

BUSINESS

WHTB Glass granted tax breaks to build Shirley plant



A WHTB Glass facility in China: The manufacturer of architectural glass plans an \$18.9 million facility in Shirley. Photo Credit: WHTB Glass

By Victor Ocasio

victor.ocasio@newsday.com

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WHTB Glass, a China-based manufacturer and distributor of architectural glass, was approved for tax benefits to build an \$18.9 million manufacturing and distribution center in Shirley.

WHTB is part of Beijing Wuhuatianbao Glass Co. Ltd., which bills itself as the largest fabricator of architectural glass in China. Architectural glass refers to glass that is used as an exterior or interior building material. The company submitted an application for benefits to the Brookhaven Town Industrial Development Agency in late 2015.

The IDA approved the benefits at a meeting Wednesday.

“We’re very excited about this project,” Lisa Mulligan, chief executive of the IDA, said Wednesday. “It’s not every day that a company comes from China to locate in the Town of Brookhaven.”

According to the company’s project application, the facility — WHTB’s first U.S. location — will eventually employ more than 140 workers.

The company closed on the purchase of 4.23 acres of vacant land at 101 Precision Dr. in Shirley in April

The IDA approved the project for a sales tax exemption of up to \$800,000 for the purchase of building materials and equipment; a mortgage recording tax break, and a property tax deal that allows the company to pay taxes only on the land — not the building it constructs — for 10 years, starting at an estimated \$6,607 in the first year and going up to an estimated \$7,896 in the last year of the deal.

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The project received final site plan approval on Oct. 19, according to the town's planning division. The facility is slated to be a 49,000-square-foot building with more than 44,000 square feet of manufacturing space plus offices.

Construction is expected to take 12 to 15 months once started.

"This company could have gone anywhere," said Bram Weber, a Melville attorney representing WHTB. Weber also praised the efforts of the IDA and town in assisting the Chinese firm to set up shop. "They couldn't have been more welcoming from a business perspective."

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