



# Economic Development Partnership

The Economic Development Department of the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

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## GATHERING MOMENTUM

# Collaboration has “Hoosick Rising” to New Heights

Families are strolling down Main Street and nearby there’s music playing from the bandstand. Shop owners serve customers, as people call out greetings to one another along the sidewalks. A police car cruises by; a group of children smile and wave. If there’s one thing Hoosick Falls has, it’s a small-town vibe. Now, with a new planning initiative taking root, the village, the Town of Hoosick and a groundswell of grassroots collaborators are working to build on the region’s attractive, affordable assets to ensure a bright future.

“*Hoosick Rising*” is a multi-faceted approach to healthy economic development in keeping with Hoosick’s natural and historic heritage. In its beginning stages, *Hoosick Rising* is already gaining momentum from the energy and enthusiasm of the community.

“It’s very exciting because more people are getting involved and they are bringing their unique ideas and perspectives to the table,” said Hoosick Falls Mayor David Borge. “The overall intent is to foster economic prosperity that builds on the wonderful small-town quality of life we have to offer. This is a great place to live, to raise a family, to start a business and to relocate a company. It’s time to get the word out.”

Through a series of open meetings, elected officials, business owners and community members from diverse backgrounds are working in partnership to identify and develop key projects.

Facilitated by Camoin Associates, Inc. of Saratoga Springs, Hoosick Rising has many facets, including potential economic initiatives and business-friendly zoning, municipal energy

efficiency, tourism, increased recreational access and more. The Chamber, recognizing Hoosick’s attractive inventory of business space, will assist in marketing an industrial building on Mechanic Street.

“The best way forward is to have more people step up and get involved,” said Town Supervisor Mark Surdam.

“We’re looking for the talents of a cross-section of people to brainstorm during this planning process. This is an unprecedented effort with the town, the village and many entities collaborating. Now is the time to be heard.”

The brainstorming won’t be limited by village or town boundaries, either. Officials say the collaborative effort will be regional as Hoosick seeks to strengthen connections with nearby locations, such as Cambridge,

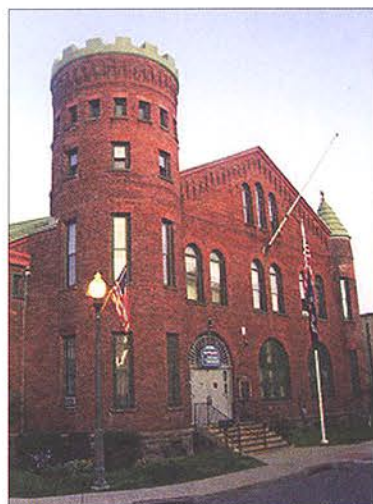
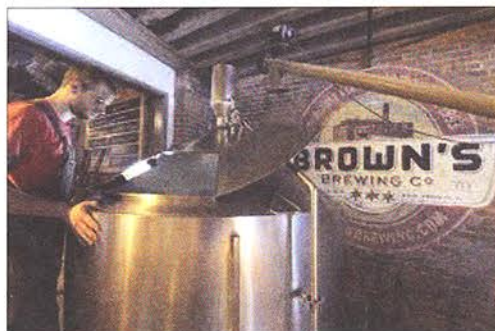
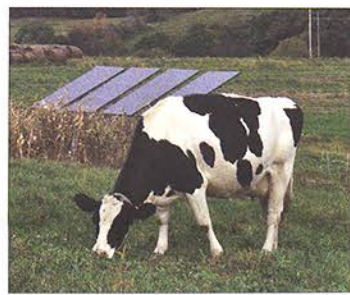
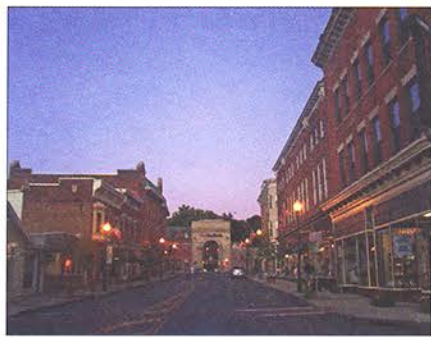
New York and Bennington, Vermont. Hoosick has its own attractions: the folk artist known as Grandma Moses lived in Hoosick Falls, and the famous Battle of Bennington took place in Walloomsac. Hoosick Rising supporters point to the area’s many historic buildings, expanded Hoosick River Greenway, and a vibrant

arts culture. In addition, there are highly-rated public and private schools, affordable real estate, a local police department, two hometown newspapers and Southwestern Vermont Medical

Center only 8 miles away in Bennington. Infrastructure investments have recently included solar energy at the wastewater treatment plant (soon to be added to the municipal center) and an ongoing sidewalk improvement program. Within 35 miles of the greater Capital Region, Hoosick is also in a commutable radius of the Luther Forest/Malta technology area.

“We have a very entrepreneurial spirit, a can-do attitude about bringing in new business and new

opportunities,” said Borge. “We’re ready to say to the region ‘Bring your ideas to our doors and let’s make it happen.’”



