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Hawley Cos.' \$4m rehab of Berkshire Shopping Center well underway

August 13, 2008 - Connecticut

Berkshire Shopping Center, the Grand Dame of Danbury's strip mall type center, is undergoing a \$4 million face lift, and when it's over, she'll be the Belle of the Ball for the next generation of suburban Danbury shoppers.

The 350,000 s/f center containing 34 stores and built in 1961, was the first strip mall type center built in Danbury. Owned and managed by the Hawley family, it was also the first shopping center built by Ervie Hawley who went on to become known as Mr. Shopping Center, locally.

David Hawley, president of Hawley Management Co., operates and manages the property.

Renovated only one other time in 1988, Berkshire will be reinvented to attract the major retailers of the next two decades. The center will boast a completely new contemporary facade architecturally accented by four bell tower-like structures that will be lit at night to attract shoppers to the shops that are set back from the busy Newtown Rd. serving the center.

New concrete sidewalks and asphalt parking lot pavement will be installed in a phased operation to make sure that all shops are kept fully operational and that customers will have plenty of room left to park on the 350,000 s/f site.

The revision and updating of the parking fields have been completed. Construction crews are now focusing on the shopping center buildings themselves, the new facade and renovation.

"Already the home of such nationally known retailers are Wal-Mart, Hallmark, Bank of America, Staples, Marshalls and Goodyear Tire," Hawley said, "We believe the upgrading of Berkshire will reflect the kind of profitable environment leading retailers will be searching for in the next 20 years."

All general contracting work to upgrade the center is being done by Hawley Construction Corp., the building arm of The Hawley Companies.

Architect for the renovation of Berkshire Shopping Center is Weber & Associates. Rotondo Engineering LLC of Shelton was responsible for all site engineering and planning.

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