

Clinton aldermen clear way for retail development

Clay Chandler, The Clarion-Ledger 1:51 p.m. CDT June 3, 2015



(Photo: Special to The Clarion-Ledger)

Clinton aldermen unanimously approved a zoning change Tuesday night that clears the way for a massive retail development at the corner of U.S. 80 and Springridge Road.

The 38-acre parcel abuts Mississippi College and was zoned special use before the vote. Its new commercial use designation will allow construction of a planned 240,000 square-foot shopping center that's comparable in size to Flowood's Dogwood Festival Market. To go with the zoning switch, aldermen granted the site a conditional use that Clinton spokesman Mark Jones said Wednesday would give Blackwater "a little bit of flexibility on the type of businesses they can bring in." The shopping center would be oriented to face Mississippi College. It would share a signalized intersection with one of the college's main entrances.



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[Clinton retail development proposed](#)

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The project's working title is Robinson Spring Shopping Center, named after one of the two springs on the site that were at least partly responsible for Clinton's original settlement in the 1800s.

Blackwater Resources, the project's Birmingham-based developer, filed the rezoning petition. In a phone interview Wednesday, Blackwater senior developer Jeff Werszner would not provide details about potential tenants. Mississippi College and a family trust own the parcels that make up the site. Werszner said the sale of those should close sometime this summer, after which construction will start. Expected completion is fall 2016, Werszner said. "At this point there are no major hurdles," he said.

Mayor Phil Fisher said in May that a historical cemetery on the property where former Gov. Walter Leake is buried will not be affected. "That's going to be left alone," he said. "I've never really dealt with something like this, a project of this magnitude," Fisher said in May. "Whether it happens fast or happens slow, it's hard to tell. I know we're excited about the possibility."

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