

State's Carvel Deal Sweet

The company that produces Carvel ice cream cakes is relocating its headquarters and manufacturing operation to the site of the old Fafnir Bearing Co. factory, bringing 225 jobs to the city, officials said Wednesday. The announcement by Celebration Foods, the company that produces Carvel cakes and other desserts, was greeted with enthusiasm by city and state officials.

'It really is ... that blockbuster announcement that we've really been waiting for,' Gov. M. Jodi Rell said. 'It is a classic example of when you have state and local governments working together in a partnership to make good things happen.' The move was praised as a successful effort by the city to find a new use for a polluted industrial site that was cleaned up through the state's brownfields program.

Mayor Timothy Stewart said many companies wouldn't want to move into such a property because of the potential liability. The deal was expected to be approved during a city council meeting Wednesday night at which the council was to vote on a proposal to sell the land at 263 Myrtle St. and 285 Myrtle St. to [Centerplan Development Co.](#) for \$252,000. Centerplan plans to build a 130,000-square-foot building and rent the space to Celebration.

The building, which will bring Celebration's plants in Maryland, California and Massachusetts under one roof, is expected to cost \$16.3 million. Celebration will also move its 40 corporate positions in Rocky Hill to New Britain. [Bob Landino](#), president of [Centerplan](#), said the company expects to break ground on the property on Monday.

Celebration Foods is expected to generate more than \$500,000 in real estate and personal property tax revenue for the city each year and more than \$23 million for the state over 10 years, according to Rell's office. It will be one of the city's top 10 taxpayers, Stewart said. The city and the state Department of Economic and Community Development offered Celebration, which had considered about 50 other communities, several incentives.

City incentives include a \$1 million grant and a five-year, 80 percent discount on real and personal property taxes, which will be reimbursed to the city by the state, Stewart said. Celebration will move into the 131 2-acre site, vacant for more than 10 years, that was once the site of the Fafnir bearing factory and, later, The Torrington Co.

Celebration's relocation was the result of months of negotiations among city staff, representatives from the state departments of economic development and environmental protection, the company, and its developer, Centerplan.

Landino, the Centerplan president, applauded Rell for her participation. 'So often, we hear about states in the South and other parts of the country that are job-friendly, manufacturing-friendly,' Landino said, 'and clearly, the state of Connecticut has stepped up in a huge way and presented itself as a leader nationally attracting manufacturing jobs.' Tom Carvel, who died in 1990, began selling ice cream in 1929 from the back of his truck in New York. He brought his company to Connecticut in 1953, when he opened his first prefabricated ice cream store in Glastonbury. 'Fudgie The Whale' and 'Cookie Puss,' two of Carvel's popular ice cream cakes, were featured in popular television commercials.

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