From the top: Architecturally significant buildings abound; renowned folk artist Anna Mary Robertson, “Grandma Moses,” was a resident of Hoosick Falls; solar panels at Berle Farms; Hoosick kids meet Rensselaer County’s Dairy Queen; the Estabrook Octagon House; Brown’s Brewing Co; Berle Farms’ organic yogurt; the Hoosick Falls Armory.

**The public is invited to attend the next “Hoosick Rising” meeting, scheduled for Thursday, September 25, at 6:30 p.m. at The Armory, 80 Church Street in Hoosick Falls.**

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

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- Center for Economic Growth (CEG)
- First Columbia, LLC
- Gurley Precision Instruments, Inc.
- National Grid
- Nigro Companies
- Pioneer Bank
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- Tri City Rentals

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- Kinderhook Bank
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- Pattison, Sampson, Ginsberg & Griffin PC
- Rose and Kiernan, Inc.
- TD Bank

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THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP (EDP) is a department of the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce. EDP’s goal is to develop, support and expand new and existing business for the region by providing relevant information, contacts and assistance through marketing opportunities to regional, national and international businesses. The mission of EDP is to enhance the economic vitality of Rensselaer County and establish greater awareness of its high quality of life.

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MEET OUR PARTNERS:

## The Rifenburg Companies



As a Visionary Investor in the Chamber's Economic Development Partnership, the Rifenburg Companies are making a tangible commitment to the region they've served for more than 50 years.

"This area is our home, and from a business standpoint it has been a successful region in which to grow our business," said President George Rifenburg. "We believe in giving back to the community. Investing in the Chamber's Economic Development Partnership is an important way of committing to the area's economic well-being and ensuring a high quality of life for everyone who works or lives here."

Founded by Ken Rifenburg, the company has followed a steady philosophy of safety and customer satisfaction, resulting in successful growth. In 1972, it had about 60 employees and its projects included many small New York State Department of Transportation contracts.

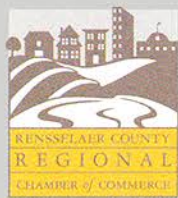
Today, the Rifenburg Companies has grown to more than 350 employees and completes more than \$90 million in projects annually for municipalities, state agencies, and private companies. Projects include industrial sites, commercial and residential developments, office parks, and more.

"Safety comes first at the Rifenburg Companies. We were one of the first construction companies to partner with OSHA," said George Rifenburg. "Our father started the business with a dedication to customer service and high-quality work. Our reputation continues to be built on the satisfaction of our clients."

Collectively, the Rifenburg Companies provide expertise in highway construction and restoration, site development, landfill technologies, environmental clean-up, utilities installation, mining, aggregate sales, equipment (sales, leasing, rentals), airport maintenance, and runway reconstruction. In 2013, Rifenburg completed a \$99.6 million reconstruction of an 8-mile-segment of the NYS Thruway, from exit 23 to 24. It was largest undertaking in the history of the Thruway Authority's Albany division. The three-year project, which included a third travel lane in both directions, drainage systems, bridge modifications and noise barriers walls, was completed on time and on budget.

By focusing successfully on customer goals, timetables, and budgets, Rifenburg has many repeat clients, and has built a solid reputation.

"The keys to our success have been respect and appreciation for our employees, an emphasis on safety for all, and responsiveness to clients," said Mr. Rifenburg.



## Economic Development Partnership

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## SMALL TOWN, BIG PLANS

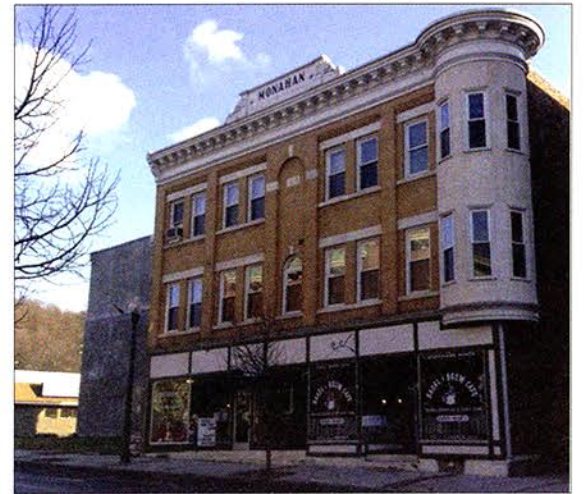
# Proposal Brings New Life to Dougherty's Corner

The Village of Hoosick Falls has announced the allotment of state funds to redevelop a vacant lot where the local landmark Dougherty's Hotel once stood (photo at right). In order to secure the reissue of a \$750,000 grant from the Restore New York Communities initiative through Empire State Development Corp., the village was required to assign a developer to the vacant John Street lot known locally as "Dougherty's Corner."

Enter Sequence Development, and its president and CEO Jeff Buell. The Troy real estate firm has agreed to act as developer and owner of a newly proposed construction project that would make the corner of John and Main streets an integral part of the village once more.

"It's a very positive move forward and just the boost our community needs," said Village Mayor David Borge, who announced the proposal at a Hoosick Rising meeting in July.

