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e Voice of the Black Community

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News

JCSU breaks ground on multi-use project
Mosaic Village includes housing and retail space

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by Ryanne Persinger

Erica Hilton won't be able to take advantage of Johnson C. Smith University's Mosaic Village as a student, but will appreciate it as an alumnus.
The JCSU senior and student body president expressed her excitement for the new facility during its groundbreaking ceremony Friday.

"We deserve this, and so does this community," Hilton said. "I just have a great sense of appreciation for it."

Being built at 1601 West Trade St., Mosaic Village will be a residential and retail building.

Malcolm Graham, special assistance JCSU President Ronald Carter and chairman of the West Trade Street/Beatties Ford Road Task Force, said Mosaic Village would be built in 14 months. The $16 million project includes:

• 124,000 square feet of living space.

• 300 apartments on four levels.

• 6,500 square feet of retail space.

• 4,000 square foot green roof and

• 595 parking spaces.

"This is not Ballantyne, this is not the University area; but this is a part of Charlotte that has so much potential that people said let's recognize the Beatties Ford Road and West Charlotte corridor," Charlotte City Councilman James Mitchell said.

Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx said he applauds Carter for expanding the university beyond the campus gates of 100 Beatties Ford Road.

"(Carter) is providing an anchor for the westside," Foxx said. "It's going to take hard work to get it done, but we're not going to run from it."

William Perkins, who moved to Charlotte from Virginia three years ago, attended the groundbreaking to show his support for JCSU and his newest community.

"I think this is awesome," said Perkins, who serves on the advisory board for the Beatties Ford Road youth football program. "We need to see more of this, especially from black colleges."

At 1545 West Trade St., next to Mosaic Village is the newly completed Arts Factory. The 14,000 square foot facility includes a dance studio, black box theatre and facilities for studio and graphic arts and filmmaking for students who major in visual and performing arts.

Mosaic Village, like the Arts Factory, is being built on property owned by Griffin Brothers Companies. Carter announced that during JCSU's commencement ceremony May 8, Larry Griffin, Sr. will be bestowed an honorary degree.

JCSU also plans to turn the Two-Way convenience story at Five Points into a bookstore and add art under the I-77 bridge. The university is working with the Arts and Science Council for that project.

"(JCSU) is a private institution with a public presence," Carter said. "We are an institute that is not afraid to engage in big sky thinking."

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