

# Tech Park Takes First STEP

Work starts on \$18 million project that will house Starfire, others.  
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MALTA -- With the arrival of spring, construction has begun on the first building at the Saratoga Technology & Energy Park off Northway Exit 12. The 105,450-square-foot structure, known as STEP 1, is going up on land next to where Advanced Micro Devices Inc. is planning a \$3.2 billion computer chip factory.

The United Group of Cos. in Troy is developing the \$18 million STEP 1 project, which will be home to Starfire Systems Inc. and other technology companies such as Lockheed Martin. Steel for the structure began arriving this week. John Ball, chief operating officer at United, said the building would be completed by the end of the year.

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, which owns the 280-acre business park, is seeking proposals from businesses and developers to build additional buildings at the site and from real estate brokers to help find tenants.

“We would love to do other sites,” Ball said. NYSERDA, a state agency, also is offering \$10 million in incentives to companies that expand clean-energy technology manufacturing in the state, at the Malta business park and elsewhere.

Starfire, which makes advanced materials used by the aerospace, energy and microelectronics industries, is one of the companies applying for the aid, which is limited to \$1 million per company. Starfire is located in an older building in the park.



“We have applied,” said David Stiles, vice president of plant operations for Starfire. “It’s a very competitive process, but we’re optimistic.” Colleen Ryan, a spokeswoman for NYSERDA, said the agency could not reveal other applicants for the money because the approval process is ongoing.

Another local company that would be expected to seek an incentive would be DayStar Technologies Inc., a solar cell manufacturer based in Halfmoon that wants to build a factory at the business park but must raise \$30 million to finance the project.

DayStar spokeswoman Erica Dart said no decisions have been made.

“Our current efforts are focused on seeking additional funding to move towards deployment of our operations and growth plans,” she said. Building at the park has not been without controversy. On Wednesday, members of Ironworkers Local 12 in Albany were at the site protesting the use of a nonunion welding company.

United Group’s Ball said dozens of companies work for the general contractor and primary construction firm, Jersen Construction Group of Waterford, and most are unionized. “We work with the unions as much as possible,” he said.

Officials from Local 12 declined to comment but said a possible settlement was being discussed. Jersen officials could not be reached. Rulison can be reached at 454-5504 or by e-mail at [lrulison@timesunion.com](mailto:lrulison@timesunion.com).