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Construction work on a new Subway restaurant near Ingles in Seneca is expected to start early next year after Seneca's Zoning Board of Appeals approved a zoning variance application on Thursday night. Property owner Eddie Adams said he hopes to have the building completed in early spring.

Appeals board approves change for Subway restaurant

BY NORM CANNADA
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SENECA — Construction on a new Subway restaurant is expected to begin early next year after Seneca's Zoning Board of Appeals gave the green light Thursday to a variance request of the setback requirements for one side of the property. The board unanimously approved the

variance request from Eddie Adams for a property he owns adjacent to the Ingles parking lot near the intersection of S.C. Highway 130 and U.S. Highway 123. The board agreed to allow a 20-foot setback from the highway instead of the required 40 feet.

Adams said construction would likely start "after the first of the year."

"We're ready to move forward now,"

Adams said after the meeting. "My contractor is ready now that the Zoning Board of Appeals has been gracious enough to allow this variance. We're going to move forward. Hopefully, by the end of March we'll have a building open if the weather helps us. ... I think in a few months we can get it rolling."

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SUBWAY: QuikTrip planning store at old site

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The need for the variance on the setback requirements was necessary after Adams learned about a deed restriction Ingles had on the property that would keep Subway from being built directly in front of the existing Ingles supermarket as well as "limits on what could be there."

Site preparation had already started, but work stopped as Adams dealt with the requirements of the deed restrictions that would mean the building would have to move closer to the highway. He told the appeals board the Subway drive-through would go on the edge of the setback, not the building.

On Thursday, Adams said he had worked out issues with Ingles to make the restaurant work, but needed the setback variance to

build it on the property with the deed restriction.

The lot is considered a "substandard lot" because its 20,038 square feet is less than the requirement of 25,000 square feet for lots zoned highway commercial. As a substandard lot, the setback on the Highway 130 side was 40 feet.

City planning and development director Ed Halbig said in his staff report the primary concern was the proximity of the property Highway 130 "especially if SCDOT sought to increase the paved surface, such as for road widening or including turning or deceleration lanes." He said he talked to DOT officials recently who had not expressed concerns about the traffic issues. He said a guard rail may be needed on the highway in the future.

The building is estimated to be a 1,862-square-foot building with a

construction cost of \$342,000, according to a building permit application filed with the Seneca Planning and Development Department. Robbie Burrell, a former Walhalla city councilman and local businessman, owns the two Seneca Subway stores, as well as seven others in Oconee and Pickens counties. He said the new building would replace the restaurant across U.S. Highway 123.

In May, QuikTrip entered into lease agreements with the owners of two properties at the corner of East North 1st Street and U.S. Highway 123. The current Subway is on the Highway 123 property. QuikTrip plans to build a new gas station and convenience store on the property. Burrell said news of an agreement for the QT led him to look for a new space for the Subway.