

Developer: Docksider 'coming together'

BY GREG OLIVER
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CLEMSON — A year and a half after plans for the controversial Docksider mixed-use development were first announced, soil is now being moved on the Tiger Boulevard property where the former Holiday Inn once stood.

"We're very, very excited about this project," said developer Brent Little, president of Dallas-based Fountain Residential Partners. "It's really coming together well. We're excited about the placemaking aspects of it and, more than anything, as I've been talking to our lenders and capital partners and everyone else about this project, the opportunity to have a true mixed-use placemaking opportunity here on Lake Hartwell with the entry to Clemson is just a fantastic opportunity."

Docksider will feature 200 apartments, 755 parking spaces and 20,000 square feet of commercial and retail stores on 5.1 acres. When the project was first announced in May 2019, it immediately generated controversy with nearby Holiday Avenue residents concerned about noise, traffic and access to their neighborhood.

Although Holiday Avenue residents repeatedly urged city council to quash plans for the project, council in January deemed that Docksider, Patrick Square, Paco-et-Milliken, 405 College Avenue and Cambridge Creek were far enough along in the development process to be excluded from the city's development moratorium.

The Clemson Board of Architectural Review also unanimously approved the project, but with stipulations — including changes in exterior light configuration, that the wall just north of the residents' entryway be



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Soil is being moved at the future site of Docksider, a mixed-use development at the site of the former Holiday Inn on Tiger Boulevard.

city, university or the lake, among other ideas.

"We don't know, but that's the exciting part in that the arts commission will be very helpful in guiding that process and coming up with something that will have lasting value and lasting meaning to the community," Little said.

Little added that the

dropped to 6 feet and that a landscape plan be finalized. Docksider officials, at the request of Holiday Avenue neighbors, said the pool area would be screened by trees, with stone in the middle and panels on either side.

In addition, Holiday Avenue West will feature additional plantings outside the privacy walls — along with those required by code — to lessen noise and provide buffering. Little said plans for a four-way signalized intersection with sidewalks have been submitted and reviewed by the state as well.

Little said while Sherman Construction is at the site, progress will be "fairly slow at first."

"There's a lot of utilities to go in, a lot of piers, a lot of dirt to be moved — it's not really exciting for the first several months," Little said.

The Docksider developer said he has been working on leases for retail and restaurant spaces, with two letters of intent com-

dock located at the lake will be rebuilt, pointing out the existing one "is pretty dilapidated."

"Because it is a public dock, people will be able to pull up in their boats and eat or take food back to their boat," Little said, adding it will be secured and lighted.

Plans are also in the works to create an event

space. Little said there is a significant need for a venue in the Clemson area.

"There's some that are on the university property, but the university controls those and there's not a lot of public opportunities and certainly not those that are lakeside — certainly not for sororities and universities, alumni, professional organizations, weddings or bar mitzvahs," Little said. "We think it will be a great opportunity to have a space there. It will be over 3,000 square feet with lake frontage, and all of the restaurants we will have there on site will be able to provide food and beverage for events, which we think is a great opportunity."

Little said the fall of 2022 remains the estimated completion date for Docksider.

two letters of intent completed and several more in negotiation.

"I think there is an opportunity to potentially have eight to 10 restaurants here in one location," he said. "We'll have that nice public green and the band shell and the kids' play place and event center. Everybody can just drive, and if kids want a burrito and you want a hamburger, you can go to the different places, pick them up and go eat by the lakeside."

Names of the restaurants and retail tenants are expected to be announced by the first quarter of next year.

There are other aspects to the development that Little said he is excited about. He is working with the Clemson Arts and Cultural Commission on requests for proposals for three public art pieces featuring elements of the