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## Meijer plans to join Anson as anchor

Proposal awaits OK; hotel chain also eyes site, developer says

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Meijer has agreed to anchor the retail section of Anson in Boone County, officials said Wednesday.

Duke Realty spokesman Joel Reuter confirmed that Meijer will be the major anchor if the Boone County Area Plan Commission approves its plan.

Duke and Progressive AE said the Meijer building and outlot will occupy nearly 20 acres on the northeast corner of County Road 650 East and Ind. 334. In addition, Meijer is planning a gas station and convenience store on the site.

Boone County Planner Rachel Whittington said Meijer's representatives have worked hard to create a suitable plan, and she doesn't anticipate any problems with approval.

Whittington said the look of the store and the surrounding street and landscape have been enhanced.

"There's a lot more windows than you typically see in a Meijer store," she said. "As for the materials, there's a lot of brick, but it's cut-face brick, which looks really nice."

Carrie Compliment, manager of the Boulevard at Anson apartments, said potential residents are being drawn in by the businesses coming in.

"People are looking for that whole neighborhood setting," she said. "Everything will be conveniently located right here."

Construction of the 192,000-square-foot store is expected to begin sometime in 2009. Once completed, the store will add approximately 400 jobs to the area.

Meijer representatives did not return a phone call seeking comment.

Anson -- with its mix of homes, retailers, offices, restaurants, warehouses and distribution centers -- is being built in phases and likely will not be completed for eight to 10 years.

Reuter said a deal is close with a private group on behalf of a major hotel chain. Although he refused to name the potential hotel, he said the matter will go before the Boone County Area Planning Commission in January or February.

Anson was recently in the news when it was mentioned as one of the possible locations for a 318,000-square-foot automated pharmacy. Medco Health Solutions is expected to announce its decision this month, said spokesman Lowell Weiner. The project, which would open early in 2009, could bring 1,300 jobs to the area by 2012.

Duke has yet to name a builder for the first wave of homes in its Neighborhoods at Anson. KB Home had been designated as the builder for the initial 114 houses, but backed out in late May, citing a weak housing market. The national builder left the Central Indiana market entirely in July. At the time, Duke anticipated only a 90-day delay. Reuter said Duke continues to negotiate with two local builders. The Boulevard at Anson has leased 11 units out of the 40 currently built. Compliment said she expects all 80 apartments will be leased by spring, with rents between \$760 and \$1,500 a month.

Ryland Homes has built 12 townhomes ranging in price from \$158,995 to \$205,995, and all but three have sold. Eighty-two other townhomes are either planned or under construction.