

Four-story parking garage for Bedford plaza OK'd, new cinema finalizing plans

By KIMBERLY HOUGHTON Union Leader Correspondent Dec 6, 2018



Construction crews work on the exterior of Trader Joe's Wednesday on South River Road in Bedford.

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BEDFORD — The architectural design for a four-story parking garage at the Market and Main project has been approved by town planners, and an undisclosed cinema chain is in the process of being finalized for the development.

"We do have a cinema with a letter of intent right now, so we are working on that portion of the project," Laura Homich, project architect, told the Bedford Planning Board this week. On Monday, the board approved the architectural design for a four-story, open parking garage that will be attached to the rear of the cinema building.

The 178,000-square-foot parking garage will house nearly 470 vehicles in the new mixed-use development being constructed at the former Macy's site at 125 South River Road.

"We have minimized the structure to the extent that we can ... there will be some detail and character to it," Homich said of the parking garage.

Attached to the precast concrete parking garage will be a 2,000-square-foot REI store and a 90,000-square-foot cinema, restaurant and retail space, according to Homich. The building is one of several that will be constructed on the parcel. Two buildings are already in the process of being constructed, including Trader Joe's and The Friendly Toast, as well as a smaller parking deck.

"Being a suburban, rural community, we don't see a lot of parking garages," said Becky Hebert, planning director for the town. "It is a large structure, and it will be viewed from (Interstate) 293 until the office building is constructed."

In a letter to Hebert, Homich explains that the garage will include staggered horizontal detail that is intended to interpret the reflective ripples seen on a river, which was the inspiration for the facade of the marquee building. She said the majority of the garage will be covered by the cinema and retail building, although most of the top level will be visible, as well as other areas of the structure. The fourth level of the garage will not have a roof, and some screening panels will be strategically placed throughout the perimeter of the structure, according to the design plans.

"You might catch the roofline of the car, but the concrete structure comes up above the bumper on all levels," said Chris Rice, an engineer with T.F. Moran.

To date, Pressed Cafe, Charles Schwab, Trader Joe's, The Friendly Toast, REI and Red Heat Tavern all announced that they have signed leases for the new Market and Main development. Other businesses intended for the site include Athleta, Cycle Bar, European Wax and MidiCi. No new announcements have been made regarding additional tenants that will be occupying Market and Main, a 355,708- square-foot complex.

Although an official groundbreaking is being planned, the date has not yet been publicized. In September 2016, the Planning Board granted the conditional site plan for Encore Retail and its mixed-use development that will include a cinema, hotel, medical office, restaurants and retail space.

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