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DATE DISTRIBUTED 5/10/11 DATE OF ARTICLE 4/29/11 NEWSPAPER Dallas Business Journal

Official: Land deal in Euless delayed

Dallas Business Journal - by Candace Carlisle, Staff Writer

Date: Friday, April 29, 2011

The recent rezoning of 194 acres just north of D/FW Airport made the land a good buy for Andrew Prime, and Steve Sanders, director of Texas investments for Stratford Land. The acquisition of 194-acres of raw land near the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport has spurred discussion of a destination-style, mixed-use development in Euless.

The land deal was scheduled to finalize April 29 through a joint venture comprised of Stratford Land and Realty Capital Corp. The purchase price was not released.

The site is at the northwest corner of State Highway 183 and State Highway 360.

Until about a month ago, the 194-acres of land was zoned for commercial use. The Euless City Council approved a plan to change the zoning to roughly 60 percent residential and 40 percent commercial.

The acquisition of 194-acres of raw land near the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport was scheduled to happen today but, as can often happen, not everything got signed off in time, an official says.

Stratford Land and Realty Capital Corp. are working the deal through a joint venture.

The land acquisition was held up by some paperwork, but this isn't an indication of any of the plans changing, said Steve Sanders, director of Texas investments for Stratford Land.

"It's not a matter of if we are closing, but it's a matter of when," Sanders said.

The land acquisition in Euless, near State Highway 183 and State Highway 360, could bring developers and builders to the site for residential and commercial projects.

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Hurst, Euless, Bedford help students get to class, work

People who live in Hurst, Euless or Bedford and have limited transportation can get a ride to school or work in the HEB area for free. HEB residents can use HEB Transit if they're coming from a low-income family and have no car to get around.

The program started in August 2006. United Way helped fund the program, and the American Red Cross' Chisholm Trail Chapter operates the service. Ongoing operations come from a federal grant.

NE student Nira Yenga doesn't have a car. She said she got the word about HEB Transit through her mother.

"I've been using it for about a year now," she said. "I use it to take me to school. Sometimes I use it to take me to work but not all the time."

To qualify, people have to call one of six participating organizations: The Christian Connection, Mission Central, NEED Center East, St. John the Apostle Catholic Church or 6 Stones.

People who qualify receive a transit pass for the service. Once the pass is received, the person must schedule a ride and will get picked up in a bus.

The service currently operates 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Senior transportation planner James Powell said many people depend on the program.

"It's an honor system," he said. "There isn't a 'Provide us with your W-2 form from last year.' People who need it will find it."

Powell said United Way helped jump-start the program and also got money from federal grants.

"United Way gave \$25,000 back in 2005 as seed money," she said. "The other half came from grants and community money."

NE student Elizabeth Baltimore, who is blind, said she's used the HEB Transit system since 2006.

"Right now, I use it once a week since I'm only taking one class," she said. "During the summer, I'd use it four times a week. I don't really go anywhere else but school and back home. I'm an independent person."

Powell said the program will expand its services in June.

"Services are going to run through midnight and will have a Saturday service," he said.

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Star of the 24th

The Star of the 24th is an initiative created by Congressman Marchant to recognize outstanding citizens and groups in the 24th Congressional District of Texas.

STAR OF THE 24TH: 6 Stones and the Community Powered Revitalization Project

In the midst of celebrating its 100th anniversary, First Baptist Church of Euless found themselves on the brink of insolvency and without a leader. Scott Sheppard, then an Associate Pastor, said the massive debt and red ink on day-to-day expenses left little hope for repayment. Instead of closing its doors, the church began reverently praying for a miracle.

Within 27 months, six million dollars of debt was paid off and all other IOUs fulfilled -- a miracle indeed. According to Sheppard, overcoming this significant internal trial shifted the church's financial perspective towards helping others. Their new-found surplus of resources allowed the church to readily respond when the City of Euless needed assistance with a home revitalization project in 2008. After finishing their first home renovation, the church gained vision for a new non-profit, 6 Stones Mission Network. Launched in January 2009, 6 Stones is a coalition of cities, local churches, and businesses collaborating to meet the needs of those throughout Tarrant County.

Through 6 Stones, the Community Powered Revitalization (CPR) project was created in partnership with the Cities of Euless, Bedford and Hurst to help struggling homeowners with costly, necessary improvements. This spring, the program will surpass the 100th home assisted. While their services are offered year round, two CPR "Blitz" events take place annually, which involve a large volunteer base working together to impact several homes within two days. The product of one community's victory over financial woes is now breathing life into struggling communities across the 24th District of Texas. For this edition of the Star of the 24th, I've asked Sheppard, now the Executive Director of 6 Stones, to tell us more about the important work of the CPR program. Below the Q&A, you will also find pictures from their recent blitz in early April.

1. What is the mission of the Community Powered Revitalization (CPR) project and how did it get started?

CPR actually began in 2008 when Gary McKamie, City Manager of Euless, presented two churches the opportunity to help two families with terrific needs in maintaining their homes. They both were in great need, but just did not have the resources, expertise, or where-with-all to keep the homes up to code. The City of Euless had established a Leadership Team of employees representing every department of the city to not just lead, but to create and develop the program, along with area churches, businesses or

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other organizations that wanted to impact the community. That program was called Eulesless Revitalization. The First Baptist Church of Eulesless was so impacted by the opportunity to work on the first house, and realizing the many other growing needs in the community, launched a Non-Profit, called 6 Stones Mission Network. Its purpose was to renovate homes, as well as try to help meet needs throughout Hurst, Eulesless and Bedford.

Then in the summer of 2010, the invitation was extended to Bedford and Hurst to partner with 6 Stones and the City of Eulesless, to help homeowners in their cities as well. That was the birth of CPR, or Community Powered Revitalization.

2. What qualifies a person to receive help from the CPR project and how can they submit their name for assistance?

The cities have developed their approval process for the homes based upon their cities criteria, developed by their staff and council. Once it is approved, then 6 Stones / CPR jumps in to help coordinate the scope of work, the materials needed, the volunteers and resources necessary to complete the project. Residents can make an application through their local city.

3. What would you like readers to know about CPR?

We half-kiddingly, like to say, "It's amazing what you can do when you don't know you shouldn't have done it". The needs in our area, our state and our nation are large and they are growing. This is not a time to be looking for reasons why we cannot do something due to the lack of funds, or collaborating between faith-based organizations, cities, school districts and businesses. It's time to realize that we are all friends and neighbors and if we are to create change and make an impact, we have to look for ways and solutions to work together. As FDR said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." In many situations, we've let fear hold us all back from accomplishing great things together; but, that is changing in our area. As it says in Psalms 50, God owns the cattle on a 1000 hills. That's a pretty good business partner to have in any venture. We've put the two together and found a pretty successful formula in our community. Actually, we have found something that is probably unprecedented anywhere. We get calls from cities, churches, and other organizations that want to know how we do what we do because it is so unique and special. There is a great story brewing in HEB [Hurst, Eulesless, and Bedford] and Northeast Tarrant County.

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