

Balzac park opens new avenues of development

David Parker

Calgary Herald

Tuesday, May 27, 2008

Driving up the Queen Elizabeth II Highway, I was surprised with the amount of construction already giving a good indication of the size of the new CrossIron Mills Shopping Centre. It's huge and will provide more than a million square feet of retail upon completion. But I was equally impressed with the progress Avenue Commercial has made about 1.5 kilometres east along Highway 566, where it is developing Wagon Wheel Business Park.

It is designed for industrial/office/warehouse real estate use, yet all of the utilities are buried underground, the already built internal roads are 30 metres wide, allowing for eight-metre boulevards, and the site holds a 2.4-hectare pond that collects enough storm water to supply the 48.5 hectares of land with water for sprinklers.

Interestingly, since work began on the site, the low-water-level McDonald Lake that sits to the south of the park has revived and is attracting waterfowl again.

Avenue Commercial executive vice-president Garry Bobke says his company has gone all out to provide a classy environment for the purchasers that includes lots of trees in the well-planned landscaping.

He says planning was made easier thanks to great relationships with the Municipal District of Rocky View and the surrounding developers. Besides the shopping centre he has near neighbours that include the new racetrack, Hopewell Development, and Centron Group of Companies.

The development kicked off with the design-built construction for Westland, Western Canada's largest manufacturer, importer and distributor of lawn and garden supplies. It is now working out of a 40,000-square-foot warehouse and 30,000-square-foot automated soil bagging operation on 16 hectares of land it purchased.



CREDIT: Jenelle Schneider, Calgary Herald
Avenue Commercial executive vice-president Garry Bobke is spearheading Wagon Wheel Business Park -- an industrial development project -- along Highway 566 in Balzac.

In the same area of the park other large tracts of land have been purchased by Big Dog Lumber, Premier Nutrition and Rolling Mix Concrete. And on the west section of Wagon Wheel where the

Alberta Construction Safety Association has its offices and training classrooms, only three six-hectare lots remain available for sale.

Buyers include Skyline Roofing that will move into a new 40,000-square-foot building on its four hectares; Parts Canada that plans to build a 160,000-square-foot distribution centre; Ironwood Building Systems, and a Coptic Church.

The bulk of the 22.6 hectares in the next phase of Wagon Wheel is under contract with a large distributor, which means the park is a huge success for Avenue Commercial.

With Highway 566 scheduled for upgrading to four lanes and Metis Trail planned to reach north to the racetrack, the whole area is going to attract a lot more development.

Bobke joined Avenue Commercial in 2003 as a partner with Steve Butt after spending 16 years with the big commercial shops of Royal Le Page, CB Richard Ellis and J.J. Barnicke. Wagon Wheel is a major project that is being overseen by Kit Rowley, manager special projects which gives Bobke more time to handle other clients' needs -- from buying, selling and leasing of commercial real estate and related businesses to property management, consulting and group investment.

Among the company's current projects is the restoration and re-tenanting of a 90,000-square-foot office/warehouse building on 8th Street and 36th Avenue S.E. in Highfield Park.

- - -

Bill Brunton and his team at Stratus Marketing have been working with Andrew MacLachlan, the new CEO at Habitat for Humanity on an outdoor and radio awareness campaign. But on June 5 they will be working for Habitat, helping to build its four duplex development in Mayland Heights.

Stratus has organized a group of its own staff plus others in the local marketing/advertising community to volunteer work hours or donate hard costs to help Habitat.

Debra Lamb of MediaWorks got so motivated she convinced Corus Entertainment to get involved and it plans to show up with 20 or 30 people, an on-site remote and community calendar notes on its three stations.

Brunton's company has just completed another interesting assignment for the

Canadian Meat Packers Association. It's been tough persuading young people to work in meat processing industry, just like any other trade, so Stratus was hired to produce a campaign to recruit workers.

The strategy that was developed was successfully used to find funding for the campaign that has run in Alberta, B.C. and Saskatchewan to drive people to the association's website where information is available and jobs are posted.

- - -

Congratulations to Jeff Shevchuk of Clover Leaf Seafoods who has been installed as the new president of the Calgary Food & Drug Executives. This organization of like-minded packaged goods professionals has been active in this city since 1974.

- - -

David Parker appears Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. He can be reached at 830-4622 or e-mail info@davidparker.ca

© The Calgary Herald 2008

CLOSE WINDOW

Copyright © 2008 CanWest Interactive, a division of [CanWest MediaWorks Publications, Inc.](#) All rights reserved.

CanWest Interactive, a division of [CanWest MediaWorks Publications, Inc.](#) All rights reserved.



Balzac park opens new avenues of development



Avenue Commercial executive vice-president Garry Bobke is spearheading Wagon Wheel Business Park -- an industrial development project -- along Highway 566 in Balzac.

Photograph by : Jenelle Schneider, Calgary Herald