



Lots of Potential

Renovation Underway for Daniel Island Office Building

[BY BRIAN SHERMAN]

When Blackbaud moved into its new Daniel Island corporate headquarters in June 2018, the technology giant abandoned space it had been renting on the second floor at 146 Fairchild St. The company left behind a deteriorating quarter-century-old building with lots of potential but not much attraction for companies seeking a Charleston address on a peaceful island defined by well-manicured neighborhoods, parks, trails, golf courses, reasonably new schools and a downtown area of shops and restaurants.

Six months later, local resident Mike White and his partners paid \$8 million for the property, and they are determined to return the building to the splendor it enjoyed in its infancy in 1994.

“I love returning buildings to their original glory,” said White, broker-in-charge at Charleston Industrial and owner of parts of four other Daniel Island buildings.

White is off to a good start. The building is in the process of going through a complete renovation. Within the next three months, the front doors will be redone,

and a stairwell to the second floor will be removed, leaving room on the first floor for a concierge station. The original carpet is coming out, a cafeteria that hasn’t been used for a decade is being replaced by office space, traditional lightbulbs are being replaced with LEDs and walls are being moved and removed to create open floor plans.

“That’s what companies want these days,” White explained.

White is equally concerned with how 146 Fairchild will look from the outside. Neglected crepe myrtles at the front of the building have been removed, and a dead tree has been replaced by a flagpole topped by Old Glory and a yardarm flying flags representing each of his 11 current tenants. He has room for three or four more companies in the building,



Mike White.

which boasts 40,000 square feet on the first floor and another 27,000 square feet on the second.

When the renovation is complete, the road leading up to the building will be lined with palm trees, a long-neglected pond to the north is to become a pleasant place for people to eat lunch or simply enjoy the company of their coworkers or fellow tenants and a courtyard behind the building is to be available for games, picnics, cookouts and other activities. And, once the brush on all sides of the building is cleaned up, Beresford Creek will again be visible from the building, and people will be able to stroll all the way to the creek.

“My aspirational goal is to have a kayak dock down there,” White said. “You can’t even enjoy the live oaks now. We are returning the beauty and splendor of the Lowcountry and putting our tenants in touch with it.”

White has grander plans for the 11.6-acre property, which includes a 280-space parking lot. He would like to develop a half-acre plot on the east side of the property, possibly with a smaller office building, a restaurant or an urgent-care facility. Meanwhile, he’s confident that a



A dead tree has been replaced by a flagpole topped by Old Glory and a yardarm flying flags representing each of the building’s 11 current tenants.

structure that once housed large vats of ice that helped cool the main office building could eventually become home to a taco bar.

In addition to 146 Fairchild, White has a stake in the commercial parts of 225 Seven Farms Drive; one suite in 245 Seven Farms Drive; most of 259 Seven Farms Drive; and 20 Fairchild St., home of a Starbucks and Bin 526, White’s wine bar.

A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, White served on active duty until 1988. After a stint in the Reserves, he was assigned to the Pentagon during Operation Desert Shield, working with a team that studied satellite imagery, looking for Scud missiles the Iraqis were lobbing into Israel and Saudi Arabia. When they found the missile launchers, they sent in

Air Force and Navy bombers to eliminate them.

White spent most of his career in military intelligence, where he developed many of the attributes that have helped him succeed in the world of industrial real estate.

“I learned to be organized — my work ethic and discipline,” he explained. “I like to work in an organized fashion.”

“And I have a continual curiosity about all things business,” he added. 🌴



Mike White looks at the courtyard that eventually will be available for games, picnics, cookouts and other activities.

A long-neglected pond will be a pleasant place for people to eat lunch or simply enjoy the company of their co-workers or fellow tenants.

