot Spitzer's proposed state funding for upstate regional economic development, establishing a working relationship and finding ways to complement county incentives with state objectives are most important toward our shared agenda. As a member of the New York State Association of Counties' Economic Development, Environment and Rural Affairs Standing Committee, my recent work in Albany produced a resolution that was passed unanimously at the NYSAC committee and in the County Legislature.

Erie County government will work together to improve the economic conditions, concentrating on strong, prudent development that benefits the region. As always, comments on Erie County's economic development and other matters are encouraged. My constituents can contact me at [Marinelli@erie.gov](mailto:Marinelli@erie.gov).



**LYNN MARINELLI**  
Legislature  
Chairperson



## Heard

call: 632-0390

*(Editor's note: Call The Bee at 632-0390 and record a one-minute comment on our Bee Heard line. It gives readers an opportunity to comment quickly and candidly on items of local or regional interest. Callers do not have to identify themselves and no callers' names will be used. In the interest of fairness and good taste, The Bee will not publish derogatory or insulting comments. All comments are by our readers and are subject to editing.)*

✓ Last month I watched a broadcast of an Amherst Town Board meeting on cable. Afterwards, I was appalled and sorry that I ever voted for Shelly Schratz. You see, I watched Dr. Mohan announce that he may need to recuse himself on the vote regarding the Maple Road project. Shelly Schratz was literally arguing with him and urging him not to recuse himself with respect to his vote. This leaves me wondering, why is Shelly Schratz telling the supervisor what to do? Certainly, she has not conducted herself in an impressive manner during subsequent broadcasts. I believe Dr. Mohan should not be voting on the Maple Road project.

✓ I attended the Erie County Health Department Hepatitis vaccination clinic at ECC; I stood outside in the cold and rain from 4

until 5:20, when I was put on a bus for 15 minutes and then went inside to stand in line until getting the shot at 7:45. It was a four-hour process. If the health department staff could only handle about 2,000 people in a seven-hour period, how could they ever treat the more than 100,000 residents of Amherst in cases of regional emergency? They are not prepared.

✓ I really wish the seniors in Amherst would mind their own business. On Election Day, I was on my way into Forest Elementary to vote. There was a sign out in front that said no drop offs before 8 a.m. Two seniors were walking out of Forest while a little boy was being dropped off. The seniors yelled at the boy that there are no drop offs before 8 a.m., but the boy kept walking inside the school because he was part of the before-school program. The sign applies only to those kids not attending the before-school program.

✓ Congratulations to Wegmans on stepping up to the plate and taking care of a problem in a generous, thoughtful way. They are a wonderful member of our community.

✓ I just spent 22 minutes in line at the Williamsville Post Office. There are five clerk stations, but never more than three clerks. This time, there were only two. With another postal increase coming in May, maybe they could spring for two or three more clerks. They also should be more up to date; the calendar on their wall was for 2007.

✓ If you feel as though you are being bled financially dry, you are not alone. This is the first time of 57 years of marriage that we can only make a partial tax payment on our home. Utilities continue to rise. We keep the thermostat at 65, do

laundry with cold water, take one day a week to shop, pay bills, etc. to conserve on gas. It's tough to make ends meet. Let's not forget we are in a recession, one where we pay for Bass Pro to come here, and a \$700 million gambling complex in the Catskills. Our homes are being reassessed; you know what that means. Let's not forget the big pay-outs to the chiefs retiring at utility companies. Football and hockey tickets are over \$50; stands are always full. What is wrong with this picture? Sometimes, it's tough to get old. I feel sorry for the next generation; it won't get any easier.

✓ I just finished reading the article, "Amherst Town Board council members seek resumes to fill committees." If we have people studying all these things on these committees, and you need a resume to even get on the committee, wouldn't the people on the committee be better qualified to make the decisions for the town, instead of council members? Then we could just eliminate council members, eliminating some of government. The Town of Amherst right now is run similar to a rat in a cage running on one of those wheels going full speed ahead but getting nowhere, because we have too many people trying to make simple decisions that aren't even common-sense.

✓ Because of the availability of Internet and school libraries, my children haven't had the need to go to our public libraries; however, at the request of my son's high school (he's 16), we went to Clearfield to get a card. He was like a kid in a candy store; he took out four books and three DVDs and told me the dates due back were Feb. 19. Imagine my surprise when I took them back on Feb. 12 and found out only the books were due on Feb. 19; the DVDs were due on Feb. 5. At \$2 a day, overdue for a week, three DVDS, it cost me \$42. I was in shock and appalled and, needless to say, we

won't be back there any time soon.

