

## PUBLIC HEARING SCRIPT

**Deckorators, Inc. and/or Individual(s) or  
Affiliate(s), Subsidiary(ies), or Entity(ies)  
formed or to be formed on its behalf  
Project**

Public Hearing to be held March 25, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.  
at Lackawanna City Hall, City Council Chambers (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)  
at 714 Ridge Road, Lackawanna, New York 14218

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Charles Clark – City of Lackawanna  
Annie Patnaude – Deckorators, Inc

### **☒ 1. WELCOME: Call to Order and Identity of Hearing Officer.**

*Hearing Officer:* Welcome. This public hearing is now open; it is 9:03 a.m. My name is Grant Lesswing. I am the Director of Business Development for the Erie County Industrial Development Agency, and I have been designated by the Agency to be the hearing officer to conduct this public hearing. This public hearing is being live-streamed and made accessible on the Agency's website at [www.ecidany.com](http://www.ecidany.com).

### **☒ 2. PURPOSE: Purpose of the Hearing.**

*Hearing Officer:* We are here to hold the public hearing on the Deckorators, Inc. and/or Individual(s) or Affiliate(s), Subsidiary(ies), or Entity(ies) formed or to be formed on its behalf project. The transcript of this hearing will be reviewed and considered by the Agency in determination of this project. Notice of this hearing appeared in The Buffalo News on Tuesday, March 11, 2025.

### **☒ 3. PROJECT SUMMARY: Description of Project and Contemplated Agency Benefits.**

*Hearing Officer:* The proposed project (the "Project") consists of: (i) the acquisition by the Agency of a leasehold interest in certain property located at 300 Commerce Drive in the City of Lackawanna, Erie County, New York, and all other lands in the City of Lackawanna where, by license or easement or other agreement, the Company or its designees are making improvements that benefit the Project (the "Land") and the existing improvements located thereon consisting of an approximately 168,310 square foot building (the "Existing Improvements"); (ii) the

construction of an approximately 19,000 square-foot addition to the Existing Improvements to accommodate manufacturing capacity (the Improvements"); and (iii) the acquisition by the Company in and around the Improvements and Existing Improvements of certain items of machinery, equipment and other tangible personal property (the "Equipment"; and, together with the Land, the Existing Improvements and the Improvements, the "Facility"). The Facility will be initially operated and/or managed by the Company.

The proposed financial assistance contemplated by the Agency includes New York State and local sales and use tax exemption benefits and real property tax abatement benefits (in compliance with Agency's uniform tax exemption policy).

☒ **4. FORMAT OF HEARING:** Review rules and manner in which the hearing will proceed.

*Hearing Officer:* All those in attendance are required to register by signing the sign-in sheet at the front of the room; you will not be permitted to speak unless you have registered. Everyone who has registered will be given an opportunity to make statements and/or comments on the Project.

If you have a written statement or comment to submit for the record, you may leave it at this public hearing, submit it on the Agency's website or deliver it to the Agency at 95 Perry Street, Suite 403, Buffalo, New York 14203. The comment period closes on March 25, 2025. There are no limitations on written statements or comments.

☒ **5. PUBLIC COMMENT:** Hearing Officer gives the Public an opportunity to speak.

*Hearing Officer:* If anyone is interested in making a statement or comment, please raise your hand, state your name and address; if you are representing a company, please identify the company. I request that speakers keep statements and/or comments to 5 minutes, and if possible, 3 minutes.

Charles Clark, Director of Development for the City of Lackawanna. I'm here to express the city's support for the Deckorators project planned for 300 Commerce Drive, a 31-acre privately-owned manufacturing campus located in an industrial zone within Lackawanna's First Ward. The city's support is based on two primary factors: First, being the project's focus on creating sustainable manufacturing activity, well-paying jobs and infrastructure investments, which were original goals for the campus when constructed 25 years ago, but none of which ever materialized in a meaningful way in the years since. Secondly, Lackawanna views a renewed Commerce Drive campus as a perfect complement to the multi-government effort led by Erie County to develop Renaissance Commerce Park on the former Bethlehem Steel Plant site less than a quarter mile away. To help advance this high impact project, Lackawanna worked closely with the applicant to secure approval of a requested zoning area variance and site plan by the city's Zoning and Planning Boards, respectively, on January 29, 2025. We're currently working with them to secure permits for construction and other related activity planned for after sale closing, which is anticipated in the coming weeks. Based on these factors, the City of

Lackawanna requests the ECIDA give full consideration to approving Deckorators' financing application.

