



# River District Project Update

February 5, 2013

---

**Streetscape Projects:** Virginia Carolina Paving, the City's streetscape construction contractor, moved from the north side of the 300 block of Main Street to Union Street in mid-December to allow stores and restaurants to operate without disruption through the Christmas holidays. The contractor has been working on the Union Street sidewalks and will continue there through the end of the month while resuming work on Main Street.

Storm drain construction is continuing up the 400 block of Main Street. Crews have begun work on the south side of the 300 block of Main Street demolishing the existing sidewalk. It is anticipated that streetscape improvements on that block will take six weeks.

Light poles will soon be installed on the north side of the 300 block of Main Street, as will intersection traffic signal poles at Main and Market and at Spring and Union. Crosswalk installation and street paving of both the 300 block of Main Street and Union Street will be completed this spring. Landscaping will be installed in finished areas.

Bids were received on January 29<sup>th</sup> from three construction companies for Phase 2 project work at the Main and Craghead "100% Corner." The lowest base bid of \$1,912,595 was submitted by the current streetscape contractor, Virginia Carolina Paving. It is anticipated that construction will begin early this spring and run concurrently with Phase 1 work up Main Street. Phase 2 work, including the new fountain donated by JTI, will take a year to complete.

**Design Guidelines:** Review of the River District Design Guidelines was completed by the Planning Commission last November. City Council discussions on the guidelines took place during the December 18 and January 15 work sessions. Additional discussion is scheduled for the February 19 work session. The Planning Commission is recommending adoption of the proposed River District Overlay District and the River District Design Guidelines.

**Downtowner Site:** The hotel demolition and preliminary site work is now complete. The final use of the site will be determined by City Council with input from the public, the Industrial Development Authority (IDA), and the Danville Development Authority (DDA). Land Planning & Design Associates (LPDA), the City's streetscape consultant, has prepared a range of design concepts depicting parking and park uses of the site. Mayor Saunders has appointed Vice-Mayor Miller and Councilmen Jones, Shanks, and Vogler to a special committee to prepare recommendations. Staff and LPDA representatives will meet with the committee on February 11 and separately on February 14 with the IDA and DDA.

**River District Parking:** The Danville Development Authority is taking on primary responsibility for the River District's public parking and streetscape programs. The Public Works Department is providing staff support to the Authority. Under the DDA's guidance, LPDA and its subcontractor, Carl Walker, are working on a proposed comprehensive parking management plan that would improve both current and future parking conditions. The design team is reviewing previous parking-related planning efforts, examining current parking conditions for on-street and off-street, and public and private lots, and estimating future parking conditions based on existing and proposed development projects.

**Economic Development:** Several private investments are currently being made in the River District, including the following:

- The IDA has sold the former Piedmont Hardware Store on 554 Craghead Street to Supply Resources for \$135,000 so that the company can expand its headquarters in the River District. Supply Resources has twelve months to begin construction on the renovations in the building, or the property reverts back to the IDA.
- Web Parts has purchased 442 Main Street from the IDA for \$175,000. The company is making over \$400,000 in improvements in the first phase of the project and will continue to improve space as it grows and add employees.
- Stephen Staats, the developer of the Smith Seeds property on Lynn Street, has indicated that the renovation work for the 20 apartments and commercial space on the first floor should be completed by in late April.
- Progress on the Pemberton Lofts project is going very well. The first phase of the project, which includes 62 market rate apartments, is well underway and includes two spaces for restaurants on the first floor. It is the developers' expectation that the space will be completed by this July.
- Lenders and the New Market Tax Credit attorneys are waiting for the RDD Project to get cost estimates in shape, so that it can move forward at the former Dan River Research Building.

**Marketing & Signage:** The renaissance of the River District provides an opportunity to build community optimism and enthusiasm about building a better future for Danville. As with a commercial product, the River District needs to convey an appealing, inspiring image to current residents, newcomers, visitors, and recruited businesses. To help accomplish this, staff and consultants are developing a marketing plan and designs for roadway and pedestrian signage that could eventually be extended throughout the City. A partnership of North Star Destination Strategies of Nashville, Tennessee and the AECOM Wayfinding Studio of Orlando, Florida has been selected through a competitive procurement process to assist the City in this effort. The Danville Regional Foundation is providing a \$25,000 grant to support this project.

Issued by the City Manager's Office