✓ To all who actually care about America, we need to change the system now. Local, state and federal government is a mess. It's time for each adult individual in this country to make decisions for policy one vote at a time. Use the Internet for voting; it could be done. For all who say this is not possible or we're not qualified, could it be any worse than it is now? We are in a war we shouldn't be. Americans are no longer liked by many in this world. America is in financial trouble; our young may never get this country out of debt. Look at Social Security. The money they want to give to stimulate the economy will just support foreign companies. Americans do not take care of Americans anymore. Look what NAFTA has done; there are no pensions or health care. America is no longer number one, and we're going downhill fast.

✓ Since when does the Chamber of Commerce have the authority to speak for residents on that Maple Road project? The area is far too small in the first place to put up all the buildings that are planned. The Chamber of Commerce and developers are just putting up a smokescreen with no hard facts. I don't know of any public survey or referendum. The handwriting is already on the wall, and the project will be pushed through no matter what. The town is already overdeveloped and has enough traffic problems.

✓ I think the Williamsville School District administration is talking through its head with a 4.7 percent increase in our school taxes. Have they ever thought of reducing taxes? Why do we need students going to local, regional and state competitions? Why do teachers need a pay raise? Also, let's get rid of counselors; they are a big waste of money that could be used for other projects. I have to agree with the board members that the administration has to reduce the increase, otherwise it will face defeat in May.

✓ Thank you for the comment about the filth at the Amherst Pepsi Center. They have more than enough businesses and teams paying for ice time there to clean up their locker rooms and the stench that permeates the entire building. Clean it up before someone gets sick.

✓ Regarding the rats sitting outside the restaurant while the cus-

tomers were eating his spaghetti, the rats are rampant throughout the entire Village of Williamsville and Amherst. And it's not just restaurants; it's residents who think it's a great idea to feed the ducks at the parks.

✓ I've been reading about the shooting club on Maple Road. I have several friends who belonged there, one was even a caretaker for years. Every two years they claimed they remove the lead from that property. Let's get the facts straight. Is there lead there or not?

✓ The recent proposal by Amherst Central School District to eliminate full-time nurses at non-public schools is a concern to us. The health and well-being of our children cannot be jeopardized. As parents, taxpayers and registered voters, we urge the board not to allow the removal of full-time nurses in our schools. We are confident the school district can find a way to reduce administrative or operational expenses so that all our children can have access to qualified nurses during school hours. We are asking for nothing more than we've had in the past. We are simply asking that our nursing care is maintained to protect our children. Amherst is a great community and a wonderful place to raise a family; let's show our unity and have others realize and envy what a great community Amherst is. Let's not separate us in public versus nonpublic schools.

✓ Why are the town board members so influenced by such a handful of neighbors in the shooting club area who are concerned about traffic cutting through their streets? It is almost impossible for anyone without total knowledge of that area to cut through from Sheridan Drive to Maple Road. People who are not familiar or live within that area are going to use the main thoroughfares.

✓ I am a weekly visitor to the Amherst Pepsi Center, and I witness firsthand the adults and children who leave their cups and garbage right where they sit. What's wrong with these people? Why do they expect others to clean up after them? Regarding the locker rooms, who do you think is making them filthy? It's the users of this facility. Parents, start parenting and teach your family to respect the place and throw your own garbage away. Stop placing the blame on the center when it's the users of the center who are destroying it.

## Letters to the Editor

### Resident offended

(Continued from page five)

my co-committee members planning enjoyable events in, and for, the Village of Williamsville.

Pat Siracuse  
Village of Williamsville

**Are You Suffering From TMJ? Do You Have Headaches or Ear Pain?**  
Robert T. Wylie Can Help  
Robert T. Wylie, DDS  
3878 Delaware Ave. • Kenmore  
(2 minutes from the Youngmann)  
873-1234

## Business News

**Lauer-Manguso & Associates Architects**, in Amherst, recently had an employee, Frank E. Otto, a project architect, receive Professional Accreditation by the U.S. Green Building Council for LEED Certification for New Construction & Major Renovations. This achievement demonstrates an understanding of Green building practices and principles and LEED rating system. It allows Lauer-Manguso & Associates Architects' clients a growing array of state and local government initiatives as green design not only makes a positive impact on public health and the environment, it also reduces operating costs, enhances building and organizational marketability, and helps create a sustainable community.