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DEMOLITION BEGINS AT DETERIORATING BUILDING IN JOHNSON CITY

46 Corliss Avenue will be "shovel ready;" state Restore NY grant aids project

Empire State Development and the Town of Union today announced that demolition at 46 Corliss Avenue has commenced in order to provide space for future development. The Town was awarded a \$471,568 Restore New York Communities Initiative II grant in January 2008 to fund the project.

"The condition of this property must be improved in order to promote the redevelopment efforts in Johnson City's urban core," said ESD Chairman and CEO designate Dennis M. Mullen. "Our Restore New York program serves as a catalyst for projects that spur economic development and transform communities. This project on Corliss Avenue, in particular, meets those goals and will eliminate a deteriorating industrial building."

"With the demolition and removal of debris, this site will be 'shovel ready,' demonstrating how state dollars can be leveraged to best serve deserving communities," said ESD Southern Tier Regional Director Kevin McLaughlin. "This is another step forward in our efforts to renew the area and provide a foundation for future development in Johnson City."

"Over the last few years, Restore NY grant funds have been utilized by the Town of Union and its Villages and we have no doubt found the program to be an extremely useful redevelopment tool for the removal of slums and blighted structures in the Town," said Town of Union Supervisor John M. Bernardo. "We will continue to work tenaciously with our resource partners on the State and County levels to identify negative elements that detract from the overall quality of life, like we have seen in the past, with the former Union Forging Site, Endicott Forging Site and now 46 Corliss Avenue. We need to continue our aggressive town wide demolition initiatives to eliminate these aging elements that have penetrated both our commercial and residential neighborhoods."

"The collective efforts to revitalize the former industrial area in the Village of Johnson City are transforming brownfields into shovel ready sites and new business facilities in the heart of our county," said Broome County Executive Barbara J. Fiala "Through County partnership with the Town of Union, the Village of Johnson City and the successful Restore NY Program, this vacant structure can be demolished to make way for the future development of 46 Corliss Avenue."

The building, a four-story, commercial building, has been vacant since 1993 and once housed the Marshall Furniture operation and later Ozalid, a paper and film company. The dilapidated building is a blight to the area and has also become a public safety hazard. Broome County took control of the property, following the owner's failure to pay taxes. Site control was subsequently transferred to the Village of Johnson City, which condemned the property. The property is zoned commercial and, once cleared, will provide prime space for future development.

There have been numerous inquiries over the past two years regarding the purchase of the adjacent building (44 Corliss Avenue) and redevelopment of the overall site. With the assistance of Broome County Planning and O'Brien and Gere Engineering Inc., the Town of Union issued and awarded the bid for demolition to Gorick Construction of Binghamton. Gorick submitted a low bid of \$444,000 for demolition plus an additional \$80,300 for the potential removal of hazardous materials after the building is demolished. In total, the demolition of 46 Corliss is estimated to cost \$635,245.

The funds from Restore NY Round II, totaling \$100 million, were distributed to 64 localities. Restore NY grants were awarded to municipally sponsored projects to demolish, deconstruct, rehabilitate and/or reconstruct vacant, abandoned or condemned buildings. The projects must be architecturally consistent with nearby and adjacent properties or built in a manner consistent with the area's local revitalization or urban development plan. Funding for the third and final round of the Restore New York Community Initiative was announced by Governor David A. Paterson in September.

Empire State Development is New York's chief economic development agency. ESD also oversees the marketing of "I LOVE NY," the State's iconic tourism brand. For more information, visit www.nylovesbiz.com.

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