

## Winston Farm Project On Breakfast Agenda Could Generate \$62M In Annual Economic Impact

There have been many ideas over the years for the development of the picturesque Winston Farm in Saugerties, but the latest project is gaining steam and will be the subject of the Chamber's next breakfast meeting on Nov. 13.

The speakers will be Josh Sommers, the CEO of Focus Media and the project spokesman, and Dan Ahouse, the founder of Kingston-based Stockade Strategies, a government affairs and economic and community development firm. The breakfast is scheduled for 7:30 to 9 a.m. at Diamond Mills Hotel and BLACKBARN Hudson Valley in Saugerties. The breakfast sponsor is Sawyer Motors.

"This will be one of the biggest economic development projects in the history of Ulster County," Sommers said. "It will complement tourism, housing and commercial development."

The project is now going through the environmental review process and Sommers said community input on the future of the 840-acre property is critical.

"This is a community opportunity, and we all have to be part of that process and lend our voice," he said. "Winston Farm is committed to providing updates. Community feedback shapes the submission and the plans. In fact, portions of the plans were changed based on how the community provided input, so the Ulster Chamber and the business community are vital to supporting the project."

Developers say the project involves \$457 million in construction spending with an expected annual economic impact of \$62.6 million. It would also create several thousand jobs and opportunities for numerous agri-tech and -tourism, light-industrial, commercial, residential and hospitality businesses, as well as urgently needed housing units that include workforce and inclusionary housing.

"These benefits are in addition to preserving a historic property's rich heritage, natural gifts, beauty, and charm through parks and trails," Sommers said.

The project would also help address Ulster County's housing

shortage by providing 155 single-family homes, 110 townhouses and 650 condo/apartment units. The plans also call for 250,000 square feet of commercial space, a 150-room boutique hotel, a conference center with 250 hotel rooms, an enclosed performance venue (the property hosted the Woodstock '94 music festival), 250,000 square feet of lab or light-industrial space and a campground with 100 cabins.

Long-time Saugerties residents and business owners Anthony Montano, John Mullen and Randy Richers purchased Winston Farm in 2020 from the Schaller family, which had owned it since 1961. Montano, Mullen and Richers are known as caring, ethical neighbors and successful business leaders, and are committed to collaborating with the Saugerties community and municipal leaders.

"Saugerties is the owners' community," Sommers said. "These respected gentlemen live in Saugerties and conduct their businesses in Saugerties. They drive the same streets, eat at the same restaurants and shop at the same stores as all other residents. They are committed to a model of smart development and sustainability plans that adhere to the Town of Saugerties' Climate Action Plan."

The Hudson Valley Economic Development Corp. identified the Winston Farm site as a premier development opportunity because of its location across from the Thruway's Saugerties entrance as well as the property's scale, topography and scenic views. In addition, the Chamber endorsed Winston Farm as a visionary proposal that would powerfully energize the Hudson Valley as a deep source of culture, employment opportunities,



tax revenue and housing for generations to come.

"Winston Farm is an opportunity to help shape the area's future in a dynamic way, and the developers are committed to collaborating with the Saugerties community and municipal leaders," Sommers said. "The development will be a robust economic engine for Saugerties and the Hudson Valley, and tourism attractions will draw new dollars and visitors. That will exponentially grow the economy, support local merchants and suppliers, and position Saugerties as a destination for the entire Northeast."

To learn more about the project, go to [WinstonFarm.com](http://WinstonFarm.com) and [Facebook.com/WinstonFarmNY](https://www.facebook.com/WinstonFarmNY).

**Chamber Breakfast Meetings are a great way to stay on top of current events and connect with other local business leaders and are open to Chamber members as well as the general public. Tickets are \$30 in advance or \$35 at the door for Chamber members, \$40 for non-members. Reservations are required. Call (845) 338-5100 or register online at [www.UlsterChamber.org](http://www.UlsterChamber.org).**

## Sawyer Motors To Sponsor November Breakfast

Sawyer Motors at 166 Ulster Ave. in Saugerties is a certified Chrysler 5-star dealership with a huge inventory of new and pre-owned vehicles. Led by Bob Siracusano, the dealership has been around since 1934. He and his brother, Larry, purchased it in 1990 and have taken it to new heights. They also purchased Sawyer Chevrolet in Catskill in 1994.



