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West Chester heart emerging

Shops, restaurants, offices in \$16 million development

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WEST CHESTER TWP. - A new, \$16 million office-retail project at Centre Point and Towne Centre drives will be at the heart of the emerging township downtown district north of Union Centre Boulevard.

Construction is expected to begin this spring on a three-story, 75,000-square-foot building, the first of three buildings planned by Towne Centre Square Partners LLC at the southwest corner of the intersection. Two more two-story buildings, each 20,000 square feet, are planned later.

Tom McGill, real estate broker and vice president of Town Centre Square Partners, said the group is negotiating with high-end restaurant-bars and possibly a brewpub to anchor the project, west of Muhlhauser Road. Plans call for a mix of restaurants and stores on the first floor and professional offices on the second and third floors.

The site is across from a man-made lake and 2-acre township park with an 80-foot clock tower expected to open for August's Union Centre Boulevard Bash. Duke Realty Corp. has opened several office buildings nearby and a public library has been proposed.

Town Centre Square Partners includes members of West Chester 75 Inc., the private group that developed Union Centre with Schumacher Dugan Construction Co.

McGill said the 5-acre site was saved by West Chester 75 from among the 1,000 acres originally developed, with the idea that it would eventually become the downtown center.

J. Craig Rambo, president of McGill Smith Punshon Inc., architect for the park and Town Centre Square, said the buildings will have dual fronts, one facing the park and the other facing the rear parking area.

The West Chester Township Zoning Commission will consider the project's final development plan Feb. 26. Judi Boyko, the township's administrator, called the Towne Center Square project "fantastic."

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