

WASHINGTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

A different curly W: Wegmans signs for another D.C.-area store

Nov 14, 2017, 5:00am EST

The city of Alexandria is the latest to be graced with grocery favorite Wegmans: The chain will open an 84,000-square-foot store at Hoffman Town Center on the Eisenhower Avenue corridor.

The news confirms what WBJ first reported in May, that Wegmans was in talks to anchor StonebridgeCarras' 1 million-square-foot mixed-use project on 5 acres inside Hoffman Town Center. Wegmans' entrance would be located on the corner of Stovall and Mandeville streets.

"Our pitch was, you can't find a site with this combination of urban density, Metro access and regional road network," said StonebridgeCarras CEO Doug Firstenberg. "For retail it's phenomenal."

Stonebridge expects to begin construction in early 2019 and deliver the first components in 2021. In the meantime, it'll work on leasing up the rest of the retail space. Sam Hodges and Dimitri Georgelakos are representing Stonebridge in the retail leasing. Hodges also represented Wegmans in that lease deal.

The store will be smaller than a typical suburban Wegmans, which can top 140,000 square feet. It's also unusual in that it will be located on the second floor of the development, which will contain a total of 210,000 square feet of retail. It will be the first second-floor Wegmans in the chain's history, company spokeswoman Valerie Fox said in an email.

Fitting Wegmans into the second floor of the project was a must for StonebridgeCarras, according to Firstenberg.

"We think grocery stores help make a neighborhood, so the challenge here was which grocery store, and would they go on the second floor," Firstenberg said. "Without them going on the second floor, you can't enliven the street."

Wegmans, for its part, was open to the idea but insisted that its loading docks also be on the same level as the store.

"It took a lot of brain damage, but we got the loading on the second level," Firstenberg said with a laugh. Trucks will enter and exit the loading area off Mill Road. Wegmans will have a 4,000-square-foot area on the project's ground floor, with 80,000 of the store located on the second floor.



COOPER CARRY

In terms of the rest of the retail leasing, first up is the other retail space on the same level as Wegmans, about 60,000 square feet a fitness or entertainment user, Firstenberg said. An additional 50,000 square feet on the street level will be leased later, closer to when the project will deliver.

The project also includes 775,000 square feet of residential development — roughly 130 condos, 400 apartments and 200 senior units.

The Wegmans news comes just as the National Science Foundation welcomed its full complement of employees at the new Hoffman Town Center headquarters last week. Stephanie Landrum, the CEO of Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, heralded the arrival of Wegmans to the city.

"An important component of our plans for growth in this area is to bring in amenities that serve both our residents and daytime population," Landrum said. "We could not be more pleased to welcome Wegmans to the city of Alexandria and know that this signature anchor tenant will go a long way toward realizing our goals for a lively, mixed-use center near Metro."

The commitment by Wegmans is also an indicator of how robust a market Northern Virginia has become for the grocer, which is based in Rochester, New York, and has been called America's favorite grocery store. The Hoffman location will be less than seven miles from another recently opened Wegmans at Hilltop Village Center in the Alexandria section of Fairfax County.

"It's a great regional location that also meets our needs for population density," Fox said of the Stonebridge site. "Our business model is predicated on high volume and therefore, we need a lot of customers to shop in our stores and we need to hire a lot of employees to serve our customers."

Rebecca Cooper
Senior Staff Reporter
Washington Business Journal

