

Fortuna looks to expand in Big Flats

**BY Sarah Grossman
The Corning Leader**

BIG FLATS |

Fortuna Energy Inc. is looking to establish its headquarters in Airport Corporate Park in Big Flats.

The natural gas drilling company is interested in occupying a 30,000-square-foot building that would have space for 90 to 100 workers. Currently, the company has two facilities, in Canada and Horseheads, and employs 85 office workers locally.

“This is an ideal location,” said Jim O’Driscoll, company president.

He added the site’s proximity to the company’s current offices, the airport and Interstate Highway 86 highway played heavily into its selection.

Plans are for the Chemung County Industrial Development Agency to construct the building at a cost of \$4.5 million. Thursday, the Chemung Planning Board will begin reviewing those plans.

Once constructed, the IDA will lease the building to Fortuna Energy Inc., said George Miner, president of Southern Tier Economic Growth. Fortuna will then have a 10-year lease with multiple options to renew, he said.

It’s a similar arraignment accepted last year for the expansion of the Sikorsky HAWK WORKS at Schweizer facility, said Chemung County Executive Tom Santulli.

O’Driscoll said the lease will be used to pay back the IDA for building the offices plus related financing costs.

“We are very excited to work with the IDA on this,” he said. “We see that they are going to be a really good partner in this project.”

However, the project still needs final site approval. The building would occupy lot three, between General Revenue Corp. and Orthstar Inc, Miner said.

“We would like to have site plan approval by very early August,” he said.

O’Driscoll said Fortuna hopes to move into the building by the summer of next year.

“This is a first class complex,” Santulli said. “Fortuna sees a long relationship with us as they continue to explore the region.”

Fortuna is a wholly owned subsidiary of Talisman Energy Inc. out of Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Fortuna is the largest natural gas drilling company in New York State with numerous wells locally.