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Elizabeth Sander and Joey Berkley at YoHo lofts in Yonkers. Photo by Bob Rozycki

FLUBLOK MAKER SEES FOREIGN HAND IN U.S. VA BID SPECS

BY JOHN GOLDEN

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Protein Sciences Corp., a Connecticut-based biopharmaceutical company that uses modern cell culture technology to manufacture its Flublok influenza vaccine at its plant in Rockland County, has reached an agreement with a Japanese company to produce Flublok in bulk in Japan for the U.S. market.

On the domestic front, Protein Sciences officials have protested to federal officials the company's exclusion from contract bidding to provide flu vaccine to military veterans through the Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense. That loss of prospective

government business has kept the company from expanding Flublok production at its federally supported Pearl River facility, according to Daniel D. Adams, Protein Sciences executive chairman.

In Japan, the company's recently announced arrangement with Unigen Inc., if approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, could add up to 25 million doses of Flublok each year to America's flu vaccine supply. Flublok is approved in the U.S. for use by adults age 18 and older.

UMN Pharma Inc., a Japanese joint-venture partner in Unigen, already is licensed by Protein Sciences to manufacture Flublok for an east and southeast South Asia market that includes Japan, China, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan

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Eleven years later, a Chappaqua Crossing groundbreaking

BY JOHN GOLDEN

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"IN REALITY THIS HAS BEEN a campaign," Connecticut developer Felix T. Charney told an audience at a groundbreaking ceremony on his company's Chappaqua Crossing property on Super Tuesday. He

was comparing his effort to redevelop the former Reader's Digest campus, an iconic landmark in the town of New Castle vacated six years ago by its bankrupt former owner and primary tenant, to the presidential primary races that dominated the news.

"It's been long. It's been expen-

sive. It's been frustrating," said Charney, president of Summit Development LLC in Southport and principal of Summit/Greenfield Partners. That joint-venture partnership in 2004 paid \$59 million for the 114-acre campus and 662,000-square-foot complex of buildings distinguished

by the Georgian-style Reader's Digest headquarters, crowned by a cupola and winged-horse statuary, which opened in 1939.

In the 11 years since their purchase, the developers faced strong community opposition to their plans to build multifamily housing and redevelop office space for

multiple tenants. The project's oft-extended review by town officials at numerous board meetings and public hearings led Charney and co-owners at Greenfield Partners LLC in Westport to file state and federal lawsuits claiming they were deprived of economic use of their

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Bedford couple opening music center at Yonkers Carpet Mills

BY ALEESIA FORNI

What started as a simple search for a music program turned into a much larger enterprise for Paul and Elizabeth Sander.

After scouting Westchester County for a challenging jazz ensemble program for their two sons and coming up empty-handed, an idea began to form.

Elizabeth Sander recalled asking her husband, "Well, what do you think about our own space?" And the Westchester Center for Jazz and Contemporary Music was born.

The Bedford residents have ambitious plans for their roughly 1,700-square-foot leased space under construction at 540 Nepperhan Ave in the newly branded Carpet Mills Arts District at the historic Alexander Smith Carpet Mills complex in Yonkers.

Joining the YoHo Artist Community owned and managed by The Heights Real Estate Co. in factory loft space at 540 and 578 Nepperhan Ave., the center will include a performance stage, a lounge, a kitchen and tables for additional seating.

The Sanders, working with the center's director Joey Berkley, aim to create an environment where students can work beside professional musicians to hone their skills. It will offer ensemble programs for musicians of all ages and skill levels. They also plan to host live performances, with the space serving as a venue for recitals or small concerts.

To realize their vision, the couple enlisted the help of Berkley, a saxophonist and private music teacher. The Yonkers resident suggested the couple check out the artist lofts in the converted factory buildings in the city's Nepperhan Valley industrial area. The Sanders also toured potential locations in downtown Yonkers with riverfront views and conveniently near the city's thriving restaurant scene but found the YoHo environment more appealing.

"It's great to be around a lot of other artists," Berkley said. "It's sort of got that air about it."

The approximately \$240,000 buildout in the gutted factory space, which was last occupied by a restaurant, has presented a number of challenges with electrical work and plumbing, heating and fire safety. "Those are the little things we weren't quite ready for," Elizabeth Sander said. Adding that the overall cost has been about double earlier estimates.

The center, originally scheduled to open in January this year, is now expected to be ready for use by May.



The former restaurant space is being renovated for the music center. Photo by Bob Rozycki

Elizabeth Sander, who is executive vice president and chief actuary at Odyssey Reinsurance Co. in Stamford, said she studied classical piano through college. Although she did not pursue a professional career in music, she recalled a conversation she had with her piano teacher when deciding on a career path.

"She said, 'OK, go out and make a lot of money, but always support the arts,'" Sander said.

Mindful of that advice, Elizabeth Sander

"THE SPACE NEXT TO US IS STORAGE SPACE, THE SPACE ABOVE US IS STORAGE SPACE, AND SO I JUST KEEP SAYING, WHEN WE'RE READY, I'M TAKING THAT SPACE!"

— Elizabeth Sander

and her husband, a former finance and software development professional who is a teacher and doctoral degree candidate in theology at Fordham University in the Bronx, are fully funding on their own the Westchester Center for Jazz and Contemporary Music. It is a sponsored project of Fractured Atlas, a national non-profit organization based in New York City that helps artists and arts organizations run their businesses more efficiently. The Sanders deposit their funds into Fractured Atlas for use by the Yonkers center to cover

development costs.

At this point, fundraising to augment their own financial support of the project is not a priority. "Eventually I think there will be more of that," Elizabeth Sander said. "But for me our focus is really, let's just get this up and running."

"Our intention, for us, is never to make any money off of this," she added. "We kind of set it up in such a way that if we're small, we can support it. If we get big, we can support it."

Sander said the cost of similar ensemble programs in the area — up to \$300 a month — prohibit some students from joining. "I think about what that means for a normal family," she said. "That's a lot of money."

Programs at the Westchester Center are expected to cost about \$145 per month. The owners will offer scholarships to students who are unable to afford that amount.

"I don't ever want to hear 'It's because I can't afford it,'" Elizabeth Sander said.

"There's no reason not to be here if you want to be," Berkley said. "But once you're here, you're ours and you have to work. And that's going to be very apparent at the get-go."

Sander already has her eye on possible expansion at YoHo — one of the reasons they chose the location.

"The space next to us is storage space, the space above us is storage space, and so I just keep saying, when we're ready, I'm taking that space!"

While construction continues, the center's founders have presented programs off-site to generate interest, including an outreach program at Pearls Hawthorne School in Yonkers and an eight-week program at the Yonkers Public Library.

"Yonkers is a community that definitely needs us," Elizabeth Sander said.

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