Annie Patnaude, External Relations Director. First of all, I would like to thank Lackawanna for potentially welcoming us into this community and the Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA) for this opportunity to present before the public on the project that we want to kick off with the ECIDA's help.

Deckorators, Inc. was founded in 1998. We are a well-established company in the outdoor living space, specializing in decking and railing products. Our pioneering spirit keeps us at the forefront of deck and backyard design innovation. We offer products, including traditional composite and mineral-based composite decking, railing, post caps, and accessories. Our company serves a diverse customer base of contractors, builders, retailers, and distributors. With the help of the Erie County Industrial Development Association (ECIDA), we hope to become a member of the community here in Lackawanna. We are proposing a project that I believe you outlined a little bit that would represent a \$70 million investment and create 50 good-paying jobs in Lackawanna. We will be putting our facility at an existing site, but with significant improvements, such as outdoor storage, utility infrastructure, stormwater retention, and enhanced driveways for truck traffic. When it is complete, we anticipate the project will encompass two buildings totaling 253,310 square feet on a 31-acre site. Right now, we are working with two local construction management companies, who are going to help us kick off development for this site, CPL Architects and Buffalo Construction Consultants. We know that working with local companies not only has a positive impact on the community but also ensures local knowledge to bear on this project. We also look forward to working with the community to source local talent that will meet our needs. This direct investment only tells part of the story. Manufacturing plays a crucial role in creating strong economies. It does more to generate broad economic growth—and higher living standards—than any other sector. In other words, manufacturing is great bang for the buck. The National Association of Manufacturers estimates that for every \$1.00 spent on manufacturing, there is a total impact of \$2.69 to the overall U.S. economy, and for every manufacturing worker, 4.8 workers are added to the overall U.S. economy, including indirect and induced impacts. As a national company, we consider many different communities when we decide to site our facilities. The tax incentive that is being considered by the ECIDA will help us prioritize making our investment here.

These incentives are crucial to balance our investment in the Lackawanna community with our need to maintain competitiveness and ensure long-term sustainability of our operations. These incentives allow us to allocate resources efficiently, supporting our manufacturing operations and workforce for the long-term. This project is very important to Deckorators. We plan to manufacture one of our most promising new product lines at this facility. Our Surestone technology, which is our mineral composite decking made with crushed limestone, represents a significant innovation in the decking industry. By expanding our manufacturing capabilities, we are positioning ourselves to meet current and growing market demands with this relatively new product line. Our company values innovation. We also value being a positive presence in the communities we call home. It's not unusual for our plant employees to volunteer their time during holidays to support local nonprofits in the community, sponsor little leagues or work with our local communities on holiday events. We encourage our plant leadership to build a strong culture with a strong commitment to safety, environmental stewardship, employee well-being

and openness to diverse experiences and backgrounds. 2024 was the second year our Selma, Alabama plant organized a back-to-school supply and backpack giveaway, working together with our employees and community organizations. We are a company focused on hiring and fostering talent and creating important opportunities for advancement regardless of background, socioeconomic status or any other traits. We seek to promote from within wherever possible. We believe the Buffalo community is a great fit for us because of its talent, culture and excellent history in manufacturing.

In conclusion, we appreciate the partnership with the City of Lackawanna and the ECIDA and the Lackawanna City Council. We are excited to take the next step to make this project a reality for the Buffalo area community.

As there were no further statements and/or comments, the Hearing Officer closed the public hearing at 9:13 a.m.

# SIGN IN SHEET PUBLIC HEARING

Public Hearing to be held March 25, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.  
at Lackawanna City Hall, City Council Chambers (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)  
at 714 Ridge Road, Lackawanna, New York 14218, regarding:

**Deckorators, Inc. and/or Individual(s) or Affiliate(s),  
Subsidiary(ies), or Entity(ies) formed or to be formed on its behalf**

**Project Location:** 300 Commerce Drive in the City of Lackawanna, Erie County, New York

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