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Tuesday, September 25, 2007

Mall set to open

Rochester board signs off on large development with Kohl's, other stores

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ROCHESTER — Next week's grand opening plans for Rochester Crossing, the new shopping plaza off Route 202, are on track following Planning Board action Monday.

The board unanimously endorsed the city engineer's prognosis that the off-site improvements are "substantially complete," a project approval condition affecting the issuance of certificates of occupancy.

The Flatley Company is responsible for completing on- and off-site improvements despite selling its retail portfolio to the Boston-based The Wilder Companies.

Significant off-site improvements, like installing new traffic signals at the plaza entrance and on



Mike Ross/Chief photographer GRAND OPENING PLANS for Rochester Crossing, a multitenant shopping plaza off Route 202 in Rochester, are on schedule for next week. Kohl's, one of the anchor tenants, is seen in the foreground.

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and off ramps to the Spaulding Turnpike, are complete, though the lights will go on when the plaza opens.

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"They've done everything that they said they were going to do," said Terry Desjardins, the board chair. "It's been a win-win for the city."

The only outstanding issue relates to building Pine Lane Extension, but the delay in completion has to do with the city — not the developers.

Flatley had to build Pine Lane Extension — which brings Pine Lane to Route 202, creating a new entrance to nearby Florence Drive — due to the expected increase in traffic.

The city's decision to install sewer on Pine Lane delayed street work by the company's contractor, City Engineer Tom Willis said. He said the new street's condition would be weighed before issuance of the final certificate of occupancy.

Other off-site improvements included widening of Route 202 and Washington Street and building a new southbound on-ramp at Exit 13 of the Spaulding Turnpike, which board members praised Monday night.

Kohl's, one of the anchor tenants of the 304,500-square-foot plaza, is having its "soft opening" Sunday, with the grand opening slated for Wednesday.

The city's first Starbucks is also opening next week, with Fashion Bug, Famous Footwear and Maurices following in the next two weeks.

The Kohl's opening is one of 80 opening in the country that day and part of 95 new stores opening nationwide this fall.

The stores feature Kohl's new look, with glass storefront entrances, showcase windows and spacious fitting rooms, the company said.

Lowe's is set to open Nov. 15, when three remaining retail buildings totaling around 38,400 square feet are expected to be complete.

The board hasn't seen plans yet for a 27,600-square-foot shopping center across the street. Dubbed Rochester Crossing East, the center will likely be anchored by Staples and the Wilder Companies with a projected opening in the spring of 2008.

A Staples spokesman confirmed the store at 106 Milton Road will be moving to the new site.

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