

Casto updates timing on Hartwell Village

Company aims for stores to open in early 2017

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SENECA — With infrastructure work at Hartwell Village set to begin next week, the company behind the lakefront retail and restaurant development expects stores to open in early 2017.

Casto Southeast executive vice president Shannon Dixon told The Journal that the company is in active negotiations with several tenants, but said she was unable to disclose any specific restaurants or retailers.

“I believe this community deserves a nice development where they can shop, eat, go to a movie, have some entertainment and even attend church,” Dixon said in an email. “Hopefully we will have some good things to announce in the near future.”

A site plan for the development on the company’s website shows a movie theater, a hotel, a grocer and at least one restaurant at the site — though The Journal has only confirmed the theater to this point.

Casto had previously announced a target opening date of later this year.

The project being developed by Casto will be the first large-scale development in Oconee to incorporate the county’s desired “rustic elegance” design attributes.

While there are other buildings in the county that feature the stacked stone and open-beam look that defines the style, Casto was incentivized by the county to utilize the “rustic elegance” theme in exchange for infrastructure assistance.

“For that help, the

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An aerial photo shows the back side of the property where Hartwell Village, a new 350,000-square-foot retail center, will be located near Seneca. The lakefront portion shown here is primarily the site for NewSpring Church.

CASTO: Development will stick to ‘rustic elegance’ guidelines

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county desired the development not to look like ‘Anywhere USA’ and to be architecturally enhanced by incorporating ‘rustic elegance’ into its design,” Oconee economic development director Richard Blackwell said. “This will help create a sense of place and make this project visually appealing, which is a great scenario for Oconee County.”

The Journal reported Thursday that infrastructure work to bring sewer to the site, which Hartwell Village will share with NewSpring Church’s Clemson campus — actually in Seneca — is set to begin Monday.

Seneca utilities director Bob Faires said he doesn’t expect the construction to lead to any lane closures, though roads will likely be lined with cones or barrels to give the public notice that work is happening alongside the road.

The city of Seneca, Oconee County and Casto agreed to split the \$1.8 million cost of sewer and water upgrades evenly three ways.

With its \$600,000 share of those upgrades, the company will make a \$2.4 million investment in infrastructure — along with roughly \$1.8 million on road construction — at the site.