

## **GRANVILLE EYES A RIVER AS ATTRACTION**

**By LYDIA WHEELER lwheeler@poststar.com | Posted: Saturday, April 10, 2010**

GRANVILLE - The village is planning to spruce up downtown and use the river as a tourist attraction. Mayor Jay Niles said the village received a \$40,000 planning grant from the Department of State's Division of Coastal Resources to develop a comprehensive plan for their Mettowee River revitalization strategy. The village hired **Elan Planning Design and Landscape Architecture PLLC**, of Saratoga Springs, to develop the five-year plan, which calls for revitalization of Main, Quaker and Church streets, the Mettowee River area and will incorporate the Pember Library and Museum and the Slate Valley Museum. Because the Mettowee River is a prime fishing spot that runs through the village, Niles said they want to capitalize on it and use it to create a tourist destination. Last week consultants from design group met with members of the community to get a vision of what residents would like to Granville to look like.

"We discussed how can we integrate the river, the two museums that are nationally acclaimed and downtown together for economic development to bring people to Granville to visit, shop and live here," Niles said. The group also discussed how to use the river for more recreational activities like kayaking and canoeing. Niles said the village is hoping to attract companies to supply those activities. In order to get those businesses to establish themselves in Granville, Niles said they need make the village more attractive.

"The plan will set specific goals for the village and then we can apply for the grants that fit those goals," he said.

In the last five to six years, Granville has been successful in obtaining more than \$2 million in grants. Although the state is in a financial crisis, Niles said the village has never not received money for approved grants. "For example, we were approved for this planning grant in April 2008, but we didn't get the contract until October 2009. It took a little over a year to get the actual contract," he said.

The extra time, Niles said, was helpful to discuss and plan exactly how the funding will be used. Although a final plan from the planning firm won't be done until the end of May, Niles said the project advisory group is still meeting to discuss village revitalization. The next meeting will be held at the Village Hall on Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. "We're looking forward to early summer and seeing the actual draft. We'll invite folks back to get their reaction. This is the community's plan," he said.