



CITY OF PEEKSKILL

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

John G. Testa
Mayor

City of Peekskill Mobilizing Multiple Resources To Support Businesses, Employees Impacted by Fire.

Low Interest Loans, Economic Development Assistance, Other Resources Are Being Made Available To Victims of Peekskill Shopping Mall Blaze..

Staffers Are Waiting For Calls; Businesses Need To Dial Planning Department At (914) 734-4210.

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2004

**Contact: Mayor John Testa
914-734-4105**

PEEKSKILL, NY—City departments are mobilizing their resources to the fullest extent possible to assist the businesses experiencing the impact of the four-alarm fire that took place at the Peekskill Shopping Mall on Route 6 on Main St. this morning.

“We’re a small city, but we’re making a big effort to help our businesses,” says Mayor John Testa. In recent years, Peekskill has developed a number of different support systems for local businesses. These are going to be fully available to qualifying operations that were rendered homeless by the fire.

840 Main Street, Peekskill, NY 10566 (914) 734-4105

Officials say the source of the fire has not yet been determined. It was first called in at around 11:30 on Monday night. When firemen arrived, one of the seven stores in the strip mall was fully involved. Reaching up into the roof, the fire quickly spread throughout the facility, sending flames flaring dozens of feet into the air.

Peekskill is part of numerous mutual aid pacts with surrounding communities. At the fire's peak, more than 175 firefighters from 13 of the City's neighbors were battling the blaze. Businesses at the Peekskill Shopping Center included a Lincoln/Mercury used car dealership, a butcher, a restaurant, an ice cream franchise, a pizzeria, a nail salon and a Laundromat.

Full details are not in yet, but estimates are that at least 25-30 jobs were lost. It is almost certain that the buildings in the mall are not repairable and will have to be demolished.

Peekskill has a number of aggressive economic development programs in place, and these will be made available to businesses that were damaged in the fire. Specific resources that qualifying businesses will have access to include:

- ✓ **The Economic Development Office**, which will work with businesses in finding new locations if they wish to move or finding other ways to deal with the situation created by the fire.
- ✓ **The Peekskill Grow Fund**, which provides low interest loans to businesses in need.
- ✓ **The Small Business Administration**, which is also capable of providing low interest loans to qualifying businesses in need of support.

- ✓ **The City Planning Department**, which will help businesses deal with the regulatory complexities that can come out of a fire situation.
- ✓ **The Public Information Office**, which will assist all businesses in publicizing where they are moving if they move, promoting what kind of services they will be providing, and getting the word out to customers.
- ✓ **The Industrial Development Agency**, which also works extensively with local businesses to secure them capital and support.

“Entrepreneurs are the backbone of any local economy. We are going to do everything in our power to help these businesses deal with the situation they are facing,” Mayor Testa says. Businesses can call the Planning Department at 914-734-4210 for information on the assistance they can get, he says.

Recent renovation work at the nearby Beach Shopping Center has resulted in numerous store openings. City officials say they are reaching out to local businesses to do what they can to find positions for unemployed workers.

Located about 40 miles from New York City, Peekskill is a city perched on the shores of the Hudson River with a population of about 23,000. It is one of the fastest-growing communities in New York State, and is known as the “Jewel of the Hudson” and “The Friendly Town.”

For more information, call: Mayor John Testa at 914-734-4105.

-END-