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News

Scoping out downtown project

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BRISTOL — Planning is under way for the eventual redevelopment of the city-owned downtown property.

Ryan Porter, project manager for Renaissance Downtowns, said his company is developing a “scope of studies.”

The scope of studies will show the “deliverables,” or results that the developer intends to bring to the finished project, he said. It also will include plans for open space and infrastructure such as roads on the 17-acre former mall property.

“It’s a timeline,” said Frank Johnson, chairman of the Bristol Downtown Development Corp., the non-profit entity that is overseeing the project.

Mayor Art Ward said he’s “really impressed” with the way Long Island-based Renaissance quickly opted to rent office space inside City Hall — the lease takes effect July 1 — and hit the ground running.

In working on the scope of studies, Porter said he met recently with City Planner Alan Weiner and Jonathan Rosenthal, who heads the Bristol Development Authority.

“They’re trying to coordinate it through the BDA with the BDDC and ideally, get all the players together,” said Ward.

Porter said Renaissance will take privately owned properties that are outside the 17-acre parcel into consideration to see which Johnson said Renaissance will keep the BDDC informed, either through verbal reports at its monthly meetings or in writing.

“It’ll be a means of measuring the progress and keeping the city informed of where things are in the overall planning process,” said Johnson.

The scope of studies is the first piece of work Renaissance must complete according to its agreement with the city and the BDDC. It’s due one month from the signing of the agreement, which means before the end of June.

Porter said that once the city approves the scope of studies, the partnership including the city, the BDDC and Renaissance will move forward to begin the work.

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