

OPINION

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our take

Welcome to DIY Group

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

According to Huntington County United Economic Development Corporation Executive Director Mark Wickersham, the DIY Group will use the building as part of its relationship with Weaver Popcorn out of Van Buren.

The Stride Rite building has been empty for several years, and we are glad to see it being used again. The fact that the purchase has created 10 jobs is a nice addition as well.

Furthermore, we were pleasantly surprised that the DIY Group asked for no

economic development incentives from the county.

We have nothing against economic development tools such as tax abatements and have seen a lot of good done in our community as a result of them. But as we have seen in neighboring Grant County a lot can go wrong if economic development dollars are not used wisely.

Therefore, we applaud the DIY Group for not using something they apparently didn't need and we applaud the work of our county and economic development professionals who were able to seal this deal without needing those kinds of incentives.

What is also encouraging is that fact,

that, with this building purchased, 93 percent of the available industrial properties in Huntington County have been developed since 2008. That's 2 million square feet of space that has been redeveloped, with only 156,000 remaining.

We are happy to see those spaces filled, for that means more work, more jobs and generally more good things for our county.

We hope that the purchase of the Stride Rite building is the beginning of a good relationship between our community and the DIY Group and that we can work together to improve their business and make Huntington County a great place to live.