While selling cars is the business focus, the Siracusanos and their team are known regionally for giving back to the community. The main fundraiser annually is the Sawyer Motors Car Show, known as the "best little car show in the Northeast." The event typically draws more than 500 hotrods, vintage and classic cars and thousands of spectators to the village of Saugerties each July. All the money raised goes back to the community as donations to nonprofits such as the Boys and

Girls Club of Saugerties, The Arc Mid-Hudson, Hope Rocks and the Center for Spectrum Services, to name a few.

Additionally, local families that have suffered terminal illnesses and other crises have benefited from their generosity. At the 2024 car show, more than \$84,000 alone was distributed.

Since starting the car show, the Sawyer Automotive Foundation has given away more than \$1 million to those in need.

The family's altruism extends far beyond the car show. They participate in numerous annual fundraisers for local nonprofits, helping them to maintain and upgrade their programs. In addition, they coordinate Holiday in the Village in Saugerties, which distributes hundreds of bikes and toys to local children annually.

One of the latest ways Bob gives back is with his vintage

Good Humor truck. He purchased the 1967 Ford from a private collector in Chicago in 2021 and now takes it to community functions to hand out free ice cream to school kids and special-needs children and adults. Two years ago, the Siracusano family opened the Sawyer Ice Cream Co., across the street from the car dealership, as another way to serve the community.

Bob, 74, is an Army veteran who got his start at the Sears Auto Center in Kingston. During his 16-year career there, he was named the No. 2 salesperson in the country. The Siracusano brothers have also earned numerous awards for their local philanthropy, and in 2022, Bob was nominated for the Time Dealer of the Year, one of the automotive industry's most prestigious honors. The New York State Automobile Dealers Association selected him for his extraordinary business practices, ongoing charitable work and community service.

## Tasca Hosting November Mixer Car Dealership Exudes Family Atmosphere

The showroom at Tasca Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge, Ram, Fiat of Kingston is the perfect location for a Chamber Mixer. It's a large, bright, cheerful space with ample room to network and meet up with old friends.

The dealership, run by the Tasca family, hosted a successful Mixer last fall and is inviting Chamber members back on Nov. 7 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. to reconnect with each other and the business at 129 State Route 28, which was founded by Larry Begnal more than 50 years ago.

"One of the things that distinguishes us is that Tasca is a family-owned business," said General Manager John Renteria. "Although Tasca operates more than 30 dealerships, this is a family atmosphere. Our tagline is 'You will be satisfied,' and that's always our aim. The Tasca family is very dedicated to its customers, employees and dealerships. It's a great company that keeps growing."

The Tasca Automotive Group, headquartered in Rhode Island, purchased the former L.T. Begnal Motors in April of 2023 and has settled in nicely and gotten to know its neighbors well. They've added EV charging stations at the dealership and have supported local fundraisers and events such as the fourth-annual Mainetti & Mainetti Uptown Car Show in September.

"We take care of our community as well as our customers," Renteria said. "We really go out of the way to make sure they're satisfied, whether they're a repeat customer or a new one."

Tasca Automotive Group was founded by Robert Tasca, Sr. in 1953. The original Tasca Ford in Bristol, R.I., was destroyed

a year later by Hurricane Carol. He then relocated and opened Tasca Ford in East Providence, which, by the 1960s, had become the second-largest Ford dealership in the world. This was also the birthplace of the Tasca Racing program and many legendary muscle cars such as the Ford Cobra Jet, Tasca Street Boss and Mystery race cars.

In 1972, he opened Tasca Lincoln Mercury in Seekonk, Mass., which became the highest-volume Lincoln-Mercury dealership in the world in 1986 and repeated in 1987 and 1988, while also winning the Ford President's Award for outstanding customer satisfaction.

At the Seekonk store, Tasca also launched the innovative Pre-Trade program, pioneering the concept of short-term trade cycles and leasing. He was also joined in the business by his three sons, Bob, Carl and David Tasca, fulfilling another of his dreams to build a successful family business. Today, Jaime, the only female family member involved in the business, works alongside her brothers, Bob and Michael, as well as her cousins. Her nephew, Bob Tasca IV, 22, represents the fourth generation.

Renteria said the family is looking forward to hosting the Mixer and has a lot of fun things planned, including a full buffet and a selection of beer and wine. They also will be giving away three big-screen TVs and coupons for free oil changes, alignments and tire rotations as well as deals on new and used cars.

