

Local News

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Cafe signals business is brewing

BY HEIDI FALLON | COMMUNITY PRESS STAFF WRITER

COLLEGE HILL -- Last week's unveiling of the newly named and greatly enhanced coffee shop proved the community is serious about its business climate and its caffeine.

The College Hill Coffee Company and Casual Gourmet is what new owner Tina Stoeberl calls "the jewel that will anchor the development" adjacent her at Hamilton Avenue and North Bend Road.

ADVERTISEMENT Stoeberl started negotiating with the previous owners nine months ago.

"It had always been my dream to own an antique shop or a bed and breakfast," she said. "Now I have the best of both -- I can serve customers, chat with people, sell unique gift items and I don't have to change the sheets."

Once Stoeberl, who has become an active leader in the neighborhood, sealed the deal, she immediately started plotting and planning to enhance what was already a popular business.

She expanded the menu, adding sandwiches like the Linden Park Commons in honor of the retail and condo development planned for the former Wigwam site.

She augmented the selection of gift items to German crafts and home goods.

She extended the hours to 6:30 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday and to 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Sunday the restaurant is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Stoeberl is quick to say she didn't open to rave reviews without help.

"We had nine days to pull this together," she said. "New Year's Eve was my 40th birthday so we had a party here and then closed.

"The next day we started working, sometimes getting only a couple of hours sleep a night until we opened. Friends and people in the community just pitched in to help."

Marty Weldishofer, one of those friends and president of the College Hill Community Urban Development Corp., said he spent many evenings scrubbing floors.

"It's just fabulous that someone like Tina was ready to step up and make sure this location and this business continued," he said.

With her personal dream realized, Stoeberl and the ambitious group of community leaders are looking toward the rest of their plans for College Hill.

The demolition of the Wigwam is slated for early spring to make way for construction of retail, commercial and condos.



ZOOM
Tina Stoeberl takes a much-deserved break on her first day of business at the College Hill Coffee Company and Casual Gourmet.

The first phase of the corners' development then will move across the street to the vacant Eastern Star property. Weldishofer said that 10-plus acre site will have 24 single-family homes.

The second phase will include more retail, office and condos where the abandoned Kroger store now sits.

All of the \$28 million development, which has been in various designs on the drawing board for several years, will be financed by private developers, plus federal and city money, Weldishofer said.

After years of battling what Weldishofer calls "naysayers," he and Stoeberl and the others who have lead the charge to revitalize their community now are ready to sit back and watch it happen.

They plan to sit and watch and enjoy a steaming cup of coffee.

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