

Suzy's may make cheesecakes in village

Written by CAROL POMEDAY

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Ansay seeks industrial bonds, TEA grant to build facility for dessert maker

Belgium village officials and residents are licking their lips at the possibility Suzy's Cream Cheesecakes may be made in the village.

Neil Tiziani, director of real estate for Ansay Development Corp., said owner Suzy Strothmann is considering moving her facility from St. Francis to Belgium, but has not made a firm commitment and is considering other options, including moving to Milwaukee.

"If everything falls into place, we have a good chance to bring Suzy's to Belgium," Tiziani told the Village Board.

The first step in luring the business was taken Monday by the board when it approved an initial resolution to issue up to \$4 million in municipal Industrial Development Revenue (IDR) bonds to Ansay Development Corp.

Ansay would use the money to build a 45,000-square-foot food manufacturing facility on 4.5 acres of vacant land in the industrial park and lease it to Suzy's Cream Cheesecakes Inc. The land is north of Dream Logistics.

"The village is only a conduit for the industrial revenue bonds and has no financial liability," Lynda Templen, of Whyte, Hirschboeck and Dudek, told the board. "The developer has all the liability. What it does is allow him to borrow money at a lower rate and saves about \$10,000 in interest for every \$1 million borrowed.

"That may not seem like much on a \$3 million project, but that's \$30,000 that can be used to create a job or do landscaping."

The bonds are available for projects that increase the value of a property and bring jobs to the community with a maximum of \$5,000 per job.

If Suzy's moves to Belgium, it plans to bring 25 employees and create another 66 jobs. The company also has expansion plans that would increase the number of jobs, Tiziani said.

The value of the structure will be about \$3.5 million, Templen said. The increased value to the tax incremental district would be about 70% of that, or \$2.45 million.

Templen said the final resolution to borrow the funds will be less than \$4 million and depends on other funding Ansay obtains.

Templen said Trimen Industries used industrial development bonds to build its facility in the industrial park, which it now wants to expand.

"I completely endorse it," Trustee Clem Gottsacker said. "I was here when we issued the bonds to Trimen. It was one of the best things we did."

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Ansay is also applying for a state Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) grant, which would cover half the cost for building roads needed to bring or retain businesses and jobs.

"The IDR is one piece and the TEA grant is another," Tiziani said. "If we get both, I think that will be enough to bring her here."

The TEA grant would be used to extend Prospect Drive to accommodate Suzy's and to extend and widen Silver Beach Road to Highway LL.

Dave Wagner, the village's financial advisor, noted there is a lot of competition for the grants, which also includes rail, harbor and airport projects that attract or retain employers.

"Suzy's will help, but two or more (businesses) would be better," Wagner said.

Village President Rich Howells said Trimen Industries is waiting to expand its plant until Silver Beach Road is extended.