New Hotels on Hudson Valley Landscape


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Abstract (Document Summary)

Exit 13, where the Interstate meets the busy Route 9, is already home to about a third of the 2,629 hotel rooms in Dutchess County, thanks largely to the presence of large companies like I.B.M. and the Gap, which have nearby manufacturing or distribution operations.

According to David S. Kaminski, the president, TC Development, after a market study two years ago, decided that the area near I.B.M. needed an extended-stay hotel, both because of a growing number of companies doing business with I.B.M. and because I.B.M.'s Poughkeepsie installation serves as a major center for training as well as research and development. In June, Mr. Kaminski's company sold part of the land it owned near the plant to the True North Hotel Group of Overland Park, Kan., a hotel operations and management company that will own the new Marriott.

Elsewhere in the county, the scarcity of hotel rooms is spurring others into action. In Beacon, Foss Group Beacon, a development company, signed an agreement last week with Scenic Hudson, an environmental group, to develop a 160,000-square-foot mixed-use project on the waterfront, to be called Long Dock Beacon. As part of its first phase, it is to include construction of a 90-room "eco-friendly" hotel with conference space and a spa, according to Matthew D. Rudikoff, a partner at Foss Group Beacon.

Full Text (893 words)


Developers are forging ahead with plans to build at least six new hotels in Dutchess County in an effort that local officials and real estate executives say is unusually active and that could cause significant changes to the county's lodging landscape.

"We're amazed at all the hotels that are coming here," said Gordon S. Rutherfurd, the director of business attraction for Dutchess County's Economic Development Corporation, a magnet of sorts for the county in the Hudson River Valley of New York State.

While hotel demand is generally down in many parts of the country, it is growing in Dutchess County, local officials say. Karen J. Woods, executive director of the Dutchess County Tourism Promotion Agency, said the county's revenue from the hotel occupancy tax rose more than 7 percent in 2002, to $1.43 million, from $1.33 million in 2001.

According to Ms. Woods, 45 percent of the visitors to Dutchess County are business travelers. Of the leisure travelers,
many are coming because of major new attractions, like Dia:Beacon, the three-month-old contemporary arts museum.

"It's one of the strongest hotel markets that I've seen in the past two and a half years," said Isabel Brandt, a hospitality consultant based in St. Louis.

Overnight travelers to Dutchess County now commonly choose between small inns and bed-and-breakfast establishments, on the one hand, and the chain hotels that blanket well-traveled highway intersections like Exit 13 of Interstate 84 in Fishkill.

Exit 13, where the Interstate meets the busy Route 9, is already home to about a third of the 2,629 hotel rooms in Dutchess County, thanks largely to the presence of large companies like I.B.M. and the Gap, which have nearby manufacturing or distribution operations.

In about two months, there is to be another hotel at the intersection: a 104-room Extended Stay America lodging, part of a chain of more than 400 hotels with headquarters in Spartanburg, S.C.

Accommodations are less abundant elsewhere in the county. "It's hard to get a room around here," said Laura E. Wojtowicz, director of planning for the town of Poughkeepsie, which includes the city of the same name. Ms. Wojtowicz said the town had approved plans for two new hotels along Route 9: a 144-room Hilton Garden Inn and a 128-room Marriott Residence Inn.

The Marriott, which is expected to be completed next spring, will be next to I.B.M.'s huge Poughkeepsie plant as well as a 30,000-square-foot retail plaza that is being built by the TC Development Corporation of Poughkeepsie.

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A similar project is being planned for the village of Tivoli in northern Dutchess County. Stephen Yarabek, a local landscape architect, said he was working with RJL Development of Rhinebeck to secure approval from the village to build a high-end hotel and conference center on 14 acres of land owned by the Kaatsbaan International Dance Center, a nonprofit group that provides housing to dancers and dance-related artists. Mr. Yarabek said that if the proposed development at Kaatsbaan is approved, it may eventually include up to 80 hotel rooms, restaurants, shops and a large spa.

In the city of Poughkeepsie, where an overhaul of part of the waterfront has received preliminary approval, another developer has plans to cater to more than just overnight travelers.

Joseph Bonura Jr., a partner at Poughkeepsie Landing L.L.C., based in New Windsor, N.Y., said he expected to build a 68-room luxury hotel, with suites making up about half the units. The hotel would generate most of its business from the sizable conference and banquet building that is to be attached to it.

"We see a huge demand in this area for a hotel that is near the water, and one that offers banquet facilities," Mr. Bonura said.

As evidence of the demand, he pointed to the nearby Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel, where he is a manager, and which is co-owned by his father, Joseph Bonura Sr. and Cosimo DiBrizzi, a local restaurateur. "When we started doing weddings at the Poughkeepsie Grand in 1994, we did 28 of them," Mr. Bonura said. "In 2003, we're going to do 208."

[Photograph]
An Extended Stay America hotel under construction near Exit 13 of Interstate 84 in Fishkill, N.Y. Plans call for a Hilton Garden Inn, a Marriott Residence Inn and others, meeting some demand and adding tax revenue. (Photo by George M. Gutierrez for The New York Times)