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Public hearing scheduled for major Sheffield resort development

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Posted: Wednesday, December 9, 2015 12:20 am | Updated: 1:31 am, Wed Dec 23, 2015.

By Russ Corey Staff Writer | 0 comments

SHEFFIELD — A major development along the Tennessee River that would include a resort, restaurants and retail shops is the subject of a public hearing Thursday.

The meeting begins at 6 p.m. in the City Hall auditorium.

The meeting is being held to gather input and discuss certain actions the city proposes to take regarding the development of about 160 acres of city-owned property between Spring Creek and the road leading to the water treatment plant.

According to a legal advertisement that ran in the *TimesDaily*, Inspiration Landing Development, LLC, is proposing to construct a mixed-use resort development on the city property and 150 acres of privately owned adjacent property that lies west of Spring Creek.

City officials said the development would include a resort, restaurants, a marina on Spring Creek, a boardwalk, retail shops and a 4,500-seat amphitheater.

The developers are expected to also outline what they are seeking from the city and Sheffield Utilities.

"This is a hearing to discuss what the city will commit to this project," City Clerk Clayton Kelly said. "It will be discussed for public input, then settled at some point in time."

Kelly said he believes the project can work, but the city needs to determine exactly what the developers are proposing and what they're projecting.

According to the public notice, the proposed improvements are projected to generate up to \$415,000 annually in property taxes. Hospitality, entertainment and retail components of the project are expected to generate up to \$1.3 million in sales and lodging taxes annually.

"Other direct public benefits will be produced by the increased population of the residential area of the project that will increase state appropriations for education and TVA in-lieu-of-tax revenue," according to the notice. "Indirect public benefits will result from increased tourism activity, increased property values and increased commercial activity outside the project area."

John Elkington, who is credited with the redevelopment of the Beale Street tourist area in Memphis, is listed as the organizer of Inspiration Landing Development, according to the Alabama secretary of state's website.

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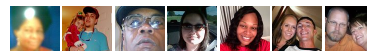


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The site indicates the domestic limited liability company was formed Nov. 10 in Montgomery County.

According to an article in the Vanderbilt University magazine, 4.2 million visitors come to Beale Street annually.

Sheffield Mayor Ian Sanford invited Elkington to Sheffield in the late 1990s during Sanford's first term in office to help the city create a concept for a downtown entertainment district.

Sanford said he could not comment on Inspiration Landing's development because he and his family are part owners of the privately held property. The mayor said he did not want to create an appearance of impropriety during negotiations.

The property in question was the site of a proposed golf course and resort development in 2008-09. The project was impacted by the "Great Recession" of 2008 and never moved forward.

The new development proposal does not include a golf course.

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