

Hawley Silkmill LCC Announces Decision on Castle Purchase

By Thomas Renn
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Hawley, Pa. -

Hawley Silkmill LLC, a group of local investors, is exploring redeveloping the former silkmill into a multi-use building which would bring more businesses to Hawley Borough. They announced they are moving forward on the purchase of the building. The redevelopment of the former Castle building in the Borough took another step forward as investors announced they will be buying the building.

Hawley Silkmill LLC representatives told The News Eagle Thursday morning they took the first step to buying the building by waiving the contingencies that were part of the purchase agreement made in January. Investor and Attorney Anthony Waldron said Hawley Silkmill hopes to close on the building in the first part of May.

Hawley Silkmill, a group of investors with local ties, plans to redevelop the building into a mixed of retail, professional offices, and possibly educational space. The building was originally built as a state of the art silk mill in the late 1800s, before becoming the home Castle Antiques in the 1990s.

Waldron said the contingencies included an inspection of the building, clear title to the property and willingness of Hawley Borough to consider the group's plans. He noted that while the Council could not give the approval, he said they were at least open to consider the plans.

In all, the property amounts to 2.7 acres and includes five buildings — the main building, the Cocoon building, two newer warehouses and a two or three car garage. He said financing for a portion of the purchase and initial development will come from a loan through a local bank.

Waldron said the project is really a community project, although a for profit partnership is leading it. He noted many local organizations are offering their support and most of the people involved in the planning are local or have local ties.

When asked how many jobs the project would bring in, Waldron said he did not want to give some outrageous number that in the end the project couldn't support. He estimated it would be about a 100 when completed. He said there would about 20 construction jobs. He said the plan is to phase the work in, would mean the construction jobs would last a little longer.

He added if they get a college or school in the building, the students coming to classes would help the local economy. He explained the students coming for classes could find their way downtown to help local businesses.

Waldron said work would begin as soon as possible after the closing on the property — which he said was being purchased for a seven-figure number. The first work he said would mostly be the removal of the warehouse, which sits between Route 6 and Welwood. The warehouse is 17 or 18 years old and he noted they have three potential buyers.

While Hawley Silkmill is still assembling the team to work on the project, Phase I would come next, he said. That work would start after the plans are finished and approved by the Borough.

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