

Last Monday, March 10, several investors, builders and Charlestown city officials gathered on Grace Avenue in Charlestown to participate in a ground breaking, one year in the making. A dozen people grabbed gold handled shovels and broke ground for the new Cobblestone Hotel and Suites in Charlestown as several people looked on. The ground breaking ceremony was a year in the making as discussion about the possibility of bringing Cobblestone to Charlestown began last March.

“John (Siebert), his wife, Julie, and myself began talking March of last year about bringing the hotel to Charlestown,” stated Denis Frankenberger.

The research credit to find the best community fit for Cobblestone Hotel was given to Julie Siebert.

“Julie found Charlestown. She had done all the research and told me I really needed to look at Charlestown. Charlestown kinda went under the radar at the beginning but she was determined that Charlestown was the perfect fit,” stated John Siebert, former Vice President of BriMark and current President of Preferred Business Consulting, Corp. “I give all the credit to Julie to get to Charlestown.”

The initial visit to Charlestown for John was one to check out the best location for the possible hotel. Of course, Frankenberger already had the location picked, the perfect location was off Highway 62 behind the Wilson Education Center, near Charlestown Landing.

“The first thing John said was he already had the location picked out,” said Frankenberger. “I was just hoping at that point it was the same location I was thinking. And it was. John had picked the spot even before I had a chance to pitch it.”

Investors are looking forward to working with Cobblestone. One investor, with ties large hotel chains in Louisville, told Frankenberger “this is going to be fun.”

Many of the investors for the new hotel are local investors. Keeping it local was an important aspect of the project for Cobblestone.

“Cobblestone comes in and looks to be a part of the community. They have a strong interest to be Chamber members, be participants in local things. They truly want to be a community partner,” Siebert explained.

The feasibility study conducted by HMI for Cobblestone came to the same conclusion of Charlestown city officials, it is time for a hotel in Charlestown.

“Charlestown needs a hotel. Cobblestone feasibility study company, HMI, came back with a 50 to 60 page study. They talked to many companies and hotels in the local area. The study proved it is the perfect time and place for a hotel,” Frankenberger added.

Frankenberger has had the opportunity to stay at a Cobblestone Hotel while he visited with

Cobblestone Hotel President, Brian Wogernese.

“When I went to meet with Brian, I stayed at a Cobblestone Hotel in Wisconsin. I was able to talk to the owner of the hotel and it was very encouraging to me. I wanted to get the feel of the hotel and the atmosphere,” Frankenberger stated.

Cobblestone Hotels is currently building their first location in Indiana in Salem. The construction of the Charlestown hotel is expected to begin in the next month with completion by the fall. The Charlestown location will be identical to the Salem hotel.

Charlestown’s Cobblestone Hotels and Suites will offer 44 rooms including king rooms, double rooms and whirlpool rooms, indoor pool, meeting room, fireplace and sitting room, free breakfast buffet, beer and wine bar, exercise room, computer room and a small convenience store.

The hotel, according to Siebert, will be “internal quarters. The Building will be secure at night. It will be a turn key development.

The Cobblestone concept is a well-rounded plan for building the perfect hotel for small town America.

“The Cobblestone concept has BriMark Builders working as the developer and Cobblestone as the franchise and WHG has the management. Our plan allows for those who want to be in the business but don’t know the business. We have it all packaged together,” Siebert added.

A century of experience in the hotel industry comes with the new Charlestown Cobblestone.

“Brian has 30 years and his partner Mark has been in the business equally as long and John has 40 years in the hotel business,” Frankenberger explained.

According to Wogernese, there are a solid 10 hotels in the works for Indiana currently. The Cobblestone brand currently has 35 hotels open, the first opening in January 2008. Fourteen Cobblestone hotels are now under construction.

“Our vision back in 2011, we set a goal of having 50 by 2015. It was just a goal. We will hit that by the end of 2014,” Wogernese added.

Siebert concluded, “Family and small business are the core. The core of America, we all need to get back to it. Cobblestone has that figured out.”

Cobblestone Hotels is based in Neenah, Wisconsin. According to their website, “Cobblestone Hotels is a hotel brand company that prides itself in filling the lodging needs of communities through its upper mid-scale new build brand.”

Cobblestone Hotels and Suites will be located at 2201 Grace Avenue in Charlestown. The rooms will feature microwaves, refrigerators, coffee service, free high speed internet and

40-inch flat panel televisions in each room.

For more information about Cobblestone Hotels please visit www.staycobblestone.com.