

Uptown on The Rise: New shopping center shows promise for OKC district

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The Rise shopping strip will be built at NW 23rd Street and Walker Avenue in Oklahoma City. (Photo by Brent Fuchs)

OKLAHOMA CITY – A development that will bring a new face to the Uptown 23rd Street area has broken ground and still expects to meet its fall opening deadline.

Land Run Commercial Real Estate Advisors President and CEO Johnathan Russell said the company broke ground on the renovation of the 22,000-square-foot Hotel and Motel Liquidation building in May. The building is at the corner of 23rd Street and Walker Avenue.

“We are working on updating our floor plans,” he said.

Russell said the space in The Rise is 70 percent leased now, but he could not announce the names of the tenants just

yet.

“Leasing efforts are going very, very well,” he said.

He said the update for the floor plans includes changing a mezzanine area into rentable space. The front façade will stay the same with the contemporary look, while the exterior of the back of the building could change.

“We’ve had a lot of interest,” he said. “At this point, it’s just trying to piece it together. We want to make sure we have tenants that fit well together.”

The space will be divided into retail, a restaurant and a pub bar space. The pub bar and restaurant are leased, while there is still retail space available.

“But we’ll consider anything,” he said. “Things can change.”

He said he expects his property to bring a new look to the redeveloping Uptown area; however, he does not give himself credit for any earlier developments in the area.

“There have been people working in that area for a long, long time,” he said. “I don’t want to take away any credit that they deserve. The magnitude of our project unmistakably has a big impact. But I don’t want to take too much credit for something people have been doing for a long time. The magnitude and square footage will definitely be a positive impact.”

One person who has been working on developments in the Uptown 23rd area is President Jennifer Seal, president of Uptown 23rd. The neighborhood and merchants’ association was formed in 2011 to help promote the area. Her husband, Greg Seal, is the owner of Granddad’s at 317 NW 23rd St.

“I’m very hopefully that The Rise will be that linchpin of showing the citizens that Uptown 23rd is making a huge resurgence in improving our city and that it is a growing, vibrant area for people to not only live, but come shop and have a drink,” she said.

She said in the next year, two more restaurants are expected to open, as well as two other businesses.

“Those things were happening even before The Rise was in the thought of those developers,” she said. “Once The Rise starts some retail property, it will be even a further catalyst for the area.”

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