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Local grocer added to Quonset Gateway lineup



Steven King

We got some great news at Quonset last month, with the announcement that a local grocer will be a key piece of the retail component at the Gateway.

From the earliest planning, the Gateway to the Quonset Business Park was envisioned as a mixed-use project. The plan called for offices, corporate headquarters, restaurants, a hotel and other much-needed amenities for park residents and the nearby community.

With 8,200 people working in the business park every day - and that number expected to grow as the park is fully developed - one of the requests we heard most often was for a multipurpose, high quality grocer. The grocer would provide a convenient place for people who work at the park to pick up some dinner on the way home, buy lunch or just get a snack. That's why we were so pleased with the announcement that Dave's Marketplace will be locating at the Gateway. Dave's is a locally owned and operated grocer, and a great local success story. What began as a fruit stand in 1969 has enjoyed tremendous growth over the years to the present, so much so that today Dave's owns and operates a string of seven markets.

The 23,000 s/f store at Quonset will be incorporated into the in-line retail component of the Gateway. New Boston Development Partners, the Gateway developers, has been working hard to encourage interest by local businesses in becoming Gateway tenants. Several local businesses have expressed interest in be part of this exciting opportunity. The addition of Dave's provides a great opportunity to further integrate the Gateway into the surrounding community.

"The Quonset Gateway is a perfect fit for a new Dave's Marketplace," said Bob

Fabiano, director of store development at Dave's.

The announcement about Dave's just reinforced our sense here at Quonset that the there is real momentum behind the Gateway. Construction is well underway on the first phase of the 72.5 acre project, with parking areas in place and a great deal of earth being moved. The Gateway's Kohl's department store is expected to open in the early fall. Dave's, which will be located directly to the west of Kohl's, is expected to open in spring 2009. And while New Boston works to secure other local businesses, site work on the Lowe's store continues to move at a brisk pace.

At completion, the Gateway will include 391,000 s/f of office space, as well as 334,000 s/f of retail. Ultimately, the development is projected to create 2,165 jobs, the majority of which will be office jobs. Walkable and green, the Gateway will include outdoor cafés, "pocket parks", a "town square" and will overall be an environmentally smart development.

Given the promise of the Gateway, the very visible progress of the construction and the announcement by the very popular Dave's Marketplace that they will be part of the retail component, it's no surprise that there is a great deal of anticipation from people who work at Quonset and our neighbors in the community.

Dave's Marketplace is a privately owned RI company that has been locally owned and operated since 1969. It currently has seven stores in Rhode Island. With its modern central commissary and in-store kitchens Dave's offers homemade meals, soups and side dishes from its own recipes which sets its offerings apart from other commercially prepared foods in terms of quality, freshness and taste. In addition Dave's has a wide selection of organic, natural and specialty foods and an extensive assortment of the freshest produce, meats and seafood to meet the demands of today's shoppers.

Steve King, P.E., is the chief operating officer for the Quonset Development Corp., North Kingstown.