

Ethanol plant clears hurdle

By AMANDA LUTEY/Staff Reporter Beaver Dam Daily Citizen 3 May 2006

TOWN OF COURTLAND - Didion Milling cleared its first hurdle in its plan to build an ethanol plant Tuesday when the Courtland Town Board unanimously approved a resolution to change the zoning from agricultural to industrial for the 10-acre parcel where Didion plans to build.

A small crowd gathered in the town hall for the meeting as representatives from Didion Milling spoke to the board about the planned ethanol plant. Dale Drachenberg, vice president of operations for Didion Milling, thanked the board for considering the proposal. He said that in the immediate vicinity of the 63 acres of land needed for the ethanol plant are currently zoned as industrial.

According to Drachenberg, the plant would bring an additional \$276,000 in tax income to the town and add 40 full-time jobs to the area, with an average salary of \$38,000 a year.

"We will be buying more corn, increasing the demand, which in turn will increase the price," Drachenberg said.

Two plans for the proposed ethanol plant were on display at the meeting, one with no rail spur and one with both a rail spur and a utilities and product transfer line going across Cabbage Road.

Supervisor JoAnn Wingers asked if Didion had a timeline for getting air and water permits from the DNR. She was told that depending on the length of time, it could take six months or more from application to getting permits.

Town chair Glenn Smits asked how many more bushels of corn would be used. Drachenberg said that in addition to product not used for Didion's milled products, there could be up to 50 percent more corn coming in.

A public information meeting on the proposed ethanol plant will be on Tuesday, May 23, from 3 to 8 p.m. at the Bierstube Restaurant, 207 West Cook St., in Portage.