



REX BROWN | THE JOURNAL

Keowee Brewing Company owner and operator Alex Butterbaugh talks about opening his business in downtown Seneca later this year at a news conference at Capone's on Ram Cat Alley on Thursday evening. Butterbaugh said Thursday the brewery will be a five-barrel brew house with 12 taps.

Brewery coming to downtown Seneca

BY JUSTIN LEE CAMPBELL
THE JOURNAL

SENECA — A new brewery with beer on tap, an indoor tasting room and an outdoor beer garden is scheduled to be up and running on East Main Street in downtown Seneca by the end of the year.

The city of Seneca and the Oconee Economic Alliance announced Thursday that Keowee Brewing Company will be the first-ever brewery in the county. Owner and operator Alex Butterbaugh told local officials during a news conference at Capone's on Ram Cat

Alley his goal is to make downtown “thrive.”

Butterbaugh, who worked for a brewing company in Wisconsin, said he wants Keowee Brewing Company to be an “instrumental part” of downtown Seneca.

‘Breweries are known as destination places, so we’re hoping to draw in more tourists and people.’

Alex Butterbaugh
Keowee Brewing Company owner

“We hope we bring a lot more tourism down here for everybody,” he said. “The more people we can bring down here, the more places there are here for them to stay and the more money they’re going to spend and the better it’s going to be for everybody down here.”

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BREWERY: 'An exciting time,' mayor said

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Butterbaugh said Keowee Brewing Company will be a five-barrel brew house with 12 taps. Butterbaugh told media the beer will be available for sampling in a tasting room, and the beer garden will host concerts, parties and community events.

The brew house is scheduled to open at 401 E. Main St. in the fourth quarter of 2018 and be split over two floors, according to a news release. Beers on tap will be brewed with water from nearby Lake Keowee and focus on IPAs, stouts and pilsners, the release said.

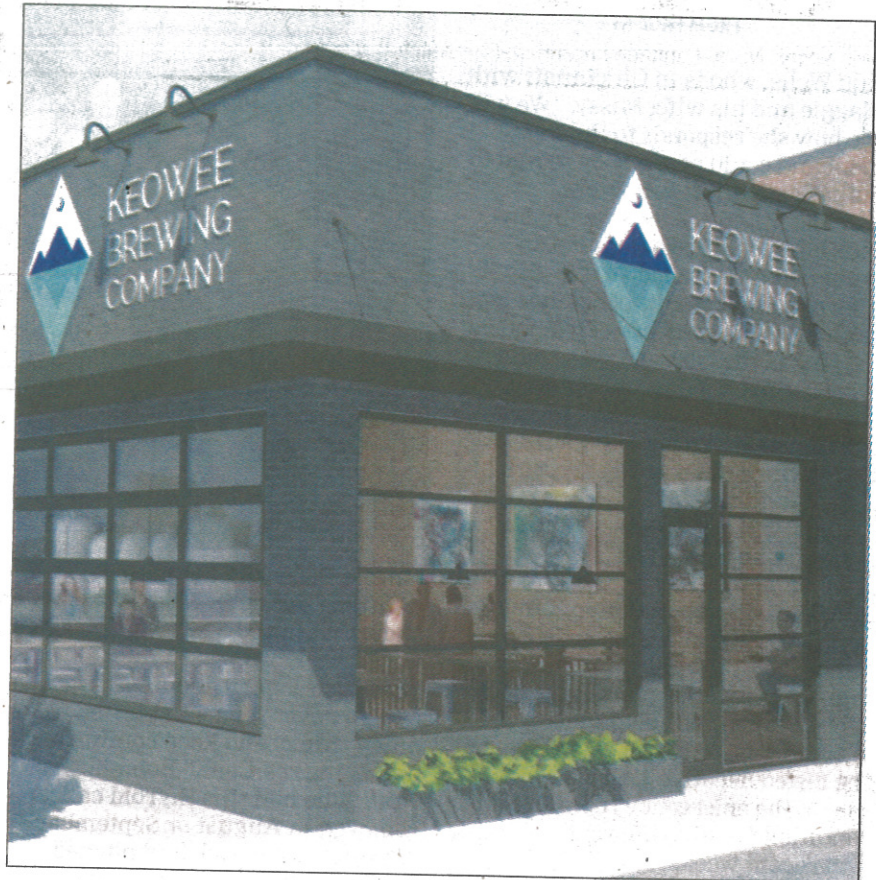
Alliance executive director Richard Blackwell said breweries in downtown areas are "catalysts" for growth. Blackwell said the alliance and city and county officials are excited about the location of Keowee Brewing Company on the other side of downtown from Ram Cat Alley.

"We think the location is going to help redevelop that area," Blackwell said. "This is a special and unique project for Seneca."

The location of the brewery is a building a couple of blocks from Ram Cat Alley at the corner of North Walnut and East Main streets. Butterbaugh said the location near Ram Cat Alley and proximity to Clemson University makes the building a "prime" spot for a brewery.

Butterbaugh told The Journal his hope is the brewery will revitalize downtown Seneca.

"With us being a few blocks away from Ram Cat Alley, we're hoping that we have an anchor down there and are able to fill in some of the vacant buildings in between," he said. "Breweries are known as destination places, so we're hoping to



SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

This rendering shows what Keowee Brewing Company owner and operator Alex Butterbaugh expects his business to look like when it opens at the corner of East Main and North Walnut streets in downtown Seneca in the fourth quarter of 2018.

draw in more tourists and people."

Seneca Mayor Dan Alexander thanked Butterbaugh and his wife, Allison, for coming to Seneca. Alexander said at the announcement he first talked to Butterbaugh about the brewery in September.

Alexander, City Councilmen Ronnie O'Kelley and Herman Smith, Seneca Light and Water director Bob Faires, city planning and development director Ed Halbig and city finance director Josh Riches all played a role in securing the

brewery for Seneca.

"It is an exciting time," Alexander said. "To the family, we appreciate you being a part of our family here in Seneca and making great things happen. We'll watch your business become a destination for the community."

Hiring at Keowee Brewing Company will begin later this year, according to the release.