

# Yorktown News

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Capital Demolition of Yonkers, pictured Thursday, Aug. 13, begins construction on the former movie theater at the JV Mall.



PHOTO: BRIAN MARSCHHAUSER

## JV Mall construction underway

### *Dick's Sporting Goods could open by 2016 holiday season*

BY BRIAN MARSCHHAUSER  
OF YORKTOWN NEWS

Renovations are underway at the Jefferson Valley Mall, with a goal of completely transforming the former movie theater space into a Dick's Sporting Goods store by the 2016 holiday season.

The renovation plans, approved by the Town Board in October 2013, also include outdoor storefronts, wide sidewalks, new entrances, outdoor plaza areas and new retail and restaurant tenants, according to James Pett of JP2 Architects, a firm contracted by

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—James Pett  
Principal, JP2 Architects

the mall owners.

"We're thrilled to be back and we regret it took quite as long as it did for the pieces to fall into place," Pett said. "But we're excited now to be moving forward

with the construction."

The reason for the delay in starting construction was the lengthy removal of asbestos from the old movie theater, according to Steve Shea, vice president of

development at Simon Property Group.

"That abatement has been completed," Shea said at the Aug. 11 Town Board meeting. "It's all necessary and important steps. None of it is glamorous, but you don't get to snip the ribbon until you do that work."

Now that the abatement process is complete, phase I of the renovation has begun, which is the demolition of the movie theater's interior. That process is expected to take about two months, Shea

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## MALL

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said. Interior mall renovations, including the reconstruction of the theater space, will begin after that.

The theater was closed in 2010 and Simon has no plans of re-opening a theater, Shea said. Simon's corporate website indicates that a 50,000 square-foot Dick's Sporting Goods store will take over the former movie theater space. At the meeting, Simon representatives would not confirm that Dick's is coming in, but stated that "a national level sports retailer" will occupy the space. Shea said Simon is not at liberty to disclose any information about its future tenants.

"They only want their names used so many months before they open," Shea said. "They've got their own PR campaigns."

Councilman Greg Bernard informed Shea that news about Dick's coming to Yorktown is "already on the Internet," referring to an article posted by Yorktown News on its website.

"Yeah, we're not always the best at keeping secrets, but we're also bound by contract," Shea said.

Additionally, Supervisor Michael Grace said the Town Board has also been sworn to secrecy about possible tenants.

"Everywhere I go I get hounded about who [residents] want to see there," Grace said. "We'll keep our mouths shut."

Shea said shoppers will notice many empty storefronts while the renovations are ongoing. Some stores, such as H&M, will be relocated to other areas of the mall, while others have been "vacated" to make space for new tenants, Shea said.

"We would love to be able to wave a wand and have all the tenants jump up at one time and switch spaces without any downside, but it doesn't work that way," Shea said. "Unfortunately you have to move tenants out of the way to find a home for the new tenants who move in."

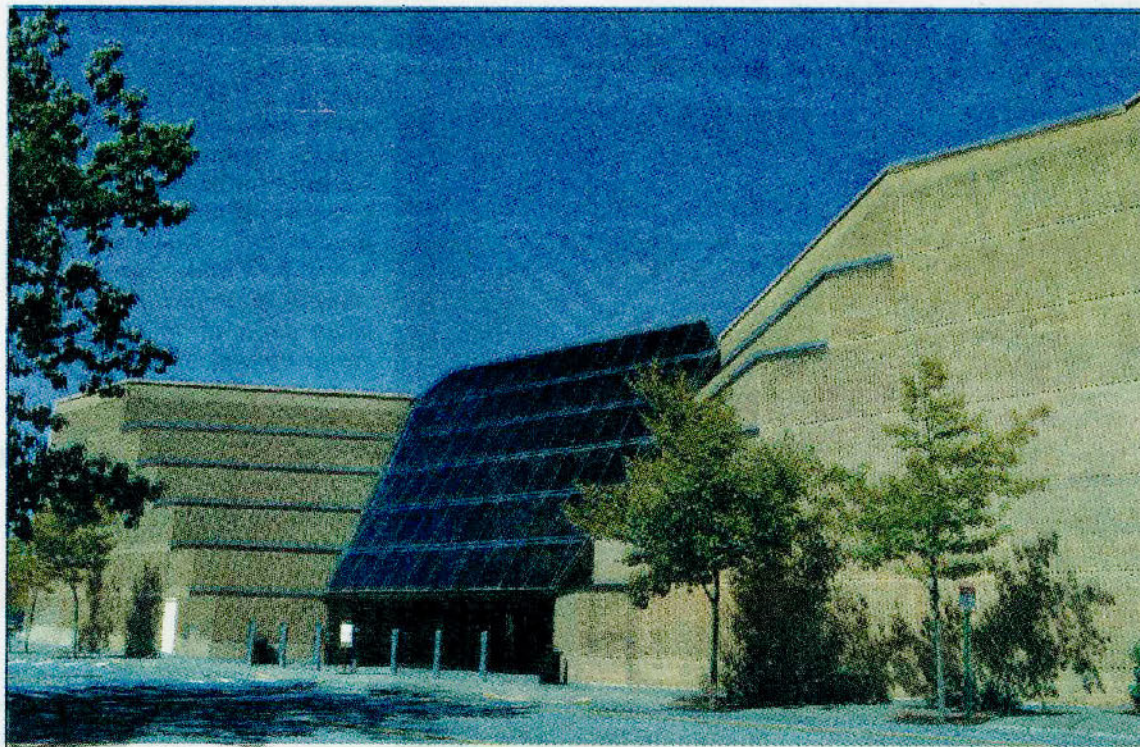
WP Glimcher took control of the Jefferson Valley Mall in May 2014 from its parent company, Simon Property Group. The newly formed subsidiary then contracted Simon to oversee the completion of the renovation, Shea said.

"It is a much smaller company



IMAGE: SIMON.COM

Dick's Sporting Goods is scheduled to join the JV Mall around the 2016 holiday season.



FILE PHOTO

The current main entrance of the Jefferson Valley Mall.

than Simon," Shea said. "They specialize in exactly this type of asset...They're very excited about the redevelopment of this asset. It's as important to them as it is to everyone who lives in the community."

Councilmen Tom Diana and Vishnu Patel said they heard from many residents who were skepti-

cal the renovations would ever happen. Shea said he understands, but assured the public that a lot of money has already been invested in the project.

"The first couple of steps are always tricky because you look like you're moving backwards," Shea said.

In addition to building upgrades, Simon hopes to begin parking lot and landscape improvements before the winter, but the timeframe depends on Mother Nature's cooperation, Shea said.

The long row of pine trees along Route 6 shielding the mall from passing motorists will also be al-

tered, with many pine trees being removed. The idea is to allow for greater visibility from Route 6, said Bob Roth of John Meyer Consulting. About 50 trees will also be planted throughout the parking lot.

After the "phase II" interior renovation is complete, Simon will then turn its attention to the mall's plain beige facade. The third phase of construction will include new mall entrances and new outdoor storefronts, according to Pett.

"That component is tenant driven," Pett said. "Some of this work is very specific to who the tenant will be."

Shea said many tenants have already signed up to join the renovated mall, and expects even more will jump on board once the first few phases of construction are complete.

"Tenants, like the Town and its citizens, believe it when they see it," Shea said.

Plans also call for a new outdoor restaurant on the edge of the JV Mall property. Roth said that component is "still part of the plan," but might not be completed until the fourth phase.

Despite splitting the construction into phases, Grace said the mall does not need to return for any additional approvals.