

Erie County Executive Run Amok-and YOU will pay for it!!

In the Clarence Bee on May 9th, the Erie County Executive had a column that blasted local IDA's for giving tax breaks to pizzerias and donut shops. One of the reasons that New York is a Home Rule state is that no one knows the business of a given community like the people who live there. This is far and away the best reason to keep our IDA safely in the hands of Clarence residents, rather than letting some politically appointed blowhard in Buffalo decide what is best for our community.

Under the current plan of the Erie County Executive, someone who doesn't live in Clarence, doesn't work in Clarence, who doesn't pay Clarence taxes, and may NEVER have visited Clarence is going to decide the future of business development in the Town of Clarence. Nuts!!

Two of the most successful projects that the Town of Clarence Industrial Development agency (CIDA) has worked on over the past six years are, Pizza Inn and Paula's Donuts. Pizza Inn started in Clarence Center in 1989 with two employees, Tim and Rick Smith. They needed to expand, and worked with the CIDA to purchase and renovate the old Hobart meat processing and storage plant on Goodrich Road. This run down building had been abandoned for over twenty years and was an ugly, unkempt rat hole. Smith bought the plant, invested over one million (\$1,000,000+) dollars of his own money in the restaurant and, after just seven years, has over 30 full and part time employees. The former meat packing plant that was such an eyesore is now a beautiful, brick building that fits in perfectly into the Mayberry-like neighborhood of Clarence Center. A GREAT project for Tim and Rick Smith, the CIDA and the Town of Clarence...everybody wins. Paula's Donuts is the other project that had drawn scorn from our fledging County Executive. A recent IMPLAN financial analysis shows that Paula's Donuts creates \$707,686 in benefits to the Town of Clarence EVERY YEAR! The CIDA granted an \$8,000 sales tax exemption to get Paula's up and running, and that \$8,000 was recouped by Erie County during the first three weeks that Paula's was in operation.

Most Fortune Five Hundred companies strive for a two year payback. Three weeks is unheard of. In addition, Paula's currently provides over 35 jobs, and these employees comprise a hearty cross section of Town of Clarence residents including retirees and high school students. Paula's buys all of their products that they use in their bakery locally, and the crowds that stretch out the front door on Saturday morning are a testimony to the excellent product that Paula's produces. Should you have any questions or comments on this article, please feel free to email dave@clarence.ny.us or stop by anytime. My door is always open!