

13 in 2013 People to Watch

One will usher casino gambling into Baltimore. One will help set the course of city development. And one — whoever he or she may be — will head up a company renowned for the part it's played in the local community under its former CEO.

Baltimore is filled with people who are poised to have a significant impact on the local business community. This week, the Baltimore Business Journal looks at 13 to watch in 2013.

Major Owings Mills project caps a high-profile battle



Brian J. Gibbons

Greenberg Gibbons
Commercial Corp.

Title: CEO

Age: 51

Why he's watchable: Gibbons is developing some of the hottest retail projects in Greater Baltimore, including the Foundry Row development in Owings Mills.

Brian J. Gibbons will likely never have a more controversial year than 2012. But that doesn't mean 2013 will be any less busy.

Gibbons, who found himself at the center of controversy in Owings Mills due to his proposed Foundry Row development, has four shopping centers in various stages of development next year.

Some projects, such as Village South at Waugh Chapel in Anne Arundel County and Towne Square at Turf Valley in Ellicott City, are close to completion. The Greenberg Gibbons Commercial Corp. CEO said all shops at Waugh Chapel should open by the middle of 2013. Harris Teeter Supermarkets Inc. also plans to open its 48,000-square-foot store

at Towne Square at Turf Valley in April, Gibbons said.

Other projects are in early stages of development. Demolition at Towne Center in Laurel is expected to be completed by the end of March, with construction of the 400,000 square feet of retail slated to start in April.

Demolition of the former the Solo Cup

Co. plant in Owings Mills could also begin in 2013, Gibbons said. The Owings Mills-based development company spent most of 2012 fighting to build a \$140 million Wegmans Food Markets Inc.-anchored retail and office complex at the Baltimore County site. The demolition could take up to eight months, he said.

Gibbons said the controversy in Owings Mills, which included a referendum drive and County Council opposition, was mostly "developer controversy." Baltimore county residents were mostly supportive of the project, he said.

"I'm really proud of our projects," he said. "The communities embrace our projects. It's our mission but its really fulfilling to create the projects that the communities want."

Greenberg Gibbons shopping centers are vital to suburban communities, said Dan Gundersen, director of the Baltimore County Department of Economic Development. The company's open-air retail malls create a gathering place often not found outside large cities, Gundersen said.

"It helps attract a different kind of demographic, a younger audience that is absolutely critical to suburban markets if they want to compete with the vibe and vitality of urban communities," Gundersen said.

The common thread between all Greenberg Gibbons projects is creating something more than a store, Gibbons said. The company wants to build something that becomes part of the community, he said.

"It's not just for shopping, for restaurants," Gibbons said. "It's creating that sense of place that it really becomes an important part of the community fabric."

NICHOLAS GRIMMER | STAFF