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## **OFFICIALS PREPARE FOR NEXT PHASE OF BUSINESS PARK DEVELOPMENT**

**Uniontown, PA** – Fayette County’s new, multi-use development in North Union Township is slated to be bid out for construction next month.

Fayette County Commissioners Dave Lohr, chairman; Vince Vicites and Scott Dunn; and Fayette County Redevelopment Authority Executive Director Andrew French met Monday to review plans for the business park, which will be located along Northgate Highway and Old Pittsburgh Road.

Sleighter Design President Rob Sleighter and Director of Engineering Ben Walls presented officials with master site, engineering and design plans, which were created in partnership with the redevelopment authority.

“The 85-acre property is anticipated to create a unique, suburban, commercial and residential development that will support the creation and expansion of local businesses,” French said. “Since purchasing the property in 2021, the redevelopment authority has worked with the commissioners to secure funding for the project, which included an initial \$1 million investment by the county that was used, in part, to secure an additional \$2.5 million in funding through the Pennsylvania Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP).”

French said Sleighter Design is also finalizing all necessary project permitting, including stormwater, erosion and sediment controls, as well as a Highway Occupancy Permit for the new entrance.

“With RACP funding secured and design and permitting close to completion, the redevelopment authority is preparing to place the initial phase of the development out to bid,” French said. “This first phase will include connection and installation of all utilities, site excavation and grading, and the installation of the new entrance and road leading into the site and first developable sites.”

Sleighter said the project team is also working on the development’s branding, which will pay tribute to the former landowner and 20th-century “business titan” JV Thompson.

“This is a really unique project, so we thought it would be good to give it an identity and build it around JV Thompson,” Sleighter said. “At one point, Thompson’s bank in Uniontown was one of the richest in the country.”

In 2004, Fayette County received a \$2 million state grant to create the Fayette County Business Park on state Route 40 in South Union Township.

Vicites said business growth will surely continue with the addition of the new business park right across the highway.

“Our existing development has attracted more than 50 businesses and \$115 million in private investment to date, and we’ve created more than 1,000 jobs in the South Union Business Park. Our new, mixed-use site will offer even more opportunities for commercial, medical, educational and residential facilities,” Vicites said. “We can continue to create jobs, promote economic development and grow our tax base for many years to come by developing this property. It’s great news for Fayette County that we’ve progressed to the point where we’re ready to plan a groundbreaking for this project this summer.”

Dunn said creating the new business park in North Union Township is “perfect timing” for Fayette County.

“With Menards purchasing nearly all the remaining acreage in our South Union business park, we’ll need more space for the many medical, professional, educational and business entities that have expressed interest in relocating to or expanding within Fayette County,” Dunn said. “This project was a huge undertaking, and I’m extremely pleased with the results of excellent teamwork between the county, Sleighter Design and the redevelopment authority.”

“I’ve been business-focused throughout my time in office, because growing business in Fayette County is good for everyone. This is how we develop, build and grow a thriving economy,” Lohr said. “One of the criteria businesses look for in selecting a community is whether or not there is a business park with ready-to-go land with attributes that fit their needs. Ultimately, they are looking for a site that balances quality, cost-effectiveness and flexibility of the space set in landscaped surroundings.”

Lohr said the business park site has “breathtaking views” and is “ideal for mixed-use development, incorporating both business and residential properties.

“In addition to encouraging economic investment, mixed-use business parks promote a sense of community and a sense of place,” Lohr said. “That’s a win for the businesses that land here; that’s a win for their workforce; and, ultimately, that’s a win for the people of Fayette County.”

Walls said the first phase of construction will include five lots this year, and the second phase will include the remainder of the development and a traffic signal. Officials expect to receive road permits from both the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and North Union Township, along with state and local stormwater permits, in June.

The Fayette County Planning Commission voted April 13 to recommend the site’s rezoning from agricultural to B-1 for business. That petition is slated for presentation to the commissioners on May 18, utility coordination and construction plans and specifications will also be completed this month.

Sleighter said this project has been “particularly rewarding,” as it allowed his team to work together with both the commissioners and redevelopment authority to achieve something exciting.

“With everything we do, we try to create an impact in our communities,” Sleighter said. “This is something new that the county hasn’t seen before, and we’re very proud to be part of this mixed-use project on a spectacular property that offers both beautiful views and endless potential.”

A request for final land development approval will be presented to the Fayette County Planning Commission on June 8, and the project will be advertised for bids beginning June 15. Construction is expected to begin August 1.

“The next phase of this project is always my favorite, because we finally get to start construction of what we’ve been working on for so long,” Walls said. “This is a beautiful property that will finally be used for the community. Now we’re to the point where we get to see things happen. Change is coming.”

For more information, contact the Fayette County Redevelopment Authority at 724-437-1547; or Sleighter Design at 724-438-4010.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit [www.fayettecountypa.org](http://www.fayettecountypa.org).

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