

Three major retailers reportedly want to open at site

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Stirling Properties said Thursday it has letters of intent from three major retailers that want to open at the old Millerville Academy site on the east side of town.

Office Depot, PetsMart and Chili's are in various stages of negotiating leases, said Chip Songy, executive vice president for Stirling.

Songy said Office Depot is furthest along. The office supply chain plans to put a 21,000-square-foot store there.

"Dirt work wouldn't start until December or January," Songy said. "We'd be looking at them opening in the second or third quarter of next year."

He said pet supply retailer PetsMart could grant final approval later this month for a 20,000-square-foot store there, while negotiations are continuing with Chili's restaurant.

Stirling bought the 9-acre Millerville Academy site during the summer.

The property, on Millerville Road near Old Hammond Highway, is adjacent to a Super Target shopping center at the Interstate 12 intersection.

Lowe's and Hibbett Sports recently opened locations there, and Songy said Best Buy could open there as soon as next week. Chick-fil-A also is expected to open a location in December.

One parcel is left at the site. Songy said Stirling is talking to several area banks that have expressed interest, but, so far, no one has committed to it.

Songy said Stirling was able to move quickly on securing tenants because of the site's attractiveness: It's close to Interstate 12, and the Super Target generates a lot of traffic.

"When we bought the old K-Mart building, we already had a letter of intent from Target," Songy said.

"There's a substantial number of tenants who like to be near Target, because it's such a good draw. Lowe's is an excellent draw for the center as well."

He said the site marked one of the last few big tracts in an area that is expected to fill up quickly once work begins on a five-lane expansion project on Millerville Road from Interstate 12 north to Old Hammond Highway.

"There's not a lot of room left along the interstate corridor," he said. "The development is definitely going to be spilling over to Livingston and Ascension," Songy said.