"If you missed the last Mixer, be sure to come out and meet

our staff," Renteria said. "We're a friendly bunch that will greet you with a smile and make you feel like family."

**Chamber Mixers are a great way to network and promote your business. Be sure to bring plenty of business cards. This free networking event is open to Chamber members and prospective members. Reservations are a must and can be made by calling the Chamber at (845) 338-5100 or by registering online at [www.ulsterchamber.org](http://www.ulsterchamber.org).**

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# THE W-Hole Story On Moonrise Bagels

## From Sunrise To Moonrise ... And Any Time In Between

Jeremy Rhodes had no idea what he was launching when he innocently stuffed a few pizza ingredients into a bagel on New Year's Eve in 2020.

"It was just happenstance," said Rhodes, now the owner of Moonrise Bagels in Woodstock and Poughkeepsie. "We had a goofy idea, and it just took off from there."

His wife, Ali Chetkof, said Rhodes was making pizza and prepping bagels for brunch the next day when he made too much tomato sauce.

"We started trying different comfort foods and things we liked to eat inside of them," Chetkof said. "We posted them on Instagram and it kind of blew up from there."

The couple was soon inundated with social media messages about their creations, and they started selling out of their apartment. When that got too big, they started holding pop-up sales in Woodstock.

"When we showed up for our first pop up there was already a line out the door and we sold out within minutes," Chetkof said.

Moonrise Bagels officially opened its Woodstock location in December 2021 after a series of pop-ups and has sold more than 80,000 bagels across all 50 states and Canada. The company was also featured on NBC's "Today Show" in January 2023.

experience it is."

"The No. 1 question we get is, 'How come no one thought of this before?' The response has been phenomenal."

The couple seem perfect for the venture. Rhodes is a former director of accounting for Union Square Hospitality Group, one of the largest restaurant groups in the world. Chetkof grew up in Woodstock and comes to the restaurant business with a public relations background.

The creative couple chose the name "Moonrise" to get people to think of bagels beyond breakfast.

"To us, bagels are just a delicious bread and when you fill them with good stuff, you can eat them all times of the day," Chetkof said. "We like to say you can eat a stuffed bagel from sunrise to moonrise and any time in between."

Chetkof said the Chamber helped organize a Ribbon Cutting for Moonrise Bagel's Poughkeepsie location and has been encouraging as they grow their business.

"The Chamber has been tremendously helpful," she said. "If we have any questions, they're there to help provide support as well. Meeting other business owners has been very helpful."



Ali Chetkof and Jeremy Rhodes



"Business has been great," Chetkof said. "Everyone has been super supportive. This happened on a whim, so we've just been really overwhelmed by the reaction and how much people like the product and how it's allowed us to expand."

Moonrise Bagels is known for serving New York-style bagels stuffed with comfort food like Bacon, Egg and Cheese, Buffalo Chicken and Pastrami Reuben along with unstuffed bagels and classic spreads. Vegetarian and vegan options are also available.

The company, which employs 20 people, opened a second location in Poughkeepsie in July and has opened a pop-up on Broadway in Midtown Kingston. Customers can also order via Goldbelly, an online marketplace for gourmet food.

Chetkof said the stuffing process is labor-intensive, and all the products are made by hand and baked fresh every day. Customers have been surprised by the cuisine creations.

"They taste it, and they're surprised by how good it is," Chetkof said. "That's the reaction we get a lot. It's a really good bagel and then you stuff it with homemade, made-from-scratch, delicious ingredients, I think they're impressed and surprised by how good of an

**Moonrise Bagels, located at 68 Tinker St. in Woodstock, can be reached at (845) 684-7447 or moonrisebagels.com. The Poughkeepsie store is at 26 Winslow Gate Road and can be reached at (845) 849-0228.**



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 Diamond Mills Hotel & BLACKBARN Hudson Valley  
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**Networking Mixer @**  
**Ole Savannah Southern Table + Bar**  
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Thursday December 5 | 9:00 - 11:00 am

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# Mixer



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Derek Leung, Tommy Yan (both from Hudson Hideaway), Brandy Walters (Hole in the Wall Donuts), Jenny Yeung and Ivy Beckham (both from Crazy Bowliz Kingston).



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