Sequence is projected to start construction of the new three-story building on the vacant 33- by 66-foot lot by October, and finish in 2015. The company also purchased the building next door at 23 John Street to augment the space for first-floor commercial use. Overall, the project will be



mixed use. "We've got four people working up in Hoosick Falls, giving the project the due diligence it deserves," said Buell. "We're immersing ourselves in the local culture to get a proper understanding of the significance of the site and its importance to the community. The people of Hoosick Falls really care about the future of their community and are trying to drive it forward. It's important that whatever we do at Dougherty's Corner, we respect what has come before and provide a new opportunity for the future."

## FIRST-CLASS EDUCATION

# Hoosick's Public & Private Schools Excel



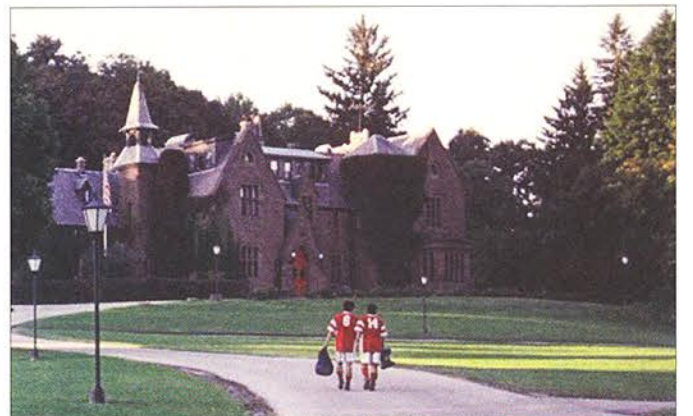
As a recognized AP honors district, Hoosick Falls Central Schools bring excellence in academics, sports and the arts (photo at left) to the community it serves. "The schools are the cornerstone of the community and our students work

hard to make us all proud of their achievements," said Superintendent Kenneth Facin. "The community is very supportive of our mission and of the students. The Hoosick Rising initiative has our full support and as the new school year gets underway, we will mobilize our students and faculty to join the collaborative effort."

Families in the region can also choose private education, including St. Mary's Academy in Hoosick Falls, and the Hoosac School (photo at right), a co-educational private boarding school in the Town of Hoosick for grades 8-12.

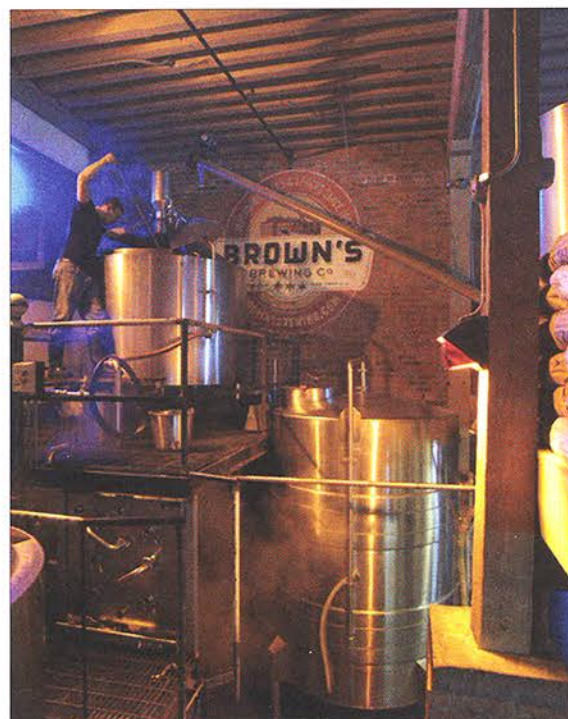
Enrolling 120 students, the elite prep school attracts top students from around the globe who go on to attend the finest colleges and universities. About 25% live locally and attend as day students.

"Hoosac will be a significant partner in the Hoosick Rising effort," said Headmaster Dean Foster. "The school brings, by its very nature, many students from different cultures around the world. This is a valuable resource that most small towns can not lay claim to. In addition, the public high school works collaboratively with Hoosac to provide opportunities for students from both schools to work together for the good of the whole community."



## BREWING-UP BUSINESS

# Brown's Opens the Doors in Walloomsac



This fall, Brown's Brewing Company, will publicly open a new \$3 million full-scale brewery, shining a spotlight on the dynamic diversity of the Hoosick region.

Located on Factory Hill Road in North Hoosick, Brown's Walloomsac Brewery and production facility is housed in a converted 19th century mill along the Walloomsac River. Formerly home to FlowMatic Valve, the factory has undergone a painstaking renovation for the past three years. Situated on 40 acres, the Walloomsac Brewery includes bottling and packaging facilities and has a maximum capacity of producing 20,000 barrels of brew a year. Eventually, Brown's plans to open the new brewery for beer tastings and tours.

A successful craft brewery since its founding in 1993 on River Street in Troy, Brown's wholesale operation sells ales and lagers to such clients as Price Chopper, Hannaford, Stewart's Shops and others throughout the Capital Region.