

Herkimer Co. to receive \$200K grant

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County IDA to use funds to assess sites for redevelopment

By Stephanie Sorrell-White

stephanie@timestelegram.com

HERKIMER — The Environmental Protection Agency has granted funds to the Herkimer County Industrial Development Agency to assess sites throughout the county for redevelopment.

John Piseck, executive director of the IDA, said the announcement Wednesday about the \$200,000 designated to the county is 'a fantastic thing.'

'Many people were involved in making this happen,' he said during a telephone interview.

Piseck said in an EPA news release that the grant 'would allow us to explore properties that could help encourage economic development throughout the county.'

During a telephone interview, he explained that the federal funding will allow for a community-wide assessment of sites that need to be cleaned.

'It will look at how to best improve [the sites],' he said. '... It's for any type of remediation

or levels of contamination.'

Piseck said it will take two to three months for a contract to be worked out with the EPA.

He added there would be various levels of community involvement to locate possible sites that can be considered under the grant. He said this could include, for example, the former Union Fork and Hoe site in Frankfort and the former Quackenbush site in Herkimer.

'EPA's brownfields program expands the ability of communities to recycle vacant and abandoned properties for new, productive reuses, using existing infrastructure,' said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt in the release. 'These grants **See GRANT, A5**

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leverage other public and private investments, and improve local economies through property cleanup and redevelopment.”

Herkimer County is among 144 communities selected for Brownfields Environmental Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund and Cleanup grants. Other communities selected include the city of Rochester, Onondaga County and the city of Cortland.

while protecting public health and the environment, according to the release. A total of \$54.3 million will be provided to brownfields sites nationwide.

“Brownfield grants are helping communities throughout our region unlock the unmet economic potential of contaminated and unused lands,” said EPA Regional Administrator Pete Lopez in the release. “EPA is pleased to be an active partner in promoting the cleanup and reuse of brownfields properties. Once cleanup is complete, the site can be put to reuse with the potential to bring in valuable private sector development, jobs and additional tax revenue.”