

Olde Towne East prime for housing upgrade

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A joint venture of three developers hopes to build 40 market-rate apartments on a vacant South Parsons Avenue site north of Bryden Road in Columbus.

Brexton LLC, Woods Development Group and Arch City Development have asked the city to adjust zoning requirements on commercial land at 122 S. Parsons Ave. to pave the way for construction. The group hopes to start building in May or June.

The plan calls for 16 two-story brownstones with two bedrooms each, basements and attached garages along an alley. Also proposed are 12 two-story, two-bedroom brownstones facing Parsons and 12 one-bedroom flats with dens on upper floors.

Developer [Michael Woods](#) said the setting in Olde Towne East should distinguish the project from apartments being built on the west side of Interstate 71 downtown.

“The idea is to create something a little different, to give residents the chance to live in an actual neighborhood,” he said.

The developers think the apartments, from 1,035 to 1,800 square feet of living space, will attract young professionals and couples and empty-nesters.

“We’re making them more upscale units than your typical Olde Towne (renovated) units,” said [Jim Tribble](#), Brexton business development manager.

The site has been vacant for about 15 years after fire destroyed a carpet warehouse there.

The neighborhood has seen investment to renovate its aged housing stock for 30 years.

“This project is the natural progression for a neighborhood that has not just stabilized but is thriving,” said [Ken Wilcox](#), president of the Olde Towne East Neighborhood Association.

Wilcox, a real estate agent, expects more developers to plan renovation and construction projects in the neighborhood this year.

“There’s a lot of stuff happening behind the scenes,” he said. “We’ll see the new buildings (that) Victorian Village saw in the 1980s.”