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Bovines to boutiques: Howell Mill project moves ahead

Sign keeps drivers apprised of development of former slaughterhouse area

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Construction fences usually provide minimal information: what's going up, or tenants being sought. Often, they say nothing.

But at the White Provision Redevelopment on Howell Mill Road at 14th Street in west Midtown, the developers are trying to be more communicative with the thousands of motorists who pass by their project every day.

They've hung a "construction information" banner that explains a portion of the hulking former slaughterhouse and meat packing plant will be removed and "everything to the right of this sign will remain."

Chris Faussemagne, a principal in White Provision Redevelopment, said the banner went up to allay public fears the entire site would be razed.

Concerns were expressed in e-mails and in conversations at JCT Kitchen & Bar, next door to the project site at Westside Urban Market.

Faussemagne said his company, and co-developer Weaver & Woodbery, plan to update the banner as the project evolves. Next up, after demolition ends in a couple of months, will be news about a new 610-space parking deck.

The original White Provision building dates to 1910 and was added on to several times until 1937. It was the first large-scale meatpacking facility in the South. Cattle were offloaded from trains and herded up a ramp to meet their maker in the Industrial Gothic building.

A copy of the original architectural drawings is displayed in the project headquarters. One area is marked "Warm Fancy Meat Room."

The plan is to build offices and shops in the 170,000-square-foot "battleship-type structure," Faussemagne said. A new split-level building — nine stories and five stories — will contain condo units and retail.

The office component could be finished late next year and the residential portion in early 2009. Overall, the \$80 million project will have about 300,000 square feet of space, including a retail building that will go up in a second phase.

A pedestrian bridge will be erected over the Norfolk Southern rail line to connect White Provision and Westside Urban Market, home to Bacchanalia, Taqueria del Sol and other businesses.

West Midtown is sizzling with development. More than 1,400 houses, townhouses and apartments, and 150,000 square feet of retail, are planned for 45 acres near White Provision in a project called West Town. To the east of White Provision is Atlantic Station.

Faussemagne and White Provision partner Mike Millett found inspiration walking the Chelsea neighborhood in New York. As a result, they decided to keep the buildings at mid-level height and to seek small retailers instead of large chain stores.

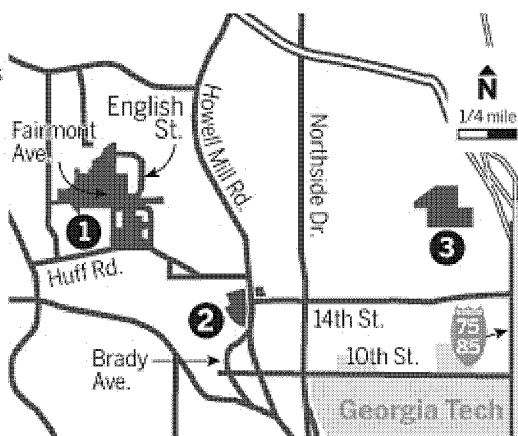
Although the developers are not yet marketing the project, it already has an office tenant — Knoll, a maker of stylish workplace furniture. Knoll will move into the former slaughterhouse space.

First there were bovines. Now come the boutiques.

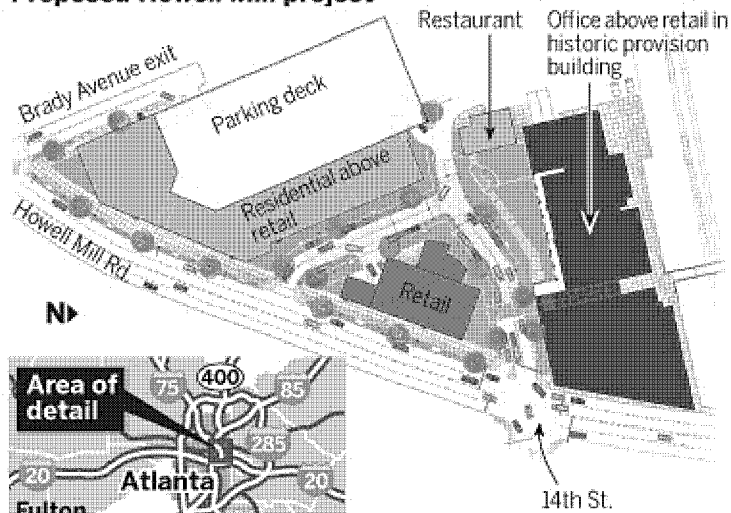
HOWELL MILL DEVELOPMENTS

White Provision Redevelopment plans to build offices by late next year with the residential portion completed in early 2009.

- 1 West Town
- 2 Proposed Howell Mill project
- 3 Atlantic Station



Proposed Howell Mill project




Source: Whiteprovision.com

JEMAL R. BRINSON / Staff

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