

DNR permit required before work can begin on steel storage project

The Village of Saukville's Community Development Authority has given the green light to a pair of expansion projects proposed for the Charter Steel plant at 1658 Cold Springs Rd.

The company intends to build a 10,000-square-foot addition to the maintenance building attached to its melt shop. That work is expected to begin immediately after final plans are approved by the state, according to Community Development Director Brian Biernat.

The other project, the construction of an outdoor billet storage, requires further review by the state Department of Natural Resources and a permit for wetland mitigation, according to Biernat.

Once built, the project will provide a covered area where stock steel can be stored before the melting process.

Both projects are eyed for the northeast side of the existing plant, in the vicinity of the Wisconsin Central railroad track, adjacent to a small wetlands.

Charter Environmental Engineer Matt Schroeder said he anticipated no problem securing the needed DNR permit.

"They have to look at any project adjacent to a wetlands, but the approval process should be relatively straight forward," Schroeder said.

In the past, some Town of Saukville residents have complained about a "booming" noise in winter caused when steel covered with snow and ice is heated rapidly when dropped into the waiting furnace.

To reduce that problem, the company extended the time the metal is suspended over the furnace before being melted.

"I don't think the project will have any impact on that problem. We already have billet storage, and the intention is to simply expand that area," Schroeder said.

"What we want to do is expand our manufacturing flexibility, so that we can have steel on hand to meet the needs of our customers. Residents should not notice any difference in appearance or operation after the projects are completed."

With that added storage capacity, Schroeder said the company is banking on an upturn in the economy and heightened demand for steel.

"We are definitely trying to position ourselves for growth," he said.

Village OKs expansion at Charter

Written by MARK JAEGER

Wednesday, 31 August 2011 14:56

Charter Steel specialize in the production of carbon and alloy steel bar, rod and wire used in a variety of industries.

The Saukville plant was built in 1978, and has undergone several expansions. It has a 100-ton electric arc furnace capable of producing 550,000 tons of processed steel a year.

Charter also has operations in Cleveland and Fostoria, Ohio.