

FEATURED

TOP STORY

## Look for shovels in the ground for Bainbridge soon, says BDC

By Jane Bellmyer [jbellemyer@cecilwhig.com](mailto:jbellemyer@cecilwhig.com)

Jul 31, 2020



Carl Roberts, chairman of the Bainbridge Development Corporation board of directors, addressed the Port Deposit Mayor and Town Council last week, giving an update on the impending development of the former naval training center

CECIL WHIG PHOTO BY JANE BELLMYER

**PORT DEPOSIT** — Almost a year after their last presentation to the mayor and town council, members of the Bainbridge Development Corporation reported that ground could be broken on the former naval training base soon.

"We hope to break ground in September or even August," Toni Sprenkle, project manager, said at the recent Port Deposit town meeting. "We will keep everyone informed. There will be some kind of ceremony for shovels in the ground."

Steve Cassard, executive director, said all the players involved a year ago are still on board.

Meanwhile, Artesian, which owns Port Deposit's water system, is in discussions with BDC about getting its distribution lines to the development site.



Cassard noted that the cost of both projects has dropped lately. Getting sewer and water in place could mean more than one tenant in the first phase.

Carl Roberts, chairman of the BDC board, said meetings are being planned with Scott Flanigan, director of the Cecil County Department of Public Works.

"We intend to meet ... regarding the engineering to put the sewer line in the ground," Roberts said.

As for the historic Tome School for Boys prospects, Sprenkle said there remains three buildings untouched by fire; the Headmaster's House, Madison House and Monroe House.

The stability and protection of those structures is at the forefront of that aspect of the BDC for now.

A year from now Roberts said the development at Bainbridge would be in full view.

"By September 2021 the grubbing will be finished," Roberts said. "We get the structure in the ground people are going to come."

"TPM continues to be our partner and they continue to work with MRP Industrial with some other prospects for full development in phase one," Cassard said.



He brought even better news to the town board.

"Now there's talk of a spec building," Cassard said of the proposed 500,000-square-foot turn-key building. According to Cassard an occupied building of that size could mean property tax revenue for the town up to \$230,000 annually.

He added a building that size attracts a certain type of operation to the site, zoned for Business and Industrial.

"500,000-square-foot buildings are attractive," Cassard said. "They are good sites for a distribution or fulfillment type activity or data centers."

All the site prep and construction will mean changes, Sprenkle said. Her offices and the truck driver training school operated by Cecil College will relocate to a site on the opposite side of the 1,200-acre property.

"The location of our offices and Cecil College classes are smack dab in the middle of phase one," she said, adding the college has expressed its intention of keeping the school at Bainbridge. "But they do have specific needs for their (driver training) route."

"We are planning on moving our offices and classrooms together right inside the (Route) 222 gate," Sprenkle said. That move will take place before the year's end.

BDC officials are confident that the infrastructure challenges of the site are being met.

"The county has a \$2 million contribution to that and the state may chip in \$4 million," Cassard said. Add to that developer contributions, he said. "We're also talking about additional funds from the 2021 session of the Maryland General Assembly. They are very eager to support it."

