

Several businesses named for county park

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Mattress Discounters, Aspen Dental and Rent-A-Center are among the businesses that are slated to set up shop at the Fayette Crossings development at the Fayette County Business Park in South Union Township.

During Tuesday's Fayette County Redevelopment Authority meeting, executive director Andrew French released a secured tenant list for the development, which already includes the confirmed tenants of Wal-Mart Super Center and Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar.

In addition to the aforementioned stores, the other confirmed tenants, as of Tuesday, include Sally Beauty, Great Clips, Cellular One, Game Stop and Oreck Vacuums. French said work at the redevelopment authority's business park continues, including double shifts on the Matthew Drive Extension project through the business park. French said the road will be operational by mid-November and then the final work will conclude next spring.

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French said although the authority has had numerous partners during the development of the business park, the authority remains in charge of the entire project. "We are fully responsible," French said.

Authority member Dee John said everyone should keep in mind that former executive director Raymond Polaski "had the vision and got (the business park) started." John said Polaski's name seems to get lost in the shuffle.

French said the authority has had numerous partners throughout the process of developing the former vacant land, including the state Department of Transportation, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, South Union Township officials and the Fayette County commissioners, who deeded the property to the authority and contributed \$2 million from a county bond issue. "We appreciate working with them," French said of the other officials.

French said he is anticipating a couple more restaurants and stores will officially sign on in a few weeks. Recently, the South Union Township supervisors said a tentative list of potential businesses that may locate in the business park, according to developer Cedarwood Development Inc., include Kohl's and International House of Pancakes (IHOP) and Sonic restaurants.

Cedarwood is developing 58 acres at the business park. The development, which is estimated to cost \$51.5 million, includes the 200,000-square-foot Wal-Mart Super Center, two strip shopping centers and the Applebee's Restaurant, for a total amount of approximately 430,000 square feet of retail space.

The development also includes infrastructure upgrades such as roads and water and sewer lines. Plans are to open the Wal-Mart Super Center before the end of the year. It will replace a Wal-Mart store at Cherry Tree Plaza.

In other business, French reported that the year-end single audit report for 2006 by Maher Duessel included one finding, which he described as a "minor issue." He said the audit also found that everything is in compliance for the authority regarding the accounting and administration of state and federal programs.

French said the authority was notified at the beginning of the audit about a new rule that went into effect early in 2006 in which someone other than the auditor must prepare a financial statement for the authority. French said he believes the requirement is "burdensome" for a smaller government entity and

the auditors said the authority is not alone in objecting to the finding. French said the auditors reported that 90 percent of the agencies they audited had the finding because they were small as well. French said the only alternatives are to hire a certified public accountant or hire another firm to do the financial statement prior to bringing in the auditors. "Both aren't feasible," French said.

After board member James Woleslagle confirmed the finding would not jeopardize any state or federal programs, he theorized that auditors have to find something.

French said the finding would come up again unless the authority hires another firm or CPA. He said possibly the auditing standards board would evaluate the issue.

Woleslagle said perhaps the auditing standards board would find that it isn't a finding at all, and "just a way of doing business."