Town Center work to get moving

Progress at Easley retail site will ramp back up, developer says

By Julie Howle
STAFF WRITER
jhowle@greenvillenews.com

Passers-by on U.S. 123 could soon see more movement on the former Saco Lowell site as work ramps back up on the Easley Town Center project.

"We're hoping that by the end of summer we're going to have a lot of increased activity out there," said David Scarnati, director of development for Cedarwood Development Inc., the group creating Easley Town Center.

Scarnati said work on the shopping center project has continued and has never been suspended, but said a slowdown was necessary.

"I think Easley Town Center was no exception to what was going on globally as far as our economy or the banking situation," he said. "It necessitated a slowdown based on the overall financial situation the whole country was in."

Easley Mayor Larry Bagwell said work started to taper off about six to eight months ago.

"I think probably by mid-August, no later than Sept. 1, you're probably going to see some big, heavy equipment out there," Bagwell said. "People are anxiously waiting to see something get started out there."

He said the project could open the area up for more development and said there have already been questions about other pieces of property around the area.

"In my opinion it's going to be a big boost for the county, not just only the city but the whole county," he said.

Easley Town Center is expected to bring about 900 permanent jobs to Easley and mean an estimated 250 construction jobs, according to Scarnati.

He said developers expect Easley Town Center to open in late fall 2010.

Scarnati said considerable amount of grading and in-ground utility work has already been done and said the plant has been demolished. He said the plan is to reuse as much materials on the site as possible.

Scarnati said infrastructure work includes replacing the bridge at Prince Perry Road at the U.S. 123 intersection along with other road improvements and work.

Bagwell said getting the bridge done is a key part of the project and said Easley Combined Utilities is bringing a new water line in as well.

"They know it's going to develop," Bagwell said. "There are already talks of probably some condominiums, apartment buildings going up out that way."

Wal-Mart is already slated to go into the shopping center, and Scarnati said the development should have about 25 to 30 tenants, although he wouldn't reveal any other tenants.

"We're very excited to get this project moving again, and we've always been 100 percent committed to the city of Easley and this project and we continue that," he said.

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