

The Office of Governor M. Jodi Rell



M. Jodi Rell
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Governor Rell, Mayor Stewart Announce Celebration Foods Building Facility in New Britain

\$16.2 Million Project to Create 225 Jobs in Hardware City

Governor M. Jodi Rell and Mayor Timothy Stewart today announced ice cream maker Celebration Foods will build a manufacturing facility in New Britain.

Celebration Foods, which has a division headquarters in Rocky Hill, plans to construct a 120,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art plant on Booth and Myrtle streets in the downtown area known as the Smart Park. The proposal will include administrative offices, food production spaces and deep frozen storage, as well as new equipment and automation technology for improved efficiency. With the existing 40 corporate positions in Rocky Hill, Carvel plans to add 225 workers in New Britain within the next three years.

“This project is responsible growth at its best,” Governor Rell said. “It doesn’t get any better than this - 225 new jobs and the reuse of prime industrial land in the heart of the city. The new jobs will benefit many, but this project also will ensure a company with Connecticut roots can continue to be an anchor in the region.

“The fact that a national, well-respected organization such as Celebration Foods wants to locate its operations in New Britain is a clear signal that businesses recognize the many positive attributes that the city has to offer: a central location between New York and Boston, easy highway access and most

of all, a ready, willing and able work force.”

“Without a doubt, this is the most exciting moment of my 3 ½ years as Mayor of the City of New Britain,” said Mayor Stewart. “Not only does this put the former Fafnir site, which has been vacant for over 10 years, back on the property tax rolls, it will mean over 225 quality jobs for New Britain residents. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for the City of New Britain, and I’m very grateful to everyone who rolled up their sleeves and made this possible, from Governor Rell and her very accommodating staff at DECD and DEP, to our Common Council members, our state legislators, city staff and of course to Celebration Foods and Centerplan Development.”

The proposed building with an estimated value of \$16 million will result in over \$500,000 in real and personal property tax revenue for the City. As important to New Britain this project is — representing an investment by Celebration Foods of \$16,260,000 in new facilities and machinery and equipment — the state will also see an economic return estimated to be in excess of \$23 million over a 10-year period.

Tom Carvel, who began selling ice cream in 1929 from the back of his truck in New York, set standards not only in the ice cream industry but also in business practices and franchising. He brought his company to Connecticut in 1953, when he opened the first prefabricated ice cream store in Glastonbury. More recently, the company’s supermarket headquarters moved to Rocky Hill. Although Celebration Foods is already located in Rocky Hill, sites outside of Connecticut were being considered for the new plant.

Celebration Food's decision to locate in New Britain’s Smart Park is important because it is an adaptive reuse of an urban brownfield site that was successfully cleaned up through the state’s brownfields program. This is a key component of the city’s economic vision and revitalization.

To take advantage of New Britain’s central location and accessible highway routes, the city needs to redevelop and reuse existing large industrial sites along the Routes 9 and 72 corridors to provide locations for new and expanding companies.

“As development relocates to our downtowns and main streets, these areas will be capable of great rebirths,” said Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) Commissioner Joan McDonald. “Old, underutilized and vacant industrial buildings occupy prime development sites in all our major cities. Converting these brownfields, and other distressed industrial sites, into useful space are responsible growth opportunities that we can’t pass up. They increase income and wealth, expand job and entrepreneurial opportunities, and attract private investment for our inner-city residents.”

“Based on the high level of cooperation we have received so far from City and state officials, we are looking forward to this new exciting venture here in New Britain,” said Robert Landino, Centerplan Development President. “We are eager to get this plant up and running and are hoping to break ground as soon as the sale closes in order to be operational by April 2008”

Both DECD and the City offered Celebration several incentives to locate the plant in New Britain

rather than in several out of state locations. These incentives include enterprise zone tax incentives, work force training funds, tax credits and loan program availabilities. Through the DECD, state aid includes a direct low-interest loan of \$2.6 million, up to \$2 million of Urban and Industrial Sites Reinvestment Tax Credits, and property tax exemptions through the Enterprise Zone program. The project may also be eligible for sales tax exemptions offered by the Connecticut Development Authority.

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