

## 9H sewer expansion project moves forward

By Katie Kocijanski Columbia-Greene Media | Posted: Wednesday, July 27, 2016 12:00 am

GREENPORT — A proposed expansion to the sewer and water system along Route 9H in Columbia County is moving forward.

F. Michael Tucker, president and CEO of the Columbia Economic Development Corporation, gave an update on the project at its meeting Tuesday.

The need for an expanded sewer system along the Route 9H corridor will help with the development of the Gerald R. Simons Commerce Park in Ghent.

“Greenport will be connected to the sewer system in the commerce park with the expansion,” said Tony Jones, corporation chairman. “We will be applying for grant for up to a 50 percent match. This is one of the prime areas in the county for future economic development.”

The corporation is applying for two \$600,000 grants from different state agencies, Tucker added. The estimated total cost of the project is about \$7 million.

A 25 percent match is being sought from the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation and Empire State Development.

In May, the corporation authorized local engineer Pat Prendergast, of Valatie, to conduct an \$18,000 feasibility study of the sewer system.

The commerce park has its own wastewater treatment plant and treats 50,000 gallons a day.

At the end of March, the Columbia County Board of Supervisors Government Committee approved the funding to fix water flow issues at the wastewater treatment plant at the commerce park.

“The county voted to add an additional \$200,000 to \$400,000 to the estimated cost of the project to run the sewer line up to the Columbia County Airport,” Tucker said. “This project shows it is necessary to have an upgraded sewer-and-water system.”

The authorization was a response to a state Department of Environmental Conservation consent order against the treatment plant. The county paid \$17,000 of a \$22,000 contract for ARCADIS, a Manhattan-based design and consultancy firm, to make changes to the plant to avoid a fine from the DEC.

In February, the county was fined by the DEC for releasing solid waste that exceeded the permitted levels allowed at the plant.

Tucker said the county has until Aug. 1 to fix the situation. The consent order was signed on Feb. 17 by Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murrell, R-Stockport.

### Broadband

A county broadband update was given by Jones and Tucker. A new subcommittee was created to look at the ongoing problem of a lack of service in the county.

Jones said the committee is working on creating a map of the county's existing broadband resources.

A complete map is needed to help the county move along with its plans to expand broadband services residents.

“The committee is hoping to complete the map by the end of August so it can be presented to the state’s broadband office in September,” Jones said.

### New Appointments

Two new appointees to the corporation’s board were announced at Tuesday's meeting.

Chatham-based architect Kate Johns has joined the board and Jim Calvin, president of the New York Association of Convenience Stores, was elected the board.

The next board meeting is scheduled to be held at 8:30 a.m. Aug. 30.

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