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Studer touts revitalization of Beloit

By JOSH FLICKINGER Co-Sports Editor
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Studer

BELOIT—Prospective Beloit Snappers owner Quint Studer expressed his excitement for the future of Beloit, particularly regarding the revitalization of the downtown area, during his presentation at the Greater Beloit Chamber of Commerce virtual meeting Tuesday.

Speaking from his home office in Pensacola, Florida, Studer said the new Snappers stadium, expected to be completed by June of 2021, can provide a significant boost to the already-vibrant downtown.

“The stadium is in a great location downtown,” Studer said. “There are cities that tried to stop Beloit from having a new stadium, because there are going to be 40 less teams in Minor League Baseball, and if we got a new stadium in Beloit, that meant a greater chance that their city was going to be cut.

“Diane Hendricks showed a great deal of courage by getting this thing built. And she told me it wasn’t even about baseball. She wanted to send the nation a message that Beloit is here, and we’re open for business. The COVID-19 pandemic has been hard on everyone, but this was a message that Beloit’s going to come back and be better than ever.”

Studer said the stadium could help in changing the way the city markets itself.

“Beloit and Janesville struggle with the same thing,” Studer said. “When they talk about the benefits, a lot of times you hear how close they are to Madison, Milwaukee and Chicago. Well, I’d like that to be changed for Beloit, and instead of talking about how easy it is to go other places, I’d love for people in those bigger cities, places like Madison and Milwaukee, to say “Boy, we’re only an hour away from downtown Beloit. We need to check that out.’ I think Beloit can be the hipster place to be.”

Studer believes that Beloit has the ingredients to be a destination city for young people.

“The first thing is that it’s in a great location,” Studer said. “The second thing is that it has diversity. Young people today don’t want to live where everybody looks the same. You’ve got a great downtown that’s now going to have a bookend. One side is already great. The stadium, and the area developed around it, is going to make the other side great, too..”

Studer also mentioned Beloit College as an asset to the city.

“If you have a college, it can produce talent that can stay local,” Studer said. “That’s a critical asset that not many places have. And I believe there is a great entrepreneurial spirit here in Beloit also.”

Studer also talked about how important school systems are to developing a great community.

“We all understand that education has been Beloit’s challenge,” Studer said. “When you have 8,000 people that work in Beloit and then go home somewhere else because they want their kids in a different district, that’s something that needs to be improved. What we’ve done here in Pensacola is we’ve done a ton of work with early childhood development—85% of the brain is developed by age 3. So we’ve partnered with the University of Chicago and made sure that every mother that has a baby gets an education on how to build the brain of a young child. They register for a program called Boston Basics that helps along with that. A huge factor in the success of a community is how many kids are kindergarten ready. In Pensacola, we’ve seen those numbers go up because of programs like this.”

Studer is hoping to bring those programs, along with a new ballpark, to Beloit.

Josh Flickinger