

Keowee restaurant dispute ends

Parties savor secret settlement

BY CARLOS GALARZA
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SENECA — A businessman looking to develop a Lake Keowee restaurant has apparently made peace with neighbors opposed to parts of his plans.

Richard Cottingham of Lake Keowee Investors Inc. said Thursday that he's reached a settlement agreement that he hopes will pave the way for a 500-foot relocation of Doug

Hollow Road.

Neighbors had opposed the relocation plans and the closing of access to Lake Keowee at the end of Doug Hollow Road. They claimed a 1966 deed provided them access to the lake.

Cottingham said the agreement has a confidentiality clause that prohibits the parties from divulging the terms of the settlement.

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Bo Knapp, one of the parties to the settlement, confirmed the agreement and the confidentiality clause Thursday.

Cottingham said the settlement includes Kelley family members.

Reached at her home, Edalene Kelley had no comment.

Cottingham said a judge still must approve the settlement before it is finalized.

In the meantime, Cottingham announced that his group plans to have an official groundbreaking for the restaurant in mid-August.

"We still plan to open in May 2012," he said.

The Oconee County Council was caught in the middle of the property dispute between

Cottingham and the Kelley family. Oconee opted to let the court handle the conflict and on May 13 the county filed for a declaratory judgment to resolve the dispute.

In the end, Cottingham said the parties took the advice of Council members Reg Dexter and Wayne McCall, who urged them to resolve the matter out of court.

Cottingham said he and the neighbors are happy.

"We have a good relationship with the neighbors," Cottingham said. "We want to be good neighbors."

Cottingham said developers would submit final plans for the restaurant to the Oconee County Building Codes Department within two weeks.

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