

## The View of Plattsburgh from Manhattan

Although people in the North Country are not whiners, they will raise their voices when they feel misunderstood—especially when something vital is at stake. Such was the case when former Clinton County Treasurer Janet Duprey sought to educate the bond rating professionals at Moody’s Investors Service about the region’s financial prospects during base redevelopment. Moody’s is a leading provider of independent credit ratings to the capital markets.

“I had to really argue with Moody’s when it threatened to lower the county’s debt rating,” Duprey recalls. A drop in ratings makes it more expensive for governments to borrow money. “Moody’s thought we would roll up and die because the base was gone. I told them, ‘this community won’t let that happen.’ They were stuck in their attitude. I finally said, ‘I’m insulted that you sit in Manhattan and tell me what is happening in my community. If you want to be fair to the people of the North Country, come up here and talk to us.’ To my surprise, they did.”

On a beautiful summer day, two Moody’s representatives arrived via Burlington Airport and the ferry. PARC CEO Dan Wieneke was at his most gracious, showing them the new housing at Lake Country Village and pointing out all the base buildings slated for replacement or reuse. They also toured a building outside the base with Adoré Flynn Kurtz, executive director of the County of Clinton Industrial Development Agency

By seeing the properties through Wieneke’s eyes, the big-city visitors could envision Plattsburgh’s present and future prosperity for themselves. “Dan was a great salesman,” Duprey acknowledges. “He had that charisma when he wanted it, and he was so enthusiastic it just bubbled out of him. The two women

from Moody’s got out of his car with their heads spinning. At the end of the day they told me Plattsburgh was awesome.”

Best of all, after making good on their promise to visit with an open mind, the ratings professionals issued Clinton County a better rating. “Which they have maintained,” says Duprey with justifiable pride.

