

# Courtyard by Marriott planned for RiverHeath



Maureen Wallenfang, USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin 4:57 p.m. CST February 16, 2016



(Photo: Courtesy of RiverHeath)

APPLETON - Construction will begin this spring on a \$12 million Courtyard by Marriott hotel at the RiverHeath complex.

The 95-room hotel will be built on RiverHeath's north end, adjacent to Telulah Park, with views of the Fox River.

It's expected to open in spring 2017.

"The hotel has been a part of the master plan from the beginning," said Mark Geall, principal of Tanesay Development, RiverHeath's developer. "It's something we've been contemplating for years. There aren't that many waterfront hotels in this area. We thought it was a neat area to build a hotel by the trails and Lawrence University."

"We're always thrilled when we see that there's a new business coming in that can add to our tax base and add to the community," said Karen Harkness, Appleton's director of community development. "Twelve million is a hefty development. I see additional tax base, additional jobs and quality of life."

RiverHeath is a mixed-use development on the river that currently includes townhomes, an apartment building and some retail space in the ground floor of the apartment building. Its zoning allows both residential and commercial uses.

The development is at the east side of the College Avenue Bridge near Lawrence University's Banta Bowl. The RiverHeath property was purchased in 2008 and construction started in 2010.

Courtyard by Marriott is known primarily as a business travelers' hotel. Tanesay will own the hotel and operate it as a franchise. The new hotel will have a lounge, exercise studio and business center, and will overlook the river and trails.

"Our hope is, as the hotel is finished, that the trail will go from our boardwalk into lower Telulah Park, opening it up to people," Geall said.

In addition to the hotel, RiverHeath's current building phase includes a second apartment building slated to open in October. It has 40 units and underground parking. Geall said one-quarter of its units has been pre-leased.

The entire development, including the two new structures, stands at a total investment of more than \$30 million.

The property is in Appleton's Tax Incremental Financing district No. 8.

Tanesay Development gets a portion of the tax increment back after it pays taxes to the city. "To date we've drawn down about \$1.5 million," said Geall.

RiverHeath is eligible for a payback capped at \$9.75 million if it builds structures up to \$50 million in value.

The hotel and second apartment building were designed by architect Mark Ernst. CD Smith Construction of Fond du Lac is the general contractor.

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