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Southern N.H. retail market: Spring and summer momentum will continue this fall into New Year

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My how time flies! The Spring Forecast has once again turned into the fall forecast though it hardly feels that way with it still being 90 degrees outside, but deep down-we all know what's coming!

What we don't know is where this economy is heading; hence predicting where the market will be in the future is just a bit tricky, unless you have a crystal ball or cosmic powers. Are we over the worst of it and close to the beginning of a true recovery or is it possible we will either stall again or worse-head back into a double dip recession. Talking to other brokers the market is still spotty at best, up and down. Some new stores are opening-others closing, and more "For Lease" signs popping up.

You can't make it through a single week without the stock market going up then down like a roller coaster with the constant flood of information from the media which is effecting how businesses and consumers react.

Continued worries about job losses and the housing market affect consumer confidence which as we know affects retailer decisions.

Based on what I've seen here in Southern New Hampshire I am going to once again stay on the optimistic side and go with the recovery is close theory. Here's a brief summary of some of the activity that has taken place to support this.

Market Basket is on a tear. They opened 77,000 s/f at Waterstone's Brickyard Sq. in Epping, have received planning board approval for a new store at exit 10 in Hooksett, announced a store on Elm St. in downtown Manchester, and are remodeling long established stores on South Broadway in Salem & at exit 4 in Londonderry.

Tractor Supply Co. will be opening at Hooksett Village. Ultimate Electronics has taken over the Circuit City in Salem. Autozone & Dollar Tree have opened at Federated Companies site on Rte. 1 in

North Hampton and Autozone is working through the approval process at the Hooksett planning board for a site on Rte. 3.

Savers has opened on Daniel Webster Highway in Nashua. O'Neil Cinema will open a 12 screen cinema at Brickyard Sq. in Epping along with other national retailers soon to be announced. Planet Fitness has opened three 20,000 s/f gyms, two in Nashua: one next to Chunky's Cinema & Pub at the Nashua Mall, the other at Westgate Mall in Stratham and one in Lee.

Get in Shape for Women will open their second NH location in Salem at the Salem Marketplace.

Several national, regional retailers and restaurant chains have opened new locations, including: Great Clips in downtown Derry adding to their locations at TJ Max Plaza in Manchester and at the Hudson Mall, 5 Guys Burgers in Nashua on Amherst St. and in Manchester next to the new Verizon store on South Willow St., and are under construction in Derry. Chipotles has opened at Pier One

Plaza on Daniel Webster Highway at Spitbrook Rd. in Nashua. Subway is opening at Northside Plaza in Manchester, and Verizon Wireless opened at the Raymond Shopping Center.

There has been some new bank openings, i.e. Enterprise Bank and River Bank opened on Crystal Ave. in Derry, and Hampshire First opened in what was supposed to be a Starbuck's location on Rte. 102 in Londonderry.

We have seen several new restaurants open, i.e. Portland Pie on Elm St., Manchester (at the former Merrimack), The Homestead Restaurant (at the former Silo) on Rte. 3 in Merrimack, and Wings your way on the north side of Elm St. in Manchester.

Others include: Crown Jewelers has moved to North Broadway Crossing (McKinnon's Super Butcher) in North Salem, North Atlantic Medical at Epping Commons, Discount Pet Supply & Baldacci's Wood Fired Pizza on South Broadway in Salem.

Several retail properties have recently been auctioned, including 337 Amherst St. in Nashua, Woodbury Court in Bedford, and Brothers Pizza on Lafayette Rd. in North Hampton. I still haven't noticed any shopping centers listed on the open market. There is continued activity of investors acquiring some of the newly built drug stores i.e. the Walgreen's in Lee, and Applebee's in Derry.

In summary though the upcoming fall and winter months are notoriously slow I remain optimistic that the momentum of this past spring/summer will continue this fall and into the New Year.

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