

## Bobby Huber plans another downtown restaurant

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Local chef Bobby Huber is bringing Bobbywood back to Norfolk.

He's planning to serve the same neo-Southern cuisine he's known for, but this time around, the restaurant opening in the fall at 145 Granby St. will be more casual than the Bobbywood on Monticello Avenue.



**Bobby Huber**

"Simple. Simple. Simple," he said. "No more billion dollar buildouts. I don't think people really give a crap about that. I think they care about the service, and the food and drink, not the light fixture overhead."

Huber is leasing the space between Plume Street and City Hall Avenue from downtown developer Buddy Gadams, owner of Marathon Development Group. Gadams is turning the former Trader Publishing Co. office space at 100 W. Plume St. above Huber's new digs into 135 apartments.

The restaurant kitchen will be visible to customers and the menu will feature lean meats and Huber's take on chicken and waffles. He plans to start with dinner and expand to lunch and weekend brunch. His goal is to open in September, Oct. 15 at the latest.

A play on Hollywood using Huber's name, Bobbywood first opened in 1995 in the Wards Corner area of Norfolk. Then in 2006, Bobbywood had a three-year run in a renovated building downtown on Monticello Avenue before closing in 2008.

The recession and lack of parking killed business, he said, especially after the city tore down the parking garage across the street to make way for light rail.

"I lost my bottom line," he said. "People just stopped coming in."

After the downtown restaurant closed, Huber went on to work as the executive chef of Steinhilber's Restaurant in Virginia Beach. He left in 2013 to open Braise in Virginia Beach with Mei ling Perkins. In January, Huber abruptly left the restaurant after a falling-out neither Huber or Perkins would discuss in detail.

Huber said Perkins had changed ingredients and raised prices while he was out on leave for a broken hip. She said that's not what happened.

"I'm not going to get into it," Perkins said. "It's not to his benefit. I'm not going to be ugly and say anything disparaging, but it wasn't a falling-out over ingredients."

About his latest venture, Huber said, "The time is now to go back downtown."