

'It's just the tip of the iceberg'

Levis Commons celebrates its one-year milestone



Creative Jobs

Levis Commons Boulevard.

By Deb Buker

One year ago today the Town Center at J. Preston Levis Commons opened its doors and celebrated "a part of history in northwest Ohio"—the first urban village community in northwest Ohio. This week the Town Center is once again celebrating—a first anniversary celebration.

The Town Center, described as the heart of Levis Commons, is a 319,000-square-foot, open-air lifestyle center featuring a collection of national, regional and local specialty merchants. With the addition of seven new tenants in its first year, the Town Center is home to 35 retailers and restaurants, of which 70 percent are first-to-market.

C.J. Banks, a casual women's clothier specializing in plus-size apparel, was the most recent addition to the center opening earlier this month.

Bistro Wasabi, an Asian bistro and sushi bar, is scheduled to open at the end of the year. It will occupy a 3,726-square-foot space on Chappel Drive across from Red River Restaurant. The bistro will offer a complete sushi bar as well as a full menu and beverage bar. Currently, Bistro Wasabi has two locations in the Chicago area.

Opening in early 2006, Bluepoint Fish Club specializes in fresh seafood as well as raw bar favorites, a variety of shellfish and daily fresh catch fish prepared to order. The restaurant also features prime steaks and chops and a full bar in a contemporary atmosphere with a glass-enclosed theater-style kitchen.

First Anniversary Celebration Events

Thursday, October 27

Pumpkin Decorating Contest

Pumpkins provided

Celebrity Judges

Age groups: up to 5 yrs, 6 - 12, 13 - 18

Time: 1 to 3 p.m. and 5 to 7 p.m.

(while supplies last)

Friday, October 28

Trick or Treating 4 to 7 p.m.

Costume parade with local characters

Costume contest at 6 p.m.

Saturday, October 29

Ohio Proud Fall Harvest Open-Air Market

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Live musical performances by Jimmy Johnson, 4 to

6 p.m., and Kerry Patric Clark, 6 to 8 p.m.

Spooky stories around a bonfire, 7 to 9 p.m.

Hot cider and s'mores, 7 to 9 p.m.

Hayrides, 3 to 6 p.m.

Sunday, October 30

Scavenger Hunt, 1 to 2 p.m.

All individuals and teams must register

The Town Center also features more than 60,000 square feet of office space overlooking the towngreen. More than 40 percent of the office space is leased which includes Dillin Corp., Hardy Communications and Hill Partners.

In an interview last October during the center's opening, Larry Dillin, president of Dillin Corp. and master developer of J. Preston Levis Commons and co-developer of the Town Center said, "Things are exploding. I tell everyone that what you see now is just a tip of the iceberg. Come back in another year and then a year after that and come back the third year and I don't think there will be any land left. The momentum is very strong from both the local commu-

nity and nationally."

It has been a year, and according to Mr. Dillin the development is now a \$500 million project and will create more than 2,000 jobs when the 400-acre development is completed.

This includes the new O-I world headquarters which will be located in Levis Commons and is scheduled for completion in September 2006.

"J. Preston Levis Commons works because of the tightly integrated mix of uses. Each section of the project feeds on the others, providing a strategic vitality that will lead to the long-term stability of the project ensuring that the community's tax base will continue to grow. We are proud of what we've accomplished so far

and we are excited to see the other elements of the development take shape," said Mr. Dillin. "Teamwork and the support of public officials and the community at large are the backbone of accomplishing any project of this magnitude."

Plans also are under way for a hotel and conference center, an amphitheater and clock tower.

Preston Gardens, located on 16 acres, features one- and two-bedroom garden apartments along with two- and three-bedroom town homes available for rent. The units showcase vaulted ceilings, crown molding, Berber carpet, large walk-in closets, a resort style pool, fitness center, business center and movie theater.

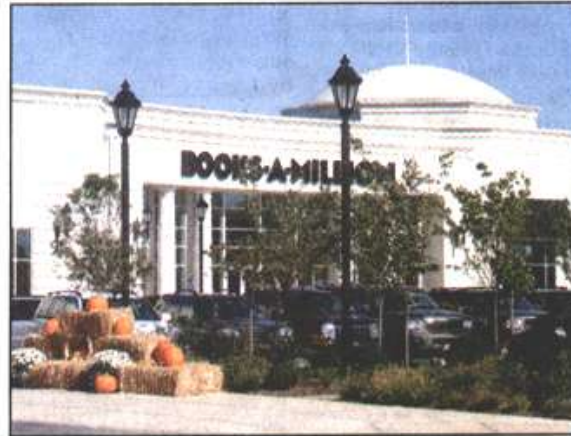
The Brownstone Village broke ground last month. There will be six homes in the first phase with four under contract. The brownstones start at \$259,400. The Brownstone concept is vertical ownership. The combination of old world brownstone elegance, charm and convenience coupled with the vitality of the J. Preston Levis Commons development makes the Brownstone Village an unique opportunity for homeowners.

Construction also has begun on Preston Place, 200,000 square feet of neighborhood commercial space, to support the needs of the residential community. Elements of Preston Place will include the same architectural and landscaping themes prevalent throughout the development—focusing on a pedestrian friendly environment.

Several individual parcels

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LEVIS COMMONS



More than 35 retailers and restaurants are located at the Town Center.



South Suburban Animal Hospital is scheduled to open this winter.



Preston Gardens.

Levis Commons

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within Preston Place have been sold for the creation of individual projects.

Opening its doors this winter, South Suburban Animal Hospital will be a new addition to Preston Place at Levis Commons. The 10,000-square-foot facility located on State Route 25 will offer not only veterinary medical and surgical care, but also several new ancillary services for pet owners. South Suburban will offer full grooming and bathing services, plus a new professional service known as "Shed-X" to help control and decrease pet hair shed-

ding in the home. Daycare services will be offered along with luxury boarding for cats and dogs.

To mark its one-year anniversary, the Town Center will host numerous family events throughout the weekend-long celebration, said Casey Irons, marketing director for the Town Center.

"The Town Center has been embraced by the citizens of northwest Ohio, as well as tens of thousands of visitors to the area who view it as a destination," she added. "The events we have planned are our way of giving back and having fun

with people in the communities we serve."

Bob Spratt, president of Hill Partners and co-developer of the Town Center, said the expectation for sales in the first year has "exceeded all expectations across the board. The upcoming anniversary celebration gives us a chance to look back on our first year of operation and reflect on the growth of the Town Center and the success that retailers have had. In our second year, we look forward to the tenant mix continuing to grow, not only in numbers but in diversity as well."

After the anniversary celebration, the Town Center will be gearing up for the holiday season. A 50-foot Christmas tree adorned with more than 66,000 lights will be the focal point of the Town Center. Carriage rides will be available on weekend evenings, a Candy Cane Concert series is scheduled and more.

"We have a full slate of activities for December along with extended holiday shopping hours," added Ms. Irons.