

# SOUTH COUNTY TIMES



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## EASTER at OAKLAND HOUSE



Ruthie Wolf, 4, and her brother Bobby, 2, go through their bags of candy in a giant Easter basket located on the front lawn of the Historic Oakland House in Affton. This is the 24th year that the Ladies of Oakland House have sponsored the spring activity for children. The event, which concluded April 17, featured story time, a puppet show and the chance for children to visit the Easter Bunny and pet live rabbits. Each child made a "bunny bag" and enjoyed a treat. | photo by Ursula Ruhl

### Crestwood

## Agreement With Mall Developer Given 6-Month Extension

by Julie Brown Patton

The Crestwood Board of Aldermen on April 9 granted a six-month extension to developers of the proposed Crestwood City Center, the former Crestwood Plaza property.

The original, 36-month redevelopment agreement between Crestwood and Chicago-based UrbanStreet Group, LLC, was executed April 6, 2016, setting the contract to expire this April. With the extension, the new date will be Oct. 6, 2019.

One board member questioned the wisdom of allowing more planning time for the long-awaited redevelopment project. The project encompasses more than 794,000 square feet of retail, office and residential space, as well as a potential connection to nearby Grant's Trail.

This mixed-use project represents \$25 million of public tax increment financing for the city's iconic 47-acre property at the corner of Watson and Sappington roads. A Community Improvement District and a Transportation Development District for the former Crestwood Plaza property also were established in 2016.

Crestwood City Administrator Kris Simpson recommended extending the agreement, given that the third and current redevelopment team at St. Louis-based Walpert Properties appeared to be in final stages of its site proposal. Last fall, Walpert took the property under contract from land owner UrbanStreet, with the sale contingent on Walpert securing tenants for the project so construction can proceed.

Prior to that, UrbanStreet Group had been responsible for redevelopment efforts since 2015 for the vacant property, and Chicago-based Centrum Partners started the same efforts in 2012.

Crestwood Alderman Jerry Miguel said all that's recently been offered regarding the site's redevelopment is "hope without real details."

"We keep hearing actions are just around the corner, but Walpert doesn't look to have construction in the works until 2020," added Miguel. "I think we need to step back and

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## I-44 Shrewsbury Project To Be Complete By Fall

After reaching an agreement with a contractor, MoDOT has updated its schedule to complete the work on eastbound and westbound Interstate 44 over the BNSF railway near Shrewsbury.

According to the latest contractual agreement, all lanes will be in their final configuration by mid-July, with all work on the project completed before Sept. 1. This includes completing the eastbound bridge, repairs on the westbound bridge, and the new driving surface on I-44 in the area near Shrewsbury.

As part of the agreement, the contractor has covered

the costs of all additional design and construction, and will pay MoDOT more than \$500,000 to cover the cost of the in-depth analysis and damages for the delay.

Construction on the project was delayed in November 2018 due to a concern with greater than usual cracking on the westbound I-44 bridge in the area. After hiring a third party to analyze the situation, MoDOT determined that the bridge, as designed, was not able to appropriately handle forces that cause bridges to expand and contract due to heating and cooling. Since the report was issued, the contractor team updated designs for the eastbound

bridge, restarted construction on the project and designed repairs for the westbound bridge.

"Through this all, the contractor has been working very hard to remedy the situation, and get this road back open to traffic while meeting the standards that Missouri taxpayers expect of work on their roadways," said Tom Blair, MoDOT St. Louis District Engineer. "We appreciate the patience of the residents near the project and the daily commuters on I-44 as we worked through the process to ensure that this was fixed, and fixed correctly."

