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Plymouth-based cheese companies form non-profit to preserve the history and educational experience of the Dairy Heritage Center in partnership with the City of Plymouth

PLYMOUTH, Wis. – May 22, 2023 After regaining ownership of the Cheese Counter and Dairy Heritage Center, the City of Plymouth is announcing its intent to sell the building and its operations to a newly formed non-profit organization which currently includes four Plymouth-based cheese companies: Sargento Foods, Sartori Cheese, Masters Gallery and Great Lakes Cheese. The companies have teamed up to form The Plymouth Cheese Counter Foundation Inc. which has been granted IRS “non-profit” status. The Plymouth Cheese Counter Foundation’s goal is to preserve the history, culture, and educational experience of the popular downtown destination.

“This move will establish a new operational model for the Cheese Counter and Dairy Heritage Center and allow us to expand the historical curation and educational aspects visitors have come to enjoy,” said Lee Gentine, Chair of the Plymouth Redevelopment Authority (RDA) and one of the founders of the new non-profit. “We want our local guests and other visitors to experience the unique history of the Cheese Capital of the World with opportunities to purchase the best crafted Wisconsin cheeses to share with family and friends.”

The Cheese Counter and Dairy Heritage Center is an immersive cultural experience, museum and point-of-interest for the Cheese Capital of the World. The Cheese Counter procures the finest cheeses from companies in Sheboygan County and world champion Wisconsin cheese artisans. All of the cheeses are available for purchase at the Cheese Counter’s store and online through gift boxes that can be shipped across the United States. The Cheese Counter also sells unique cheese-themed gifts and clothing which celebrate the City of Plymouth as the Cheese Capital of the World. The downtown destination also serves the “World’s Best” grilled cheese sandwiches prepared fresh and made-to-order. The newly formed Plymouth Cheese Counter Foundation will purchase the space from the City of Plymouth for \$1.

“We’re thrilled to have this new partnership and new vision for what’s become a must-see tourist attraction and gathering place for residents in our community,” said Don Pohlman, Mayor of Plymouth, Wis. “To have the support of four great companies to maintain the heritage of our City, in an inviting and engaging space demonstrates our shared goal of ensuring the story of Plymouth continues to be told for generations.”

“This partnership is a win-win for the City and for all residents and visitors of Plymouth. It allows Cheese Counter and Dairy Heritage Center to maintain and improve operations, but with the backing and expertise of those that have experience in the cheese industry” stated Tim Blakeslee, City Administrator and Utilities Manager. “The plan also protects the community’s investment in the historic property because the City maintains the option to purchase the building back for \$1.”

The City of Plymouth plans to continue its annual \$7,500 contribution to the Cheese Counter and Dairy Heritage Center in recognition of the Center being a tourist attraction for the Cheese Capital of the World.

The Cheese Counter and Dairy Heritage Center is located at 133 E. Mill Street in the heart of downtown Plymouth. It opened in 2018 in the former H.C. Laack building, which previously sold hardware, dry goods and groceries.

About The City of Plymouth

Located in Sheboygan County, Plymouth is nestled in the gently rolling hills of the Kettle Moraine. Conveniently located seven minutes from Elkhart Lake, one hour north of Milwaukee; one hour south of Green Bay; and two hours north of Chicago. Plymouth is an ideal place for you to enjoy fun activities, explore, and rejuvenate.

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