



The former Staunton Correctional Center property is the site for a proposed development. The grounds contain 34 buildings and an historic cemetery

File

Extensive property presents challenges

Miller awaits city, state negotiations

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STAUNTON — The vision is a village. A community within the historic Staunton community, featuring residential space, commercial offices, retail and hospitality, including hotels and restaurants across 84 acres. It would be the first development of its kind in Staunton.

Richmond-based developer Robin Miller of Miller and Associates is eager to tackle the former Western State property, calling it “an enormous project with incredible challenges.” Located at Richmond Road and Greenville Avenue, the property is an eye-catcher, spread on rolling hills at downtown’s entrance with 34 buildings and an historic cemetery.

Miller and Associates — selected by the city in June — is part of a three-company team, along with The Folsom

Group and Arcadia Land Company.

But at the moment, Miller can only mark time. “We’re ready to go as soon as we can arrive at an acceptable price from the state in selling it to the city,” Miller said.

He’s hoping it will take weeks, not months, but he’s prepared. “My guess is it will take two to three months before we have a legally binding contract that Staunton works out with the state.”

Until then, Miller said he’s not

willing to go into much detail on his plans for the property. He wants to make sure the details are solid first.

Miller’s ideal time to begin work is late spring or early summer. He hopes the building will hold up until then. “We need to move rapidly because old buildings deteriorate rapidly and I would hate for one of those to go through another winter,” he said of the property, which has been shut down since December 2002.

“I’m very hopeful that the city

and state can negotiate a price, and we can get in there and stabilize the building and put some security in there and then protect the building so that we don’t have a problem,” he said.

With two large undertakings on the threshold, does Robin Miller have his eyes set on anything else in Staunton?

“Right now we’re sort of maxed out in terms of manpower in what we’re working with now, but once we get going a little farther on the Y, I’ll be very interested in doing some

other projects in Staunton,” he said. “I think it’s a great city.”

He’s been scouting, but hasn’t set his heart on anything yet. “I have looked at some other buildings downtown,” Miller said. “No, I don’t have another particular building (in mind). I have talked to some property owners ... frankly, I haven’t had time to focus on another one, but I am interested.”