



## \$300 million Chattahoochee project up for Cobb vote

By Janel Davis

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

A development team is proposing a \$300 million mixed-use project along the Chattahoochee River in Cobb County that has some area business owners worried about the impact on their companies.

If approved, Green Street Properties, Marthasville Development and Jamestown Properties would build a development with a mixture of residential and commercial components on about 81 acres in the south Cobb area on both sides of River View Road near I-285. The group is seeking a zoning change for the area from heavy industrial to Planned Village Community.

This popular type of development, where residents can live, work and shop, was approved unanimously, with stipulations, by the county's planning board earlier this month. The County Commission is set to make a final decision on Tuesday.

The Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority approved the project in December, and a mixed-use project like this is included in a master plan of the area completed last year.

The plan calls for 155 single-family homes, 332 townhomes, 165 condominiums, 200 senior housing units and 850 apartment units, along with retail and office space. The developers' attorney Garvis Sams calls the project an enhancement for the area that also will have an environmental impact as the group works to secure funding to clean up the riverbank.

"There are other mixed-use developments [in Cobb], but they haven't been able to leverage the river the way this project does," said Sams, a partner with Sams, Larkin and Huff in Marietta. Despite the proposed advantages, the development's location concerns some business owners in the area.

Members of the Chattahoochee Business Association organized and hired an attorney to present their concerns -- among them, traffic flow in an area they say can't handle the additional cars and that the project lies in the current 100-year flood plain.

[editorial]



[The Reynolds Group Inc.] [www.thereynoldsgroupinc.com]

A revision to the current flood plain has been submitted to the federal government that would impact this section of the Chattahoochee River, according to the planning documents.

Developers also are planning to fill and raise the road level in the lowest areas to solve any flooding issues. "There are portions of the 81 acres in the flood plain, but now we don't show any buildings in the flood plain," Sams said.

Still, the development so close to heavy industrial businesses would present problems, said Clint Stamps, a member of the business association and owner of Stamps Sand Co. "Everyone has the right to do what they want to do with their property, but in these times, Green Street took a gamble and I don't think this is the place for a live, play type of major development."

To make the plan work, developers plan to install buffers between the industrial businesses and make road improvements to help traffic flow. They agreed to a formula to balance the project between apartments and other uses, and will require residents to sign affidavits stating that they are aware of their industrial neighbors, noise and smells.

"Originally at public meetings, there was a concern that we were going to try to run [the existing industrial business owners] out of business, but I think we can co-exist in that area," said Commissioner Woody Thompson, whose district includes the proposed project.

Construction for mixed-use projects is not feasible right now, said Scott Amoson, research director for Colliers International, but the Cobb project has the advantage that developers are able to fund the project themselves.

"There is nothing else that will be in competition because everyone else will have to get financing," Amoson said. "It's far enough away from the industrial where the development won't affect it too much and close enough to other projects in south Cobb, so it definitely could be supported and coexist."

If approved, developers estimate a seven- to 10-year build-out of the project.

[editorial]



[The Reynolds Group Inc.] [www.thereynoldsgroupinc.com]