

Bellefonte Waterfront Project Out for Bid



A design rendering depicts the hotel portion of the planned Bellefonte Waterfront project. Image courtesy bellefontewaterfrontproject.com

By [Vincent Corso](#) - August 12, 2022
[Business](#) | [Community](#) | [Local News](#)

Don't fret, Bellefonte: The much-anticipated Bellefonte Waterfront Project is inching closer to reality. Developers have completed designs for the hotel and parking garage and have sent the project out to bid with hopes to break ground by the end of the year.

Developer Tom Songer II told The Centre County Gazette, "At this time, we are hoping to begin the deep foundations before the end of this year and start the vertical construction by next spring. We are hoping that material costs come down by then."

In February, Songer said he was hoping that work would begin this summer. The project has been in the works [since 2018](#), and the original plan was to start construction in the summer of 2020. [COVID foiled that plan](#), and the start date continues being pushed back. Nonetheless, developers have continued to move forward, working to make the dream a reality.

The waterfront area has remained vacant since a 2006 fire destroyed the iconic Bush House. Songer and project managing partner Mark Morath said in a May [2022 vision statement](#) for the project that they believe the project "will be the catalyst to enhance Bellefonte's vibrant and active community, where people will want to visit and live, while supporting other businesses in the downtown area of Bellefonte and surrounding area."



The Waterfront area has been vacant since a fire destroyed the Bush House in 2006.

The project as a whole consists of the construction of the previously mentioned hotel and parking garage, along with a six-story condominium building, with commercial space on the first floor that will be started a year after the hotel and parking garage.

Songer said once bids are in for the construction of the site, hotel and parking garage, developers will determine when the project officially moves forward.

According to the vision statement, the hotel will be located on the corner of High and Dunlop streets and will include a restaurant, rooftop lounge, banquet/ meeting facilities and food and beverage service outlets. The ballroom will accommodate 250 to 300 guests for receptions, weddings or meetings and can be divided into smaller meeting rooms.

The restaurant will provide guests with a farm-to-table dining experience using locally sourced agricultural products along with locally crafted beers, wines, spirits and ciders.



An artist's rendering depicts the rooftop lounge planned for the Bellefonte Waterfront hotel. Image courtesy Bellefonte Waterfront Project

A goal of the project is to support local businesses, according to that vision statement. In April, borough council changed the height limit for the project from 65 feet to 75 feet to allow for a [rooftop experience at the hotel](#).

At the time, Songer also announced developers were adding five stories of residential condominiums on the Spring Creek side of the parking garage, above first floor commercial space. The parking garage is planned to stand between the hotel and the other condominium building.

Songer said the added condominiums on the creek side of the parking garage would provide a “nice visual, aesthetically pleasing experience” as viewed from Water Street. The developers have already been receiving interest about the one-, two- and three-bedroom condos, he said.

This story appears in the Aug. 11-17 edition of The Centre County Gazette.