

Stride Rite building sold

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DIY Group buys building to use for Weaver Popcorn

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The former Stride Rite building, one of the last empty manufacturing buildings in the county, has been purchased by the DIY Group.

According to the DIY Group's website, the company offers contract packaging, primary packaging, warehouse and distribution services.

"DIY Group is a logis-

tics firm and among their clients is the Weaver Popcorn Company of Van Buren, Ind., and I'm aware that the Weaver facility will be a significant part of the activity at the Huntington facility," Mark Wickersham, executive director of the Huntington County United Economic Development Corporation, said.

Stride Rite announced the closure of the facility around 2007 or 2008, he added.

"One of the marketing challenges with that facility over the years was the fact that it really did not lose a significant amount of assessed valuation, so its market value held,"

Wickersham said. "That kind of limited the opportunities to sell the building."

He added this purchase was interesting in a couple of ways, one of them being that the company asked for no economic development incentives.

"This ended up being a very economical project opportunity for the community," Wickersham said.

With the purchase of the former Stride Rite building, 93 percent of the available industrial properties in Huntington County have been redeveloped since 2008.

"That represents over 2 million square feet of

square footage that has been redeveloped in the community," Wickersham said. "At this point, the available industrial property space is divided over eight buildings that combine for 156,000 square feet."

These eight buildings with the shovel-ready Markle Industrial Park are the current available industrial space in the county.

"We're very proud the DIY Group has selected our community and we certainly offer our congratulations and support," Wickersham said.

Wickersham added he knows the company has

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hired 10 people, but is unsure if that is the extent of their employment.

The DIY Group could not be reached for comment.

Huntington City Mayor Brooks Fetters said he was excited for the company to come to Huntington.

"We welcome them as

part of the Huntington community," he said.

Fetters added the city has worked with the county to help make economic development hap-

pen.

"We still have more work to do, but it's sure nice to have somebody put that Stride Rite building to good use," he said.