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Redevelopment authority director expects busy year

By Amy Karpinsky, Herald-Standard
02/08/2006

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Fayette County Redevelopment Authority Executive Director Andrew French told his board Tuesday that there is going to be a lot of activity at the Fayette County Business Park in the next year.

The business park, located along Route 40 in South Union Township, has several businesses including a motel, engineering firm, CareerLink and a doctor's office, and more are planned to open this year.

During the executive director report, French said Cedarwood Development Inc. is hoping to close and break ground by April at the park.

Cedarwood is purchasing 25 acres and plans to put in a large-scale commercial project, including a Wal-Mart Super Center and other major retailers.

French said environmental clearances have been received for the Matthew Drive extension through the park. "That's a huge hurdle to get the road constructed," he said.

French said the project is being approached as a "design-build" which should put it on track for spring or summer of this year.

Also, French reported that the next phase of infrastructure includes a decision of where the sewerage will go.

He said Laurel Pediatrics is also open for business, and construction is ongoing for two other projects. "All in all, 2006 promises to be a pretty busy and hectic year," French said.

HSTV Daily Schedule	
Local Interest	▶ In two related items, the authority voted to approve an amendment to the agreement between the authority and Cedarwood for the real estate purchase and voted to execute a reinvestment agreement between he authority, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and South Union Township for the Matthew Drive Extension Project, both at the Fayette County Business Park.
Entertainment	▶
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Websites	▶ French said the agreement with Cedarwood is for two items, the property boundary description and the access easement along Route 40. Solicitor Herb Margolis told the board there was nothing they didn't already know about.
Community Choice Awards	▶
Contact Information	▶ The reimbursement agreement will lead to the construction of Matthew Drive through the business park and also for a connector road to the Mon/Fayette Expressway. French said the \$6 million project will include funding from the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission and state Department of Transportation (PennDOT).
The Greene County Messenger	
Other Calkins Media Sites	▶ He said the authority will contract to construct the road and request reimbursement from PennDOT.

In other action, the authority approved a contract with Allison Custom Fabrication Inc. of Allison not to exceed \$215,000 for installation of a canopy over the stage at Storey Square adjacent to the State Theater in downtown Uniontown.

French said the project includes installing a steel frame around the stage and putting a canopy over it. He said the company will likely subcontract to Hibbs, the same company that put the canopies downtown, so the new canopy "will blend."

French said the contract was awarded despite being the only bid received. He said the project was initially put out to bid in December and no bids were received.

French also reported that the 2006 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation will be \$1.8 million, a \$200,000 reduction from the 2005 allocation.

He said the 10 percent reduction is "quite a hit." The board voted for French to attend the 2006 National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Organizations Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., in March.

French said he will have an opportunity to meet with legislators to advocate for the importance of the CDBG program.

He said the current proposal by President George Bush is to reduce the national allocation by \$1 billion.

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