

# QUICK START WANTED FOR SNAPPERS' DEVELOPMENT

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Studer

BELOIT - Future Beloit Snappers owner Quint Studer wants to get things done right and get them done quickly, saying Wednesday he wants all aspects of the sale approved ahead of schedule.

In an interview with the *Beloit Daily News* on Wednesday, Studer said he's confident the process can move faster than anticipated. On Sept. 30 during a public workshop over the future downtown stadium plan, officials estimated all aspects of the sale would be ready for approval at the Major League Baseball Winter Meetings in December.

"We'd really like to have everything done as soon as possible," Studer said. "We want to be out promoting the Snappers for next year and to hit the ground running."

As of Wednesday, Studer said the only remaining piece to fall into place was a lease agreement with the Riverbend Stadium Authority, a group that's aiming for nonprofit status and that will retain control of any new stadium. The plan calls for a \$34.2 million project on a 7-acre site at 217 Shirland Avenue along the Rock River.

"I think both sides want it to happen as soon as possible, and we've done a lot of the preliminary work," Studer said.

Shortly after Sept. 30, the asset purchasing agreement signed by the Beloit Professional Baseball Association President Dennis Conerton and Studer was sent to the Midwest League. On Monday, the Beloit City Council approved the reassignment of the current lease between the city and the association to Gateway Professional Baseball, whose managing president is Studer, according to the lease reassignment document. The Snappers are set to play the 2020 season at Pohlman Field, their home over the last three decades.

The Snappers are currently a Minor League Baseball affiliate of the Oakland Athletics. In 2018, the team signed an extension with Oakland for affiliation through 2020. Studer said the sale will not impact the affiliation agreement, but added he could not comment on the process specific to any future Beloit affiliation plans due to legal reasons.

Studer, through his company Studer Entertainment and Retail, agreed to sign a 20-year commitment to Beloit, something that was contingent upon the baseball association's willingness to sell the team.

Major League teams and local ownership groups can state interest in agreeing to a new affiliation in the fall of even years (2020) and, Studer said getting a deal done all comes down to having the right player and coach amenities. He said the new downtown stadium would need to have state-of-the-art amenities for players and their families, along with the coaching staff.

"Without the stadium, there would be nothing," Studer said. "We know what these amenities need to be and we want Beloit to be the must-have place to be for every single (MLB) team."

Studer stressed his company's efforts would not be possible without the contribution by Beloit businesswoman Diane Hendricks, who provided the majority of the private investment needed for a downtown stadium. He added that Conerton's tireless work to keep the Snappers in Beloit was also key to the process going forward.

"That commitment by (Hendricks) and hard work by (Conerton) is something that's invaluable and not every city has that," Studer said. "They deserve all the credit on this."