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## **Developers say retail center will be 'unique and exciting'**

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By fall, developers could start building a commercial center that would bring 660,000 square feet of retail -- twice as much as what the Deer Park Town Center currently offers -- to South Barrington.

Still, Village President Frank Munao said he wouldn't make the characterization that the community is now changing.

He explained the Arboretum of South Barrington, if approved, would be another slice of the 610-acre pie that was the Klehm property, most of which has been consumed by the Woods of South Barrington. And changes to the overall swath of land, including rezoning it, have been six years in the making.

"With that zoning, we've had six years to live with it," Munao said, adding, "Once the residents have seen what it is, they're really impressed with it. (The Arboretum) won't be a run-of-the-mill shopping center."

The 80-acre property on which the Arboretum would be built would be cradled by Route 59, Higgins Road and Bartlett Road.

"We are trying to create what I believe will be the most unique and exciting retail facility in the northwest suburbs," said Scott Lucas, co-manager of the development with Mike Jaffe and development director Jonathan Payne.

Both Lucas and Jaffe worked on the Deer Park Town Center and have developed other lifestyle centers across the country. They are seeking to do them all one better with the Arboretum, and believe they will do so with its proximity to Interstate 90, its Tudor-style architecture, its landscaping, and its mix of more than 130 upscale apparel shops and high-end, home-related stores.

"We wanted to make sure this was a step above the other centers in terms of architecture and what's been found not only in our previous projects but also other projects in the area," Lucas said.

The mall's name is intended to both pay tribute to the Klehm property's history as a tree farm and provide a theme to help break up the expansive site into distinctive destinations. Each one would be named after a species of tree, and each section's streets would have as its primary piece of landscaping its arboreal namesake.

"This type of care and detail was not provided at any of the other properties. And in fact, I'm not familiar with one that takes it this far in the city of Chicago," Lucas said.

A lifestyle center differs from the traditional mall in several ways, including offering an outdoor setting. Lucas said shoppers can drive up to the store of their choice, park, go in, and get out with ease, rather than spending their time walking longer distances, for example. Lifestyle proponents also argue that the outdoor centers offer a wider array of higher-quality stores.

What the developers believe will truly set the Arboretum apart from existing shopping centers is its designation of roughly half its retail space for home-related services and goods, including not only furniture but also, kitchen and bath, appliances, door coverings, window treatments, bedding and home food.

"We're finding that as the Baby Boom generation ages, there is an increasing emphasis on what we refer to as dressing a home as much as dressing themselves," Lucas said. "People want to reflect their lifestyle not just in what they wear but also in their home."

The Arboretum developers are currently seeking preliminary approval for the project and were scheduled to appear before the Plan Commission Wednesday.

Lucas said they hope to begin construction this summer and have the shopping center open by late fall of 2007. They expect to build it all in one phase, but they have the flexibility to do it in stages if necessary, he said.

South Barrington Village Manager David Pierce said estimates of how much revenue the Arboretum will generate for the village would depend on the mix of tenants, which the developers won't yet announce.

"We think the numbers are going to be very good for us," Pierce said. "Obviously, 600,000 square feet of retail space would be extremely beneficial to the village, and the restaurants would also generate food and beverage taxes."

Pierce said the village has not received any significant negative comments about the mall. He noted it has been envisioned since the Klehm property was annexed into South Barrington in 2001.