



Monday, October 1, 2007

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# Shoppers flock to Rochester Crossing

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ROCHESTER — Bulldozers and construction vehicles at the new Rochester Crossing shopping complex were replaced with a parking lot full of cars and shoppers on Sunday.

Kohl's opened its doors for a "soft opening," making it the first store to open in the 304,500-square-foot building in the new retail plaza off Route 202.

Shoppers passed through the store's doors throughout the afternoon, some making purchases and others just getting a peek at the new facility.

Rochester resident Michelle Houle left the store empty-handed Sunday but said as a frequent shopper of Kohl's in Portsmouth, she's happy to have one so close to home.



John Huff/Staff photographer KOHL'S had its "soft opening" Sunday at the new 304,500-square-foot mall called Rochester Crossing. A steady stream of shoppers came to check out the new store. Kohl's will be joined by other stores in the coming weeks and Lowe's is set to open Nov. 15.

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"This is my favorite store. I love it! There's always a bargain," she said. "It's nice inside the store and it's just an excellent location."

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Houle did admit, however, she might continue to shop at the Newington store on occasion, noting she works in Portsmouth and it's sometime convenient to shop in that region.

Heather Dillingham of Farmington carried a few bags out of the store and said she planned on stopping by all week.

"I just like Kohl's," she said. "This one is closer to my house and it saves a trip to Portsmouth."

Other shoppers complimented the store's interior and exterior, some calling the glass storefront "beautiful."

Store management had no comment about Sunday's early opener. The official grand opening is slated for Wednesday. In the next week the city's first Starbucks along with Fashion Bug, Famous Footwear and Maurices will also be opening. Lowe's is set to open Nov. 15.

In addition to new businesses, the development also meant for many off-site improvements in the Washington Street-Route 202 area, including installing new traffic signals at the plaza entrance and on and off ramps to the Spaulding Turnpike. Those improvements are complete.

Still to be finished is the building of Pine Lane Extension, to connect Pine Lane to Route 202, and creating a new entrance to nearby Florence Drive because of the expected increase in traffic.

Other improvements included widening Route 202 and Washington Street and building a new southbound on-ramp at Exit 13 of the Spaulding Turnpike.

Kohl's store hours are 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday.

To reach the store call 330-9646.

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