



Publix center uses equestrian theme to lure shoppers

New supermarket near Polo Fields designed to fit in with area's design

By Jennifer Sami
Staff Writer

On Dec. 7, shoppers will be able to purchase groceries "straight from the barn" as the new equestrian-themed Publix supermarket opens near Polo Fields.

The Publix supermarket, constructed to look like a barn, will be the second business to open in the Castleberry-Southard Crossing shopping center. A Wachovia Bank financial center opened Nov. 6, marking Wachovia's ninth center in

Forsyth County.

The concept to create an equestrian-themed shopping center dates back to the zoning process.

"Whenever we design a public center, we want to make sure it fits in with the surrounding area. Those familiar with the area already know it has an equestrian flavor to it, and that was well-received by Commissioner [Jack] Conway," said Terry Taylor, president of



Photo/Jim Dean

Work is continuing on the Castleberry-Southard Crossing shopping center being built at Castleberry and Bethelview roads.

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Mirabeland Investments, the center developer.

The idea was such a hit, the commissioners will vote whether or not to have a design overlay district in the area surrounding the center. The design overlay — which would set design guidelines for future construction — would mirror the equestrian theme of the center.

"I think it will add to the appearance of the center and the entire area. The idea was that the center and the intersection would be a gateway to horse country," said Taylor. "Not only to the retail center, but from a residential standpoint—any time you can mirror the residential design within a retail development, it is a plus."

The center is located at the corner of Bethelview and Castleberry Roads. The new Publix is located three miles north of the Publix on Hwy. 20 and Hwy. 9 and three miles south of a Publix on Post Road and Hwy. 9.

Brenda Reid, spokeswoman for the Publix Atlanta Division, said the decision to open a third location so close to two others was based on the county's growth rate.

"This is a part of our strategy to keep the pace with the growth that's going on in the Cumming-Forsyth

County area," she said. "The other stores are doing well, holding their own and growing with the community. We saw this as a better opportunity to serve our customers based on where people drive to and from."

The center is 40 percent leased, however, Taylor estimates between an additional 30 and 120 days before the stores open.

Wachovia Bank, La Belle Nails, King Chiropractic, Esquire Cleaners, SOHO HERO and the Pacific Spice restaurant are among some of the companies which have signed a lease with the center.

"It's a solid center. [These are] the types of businesses that traditionally follow us," said Reid. "I'm not sure being close to Polo Fields was that big of a draw. It makes for a pleasant experience, sort of like our Chateau Elan store, which is right across the street from the Chateau Elan, but it's really about the growth in the community around there."

The Publix center will occupy 45,000 square feet. Spaces ranging from 1,400 to 5,000 square feet are still available for lease. To lease space, call Sherri Sparrow at (404) 252-1138.

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