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In Rochester: Fat Tony's makes use of facade improvement grant

Monday, August 31, 2009

ROCHESTER — Fat Tony's Italian Grill opened in 2007 to much fanfare and acclaim. It was the creative vision of Anthony Ejarque, owner of Slim's Tex-Mex Saloon and innkeeper for the Governor's Inn and Café, along with the new Spaulding Steak and Ale.



Courtesy photos The photo on the left shows the structure as it looked before remodeling took place. On the right, Fat Tony's displays a fresh paint job, new lights and new signage.

A critical piece of setting the stage for his Italian-American menu was developing the internal ambience and welcoming external facade. Fortunately the City Economic Development Department was available to help.

"Anthony wisely applied for the City's Sign & Facade Program at the same time he applied to the Rochester Historic District Commission for review, and his creativity coupled with the HDC's input has resulted in a much more appealing restaurant and streetscape," said Karen Pollard, Economic Development Manager for the city.

The Sign & Facade Program provides for a \$1,000 grant when a business invests at least \$5,000 in qualifying improvements to their exterior entrances, signs, awnings, or lighting.

More information about the program and how to apply is available at www.thinkrochester.biz/Entrepreneur-Financial-Center.php.

"The grant program supports business and property owners who want to make quality improvements in their appearance," Pollard said.

Ejarque agrees.

"Now is a great time to invest in a new sign or awning and revitalize the look of your business. Fat Tony's Italian Grill now has the look of a trendy Italian bistro that I was trying to achieve," he said.



Conor Makem/Times photo Anthony Ejarque, owner of Fat Tony's in Rochester, received a \$1,000 economic development check for facade work on the restaurant. From left, Rochester Main Street Director Michael Provost, line chef Wayne Durant, Rochester Economic Development Manager Karen Pollard, Ejarque, and manager Heather Stachura.

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