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NXP workers keep up hope as job losses loom

*By Craig Wolf
Poughkeepsie Journal*

WICCOPEE - A 90-day notice circulated by management at the NXP Semiconductors plant says mass layoffs will occur from June 24 through July 8.

But hundreds of workers are hoping efforts to bring in an unnamed buyer will save their jobs - and fast.

"I haven't given up," said John Ianni of Wappingers Falls, who has worked at the plant under several owners back to the 1970s. "I'm still working and I try to keep busy," he said.

The 90-day notice, which was given last week, is in line with the plan announced last fall when Netherlands-based NXP decided to downsize its global group of chip-fabricating plants.

East Fishkill's 700-plus workers got word they'd be gone unless a buyer for the business was found.

A flyer is being circulated around town by employees urging people to plead with elected officials to help now.

IBM offers support

Rebecca Samuel, a spokeswoman for NXP's American operations, said, "We are receiving support from IBM and state agencies to create an attractive package for the site."

IBM Corp. is the landlord of the property. The state is looked to as a source of financial aid to help the prospective buyer afford a takeover.

State Assemblyman Marc Molinaro, R-Red Hook, said Tuesday efforts continue, but declined to give details about any offers the state may have made as incentives.

"We have engaged with ongoing dialogues," he said, mentioning county and state agencies involved. "Elected representatives have been at the table with the principals and we remain involved in a hopeful effort to save jobs at NXP."

Katie Krawczyk, spokeswoman for Empire State Development Corp., the state agency, said, "As a matter of policy, ESD cannot comment on ongoing negotiations, including those with NXP."

John MacEnroe, president of the Dutchess County Economic Development Corp., said he's sure IBM is interested in helping to get a new tenant. The state wants to help and has said it has some money available, but "weren't all that forthcoming about where it was coming from."

"We at the county all remain committed to trying to broker some sort of a deal," MacEnroe said. "I don't know of a deal at the moment that's imminent."
