

# MonteLago on shaky ground?

## Lack of progress on Keowee project raises questions

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SENECA — A Greenville developer's apparent skittishness in signing an agreement with Seneca to build sewer infrastructure for the proposed MonteLago high-rise condominium complex on Lake Keowee is helping fuel speculation that the multi-million project could be on shaky ground.

Two months have passed since Seneca City Council voted to enter into a contract

to provide sewer to Marick Home Builder & Developers' 270-unit project. Seneca is still waiting for Marick to return a signed contract.

During Monday's Oconee County Sewer Commission/Joint Regional Sewer Authority meeting, the MonteLago project was briefly discussed. Sewer officials voted to extend, for an additional 180 days, a request made late last year on behalf of the developer requesting the agency accept a maximum of 108,000 gallons of waste daily from the proposed project.

According to reports, Marick officials are hesitant to forge ahead with the development at a time when "construction is down, the stock market is down and the economy is down."

Marick President Rick Thoennes III could not be reached for comment Tuesday.

Seneca City Administrator Greg Dietterick, a member of the sewer commission/authority, said during Monday's meeting that the city does not have a contract from Marick on the sewer deal.

According to the agreement approved by the city, Marick would pay for the main infrastructure of the sewer system, while the costs of the upgrades Seneca wants would be paid back by the city. Seneca's cost of the upgrades would be capped at \$500,000 to be paid back interest free during a 10-year period.

Marick's apparent problems in getting MonteLago off the ground have to be welcomed by a group opposed to the project from the very start. Advocates for Quality Development (AQD) reached an out-of-court settlement with Marick last year that scaled back the project from 330 to 270

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units.

Under the terms of the settlement, Marick also agreed to limit the height of buildings to about 100 feet, pay to widen

Luther Lane Road (the county road adjacent to the property), preserve a 25-foot natural buffer at the lake's edge and contribute financially to improve local

firefighting capabilities.

AQD President Steve MacLeod said Tuesday that he had not heard anything new concerning MonteLago.

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