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Ceremonial tree tops off Barboro Flats development Downtown

By Wayne Risher
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Developers and Downtown boosters "top off" the Barboro Flats parking garage and apartment project at 100 S. Main on Wednesday, site of the former "hole in the ground" on South Main. Contractor Montgomery Martin raised a Christmas tree and a U.S. flag to mark the construction midpoint.

Main Street's infamous hole in the ground was a distant memory Wednesday as a topping-off ceremony marked the midpoint of construction on [Barboro Flats](#).

Developers and Downtown boosters said the combination of apartments, commercial space and a public parking garage stands as proof that it takes a village to eliminate an eyesore.

The \$18 million building is on track for completion in July after recently reaching its finished height of five stories. Leasing is expected to begin in March.

The building has been under construction since January on a formerly weed-infested lot left vacant when rundown buildings were removed earlier this decade. The project is considered one of the crowning accomplishments of the Center City Commission's Main Street demonstration block.

Co-developers Jason Wexler of Greenhat Partners and Henry Turley Jr. of Henry Turley Co. said the project was a testament to Center City's tenacity and cooperation among various project participants.



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The Downtown Parking Authority, an arm of Center City, is developing the garage, while Wexler, Turley and investment partners are developing apartments and commercial.

"It has been a model public-private partnership," said Wexler.

Turley said Center City deserved much of the credit for insisting on a modest-sized project that blends with the historic buildings in the block between Union and Peabody Place.

"I feel real good about it," he said. "The thing I like most about it is it respects the street."

He praised the architects, Looney Ricks Kiss, contractor Montgomery Martin and project lender SunTrust Bank, which made the construction loans despite turbulence in financial markets.

The topping-off ceremony left a Christmas tree and American flag looking down on the Main Street Trolley from the top of the building.

"It's just kind of a long tradition to put a Christmas tree and a flag on top of a building," said Scott Young, project superintendent for Montgomery Martin. "It's for good luck: The building has reached the highest point without loss of life."

-- Wayne Risher: 529-2874

Barboro Flats

Address: 100 S. Main

Residential: 92 apartments; leasing by Henry Turley Co.

Commercial space: 7,000 square feet for retail and office; leasing by Slovis & Associates.

Parking: 205 spaces; Downtown Parking Authority is seeking a garage management firm

Web site: barboroflats.com

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