



New Owners Plan Redesign of Ledgewood Mall, Mayor Says

By Ben Horowitz

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ROXBURY – The new owners of the Ledgewood Mall are planning a redesign that would add two buildings and turn it into a shopping center relying on external access rather than internal access, according to Mayor Jim Rilee.

Rilee, in an interview, said the new owners have circulated a “rough draft concept plan” to the township’s master plan committee, a subcommittee of the planning board. They haven’t hired engineers yet, he said.

Although nothing formal has been proposed, the new owners plan to tear down the closed Macy's building as part of the redesign.

The plans are “really wide open at this stage,” Rilee said.

But he added he is “happy” the new owners have started what appears to be an attractive plan that would “revive a mall that really needs to be revitalized.”

“We're encouraged by the quality” of the individuals and companies that bought the mall, Rilee added.

The new buildings, whose exact size has not yet been determined, would house several businesses that would offer “separate entrances” from the outside, Rilee said.

“Their hope is to create space for larger retailers,” he added.

In August, a joint venture was announced among three companies to acquire the mall in order “to modernize the property and ensure its future,” said Peter Coccoziello, president of one of the companies, Advance Realty.

“The mall’s ideal location on a large parcel of land within the heart of Morris County presented us with a compelling opportunity to acquire a property that is an important part of the area's retail sector,” Coccoziello said.

The companies involved in the transaction, Advance, DeBartolo Development and Invesco, did not announce any formal plan for what they would do with the property, and specific new stores have not yet been announced.

However, Rilee said, other businesses presently at the mall are expected to remain there, including three anchors: Wal-Mart, Ashley Furniture and Marshalls.

Also on the property, in separate buildings, are Sports Authority, Men's Wearhouse, Barnes & Noble and Ruby Tuesday.