



Developer Ian Gillespie says his planned corporate center will preserve 60 percent of his land as is.

(Photo by Thomas Bell)

Developer plans model corporate complex

By Thomas Bell

Ian Gillespie, the developer of Littleton Corporate Center, calls his project a "dream come true" and says he wants to work "in concert with the townspeople" in building his 640,000 square foot office park.

On September 13 he goes before the Planning Board to begin the official public hearing for the site plan and for special permits.

Gillespie is sensitive about being portrayed as the villainous developer. He says town residents made the decision about how this land would be developed.
Continued on page 8

Corporate center will include park and public courtyard

Continued from page 1
developed when they zoned it for industry decades ago. He says he is providing the town with a much higher grade of development than could have been built on the site.

"I'm doing everything I can to protect this magnificent environment...I want to build something the town is pleased with," said Gillespie as he walked the 87-acre property with his environmental engineer, Brad Saunders, an ecologist with Sasaki Associates of Watertown.

As Gillespie and Saunders and walked through the field, they seemed genuinely impressed by its beauty. Their abstract site plan was now awash in a spectacular wave of purple loosestrife. "You forget how beautiful it is out here," said Gillespie to Saunders.

Gillespie's "master-planned business community," which will be visible from the Common, will contain six buildings that will house a total of 2300

2400 workers. But this office park is more than a collection of box-shaped glass offices. On top of the hill, opposite I-495 from Digital, a European-style courtyard will be open to the public. In the middle of the courtyard a group of boulders will sprout a spray of mist that Gillespie says will create a "permanent rainbow effect."

The design also calls for a reflecting pool, a water trough, and a birch orchard. Also, a "state of the art" sewage treatment system will be incased in a re-creation of an old New England barn.

Plans also call for widening King Street from I-495 to the entrance to the office park, which will be located directly across from Russell Street. Two signal lights are also planned to be erected on King Street on each exit from I-495.

Saunders says that the development will be "kinder to the wetlands" than the previous farm. He says farmers of a generation ago used pesticides such

as DDT and arsenic, and he adds that fertilizer runoff and soil erosion caused by farmers have also hurt wetlands.

Gillespie has already completed an expensive environmental impact report and has spent about a half million dollars on a traffic study, engineering, and architectural work.

He has received approval for his access roadway to cross wetlands from the Conservation Commission, and says he will replace the wetlands displaced by the road by creating wetlands elsewhere on the property that will be three times in size. He also says that only 40 percent of the site will be disturbed, compared to 80 percent of most developments.

Gillespie envisions townspeople "interacting" with his project when it is completed. "The protective ecosystem will be worthy of study by school children," he said. "It will be open to the public. People will be able to go on walks there and take their lunch. There will be beautiful views of the valley."