



nerej

Summit Development to convert former IGA supermarket into 9,700 s/f The Goddard School

February 15, 2019 - Construction Design & Engineering

The Goddard School, 1280 Stratfield Road - Fairfield, CT

Fairfield, CT A school focused on early childhood education will be coming to the town, occupying a vacant former IGA supermarket building on one of the major thoroughfares in the Stratfield Village neighborhood.

The Goddard School, which provides a comprehensive play-based curriculum for children six-weeks to six-years-old, signed a 15-year lease with Summit Development which recently acquired the former retail property at 1280 Stratfield Rd. Goddard plans to convert the 9,700 s/f free-standing building into its newest location which it hopes to open September 1. Monroe Partners is the architect. Brett Sherman, senior vice president of Angel Commercial Real Estate, represented Summit in acquiring the property.

Headed by local resident Felix Charney, Summit specializes in creative new uses and repurposing opportunities for underutilized properties both large and small. Over the last four decades, Summit has developed nearly 100 properties representing seven million s/f in communities across Connecticut, New York and in Florida. Last fall Charney made news acquiring the 1.2 million s/f former Union Carbide headquarters in Danbury, which he is repurposing for office, residential and related retail and service uses.

For more than 50 years the newest Goddard location, which is zoned for childcare use, was home to the Stratfield Market, a neighborhood grocer that closed in 2006. In the years since the nearly one-acre property at the corner of Fairfield Woods Rd. has remained vacant. A Walgreen's was proposed for the site, but the use was ultimately turned down by the town.

Fairfield director of economic development Mark Barnhart said that over the years attempts to find a new grocery user were unsuccessful.

At one point responding to another proposal, the Town Planning and Zoning Commission amended the permitted uses to include child care. While that plan never moved forward, the use is now

permitted.

Charney said the Goddard School will be an excellent addition to the community and the perfect use for the location. He said that his company and the school will work closely with the town that recently received a \$650,000 grant for streetscape improvements to enhance the entire area. He said he will also be working cooperatively with the Stratford Village Neighborhood Association as the design for the school is developed.

James McCusker, a leader of the Neighborhood Association, said the organization is pleased that a new use has been found and that the redesign of the building is a welcome step. "The Four Corners, as the location is known, is at the heart of the neighborhood," he said. "The property has deteriorated and become a blight on our entire neighborhood. We look forward to working with Felix Charney to revive the entire corner. Our interests are very well aligned. Summit has a great track record of owning and developing beautiful properties and we are excited that we will have one in our neighborhood."

McKusker said that the Association has so far raised \$175,000 augmenting the state grant for streetscape improvements that will include benches, brick sidewalk inlays and new lighting.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540