SDOC finalizing negotiations for Walhalla High sewer installation

BY GREG OLIVER
THE JOURNAL

WALHALLA — School District of Oconee County officials say negotiations are continuing with three property owners living near the new Walhalla High school site in an effort to purchase right of ways for sewer installation.

Assistant Superintendent Michael Thorsland said Wednesday that district administration updated the school board on progress being made during executive session of Monday night's regular scheduled meeting. However, the report was for informational purposes only and no action could be taken.

"We're still negotiating with the property owners (which is a reduction of the original10 to 12) essentially on what it's going to cost," Thorsland said.

Thorsland added that a complete report on the sewer project will be made at a future school board meeting once negotiations are finalized.

The new school will be located on the west side of S.C. Highway 11, one mile north of the S.C. Highway 183 intersection and a little more than three miles from the existing Walhalla High School site on Razorback Lane. Estimated at $50 million, officials say the 215,000 to 225,000-square-foot facility will house 1,200 students with room for growth.

Thorsland said the new 600-gallon-per-minute sewer system would go from the back of the new school site to S.C. 183. There, a pump station would convert the sewer system to a force main that would travel up S.C. 183 to S.C. 11, then follow S.C. 11 to Scenic Heights Baptist Church located across from Fowler Road.

"From there, the system would gravity flow down the hill to the main trunk line on Cain Creek," Thorsland said. "The advantages are that it still opens up the two major intersections — S.C. 183 and S.C. 11 — that we were trying to get on sewer and Fowler Road and Highway 11. Those are potential roads for future development."

Thorsland said the cost estimate for the sewer portion of the project is $2.5 million. But if a grant request of $500,000 were funded by ACOG, Oconee County and the school district would each fund $1 million.

Thorsland said he has met with Oconee County Administrator Scott Moulder and County Attorney Tom Martin and feels good about the relationship the entities share regarding the project.

"We're pleased to be partnering with the county and the City of Walhalla because they ultimately will operate this portion of sewer," he said.

The assistant superintendent said Design South, the engineering company for the project, hopes to bid out construction in January. Construction is slated to begin in the spring of next year and the school is expected to open in January 2015.

greg@dailyjm.com | (864) 973-6687

NEW WALHALLA HIGH SCHOOL

- Will be located on the west side of S.C. Highway 11, one mile north of the S.C. Highway 183 intersection and a little more than three miles from the existing Walhalla High School site on Razorback Lane
- Negotiating with three property owners, compared to original 10 to 12, in effort to purchase right of ways for sewer installation, a necessary step in the effort to open on time
- Design South, the engineering company for the project, hopes to bid out construction in January. Construction is slated to begin in the spring of next year and the school is expected to open in January 2015.



JESSICA NELMS | THE JOURNAL

Negotiations continue to install sewer at new Walhalla High

Negotiations are continuing with several property owners in an effort to begin the installation of sewer for the new Walhalla High School site. **To read the complete report, see page A3.**