

New Industrial Hub Was Site Of Magnavox Plant

BY KEN LITTLE
STAFF WRITER

The eyes of Greene County are on the Chasan Industrial Complex.

Generations of Greene Countians who worked at the former Magnavox plant on Snapps Ferry Road or had relatives who did so are very interested in what is going on there, said Ricky Shepherd, Chasan Properties facilities manager.

In recent years, the 1.1 million square-foot Chasan Industrial Complex has been repurposed to include a number of warehouse and in-house manufacturing clients.

Shepherd has worked at the site since 1979, when Magnavox was still in operation. He's excited for the future of the 64-acre property, at 1915 Snapps Ferry Road.

For decades, the massive building was home to Magnavox, which had about 4,800 employees and accounted for 40 percent of all jobs in Greene County at one time.

Much has changed since televisions were made there.

"We're converting this into an industrial complex," Shepherd said on a recent tour of the spacious building.

LINK TO THE PAST

Shepherd said that wherever he goes, people ask him what is happening with the building.

"Everybody in Greene County had a brother, grandmother, grandfather work here," he said.

Services the facility offers include full-service warehousing, flatbed and box trucking, food-grade storage, distribution rail spur services, cross-docking, a trailer and container drop lot, repackaging services, freight consolidation, pallet wrapping, product assembly and trucking services.

The industrial complex



SUN PHOTO BY KEN LITTLE

Employees of the Chasan Industrial Complex at 1915 Snapps Ferry Road use forklifts to move cardboard stored in one of the company-operated warehouses in the complex.

will also soon include offices. Space is currently being renovated in a 25,000 square-foot portion of the second floor of the former Magnavox headquarters office building, and a tenant will move in this summer, Shepherd said.

Current industrial complex tenants include Klumb Forest Products, Seksui, Jelac, HSN, Amsee Ltd. and Premium Waters Inc.

There are 21 customers in all who are either onsite or use the services of the Chasan Industrial Complex, Shepherd said.

Nine lease space, and Chasan provides full-service warehousing for 11 others, he said.

"We're a multi-tenant facility now," Shepherd said. "At the same time, Chasan offers full-service warehousing as well."

AMPLE SPACE

Some lease the complex's ample warehousing space.

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Plant

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Others, like Amsee Ltd., are running manufacturing operations.

Amsee occupies a 100,000 square-foot space and makes metal components. Its primary customer is Parker Hannifin, company owner Scott Dinger said.

The company located in the building last November.

"Our main customer, Parker Hannifin, is right down the street, and the infrastructure that we need is right here, so that's perfect for our business," Dinger said.

An overhead crane system is one of the features that attracted Amsee Ltd., Shepherd said.

"Chasan has invested a lot of money into this facility," he said.

Premium Waters occupies a large area of square footage in the building.

"They're a warehouse. It's their warehouse," Shepherd said.

Outside, dozens of trailers from major retailers are pulled up to loading docks.

MANY IMPROVEMENTS

Shepherd said numerous improvement projects on the property are attracting new customers.

The first thing seen by visitors pulling onto the site is a large sign with the names of companies doing business there.

Between 2013 and May, a new Comcast cable line was installed through the center of the building, Norfolk Southern rail improvements for unloading were completed, lighting in the 950,000 square-foot warehouse and manufacturing floor was replaced, a chill water system was installed in the Amsee warehouse area, and 10 dock shel-

ters and plates were replaced.

Landscaping improvements were also completed, in addition to other ongoing upgrades.

By mid-July, Chasan Industrial Complex will house 225 employees. Renovation work is continuing on the second-floor office space in the building.

Ricky Shepherd, facilities manager of the Chasan Industrial Complex at 1915 Snapps Ferry Road, stands inside a 65,000 square-foot warehouse space leased by Chasan to Sekisui America Corp. Raw materials for tape are stored in the warehouse.

SUN PHOTO BY KEN LITTLE

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The name of the "major tenant" that will occupy about 25,000 square feet had not formally been announced in May.

"It's obviously happening," Shepherd said.

The building also includes Chasan's own full-service 225,000 square-foot warehouse. Space is leased to different tenants and companies, Shepherd said.

HSN opened a stor-

age area last October in the Chasan Industrial Complex, and continues to lease 430,000 square feet in the building.

CHANGE IN DIRECTION

Charles S. White, of Knoxville, president and CEO of Chasan LLC, owns the building and made the commitment several years ago to take the business in its current direction," Shepherd said.

"Greeneville and Greene County are very fortunate to have Charles White as (the building's) owner," Shepherd said. "He has invested a lot in this facility."

Since 2005 Chasan had maintained at least one primary tenant in the former television manufacturing factory.

White and Shepherd

went in a different direction in 2013.

"We decided we would change this to a multi-tenant facility and we did, and marketed and promoted our building as the Chasan Industrial Complex," Shepherd said.

The response has been good. The building is about 90 percent full, with the remaining 10 percent comprising office space currently under renovation.

Tom Ferguson, president and CEO of the Greene County Partnership, said the Chasan Industrial Complex has much to offer prospective tenants.

"It's got all the infrastructure, particularly rail," he said. "There

helped attract tenants. "It's an older building but it's been very well maintained and it can serve multiple purposes," Ferguson said.

'GOING GREAT'

Shepherd said the change in emphasis had paid off.

"The building is so big (and) we tried to lease it to one company with no success," Shepherd said. "There was a lot of people out there looking for smaller areas to lease and this building divides really well."

Shepherd is gratified to see this piece of Greene County business history bustling with activity again.

Shepherd's father worked at Magnavox for 35 years. His brother worked there for 20 years. Shepherd remembers well his first day at Magnavox: June 22, 1979.

He never left.

"It's a great story, especially for me. I had a personal interest in growing this thing," he said. "I've been through (the time) of 4,800 employees and saw it go to four employees."

"Everybody wants to know what's happening to this building," Shepherd said.

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