

First project takes shape after Jamaica rezoning

BY IVAN PEREIRA

A mega market for electronic retailers across the country will be the first major commercial facility in the rezoned area near the AirTrain station in Jamaica, the representatives of a Korean developer told Community Board 12's monthly meeting last week.

On Nov. 21, Paul Travis, the managing partner of Washington Square Partners, a Manhattan-based firm that represents the developer Prime Construction, showed off preliminary plans to transform a former abandoned meat market on Sutphin Boulevard and 94th Avenue into a 13-floor international wholesale electronics market.

The \$260-million mart, currently under construction in Jamaica, will be beneficial to the economy of both the city and southeast Queens, according to the developer, because of its location near the busy street and AirTrain station.

"It will be a mart where buyers from all over the country will come to buy these electronics and sell them to other outlets," Travis said. "We continue to think that this will be an important project in southeast Queens."

The first three floors of the mart will be used for retail space, while the remaining floors will be used for wholesale

showrooms, Travis said. Construction at the site will be underway in full force in early 2008.

The project is the first commercial venture to be developed in the area since the city rezoned 368 blocks in southeastern Queens on July 11. Prime Construction, which is based in South Korea, acquired the site about a year ago, Travis said.

Although the mart will cater to producers from outside the city, Prime has already looked to the community for help in building the space. The company gave \$1.62 million in contracts to locally owned minority construction businesses for the demolition of the old meat mart, according to Travis.

"It was very important to us that the first piece of work was done by businesses in your area," he said.

Although employment procedures for the mart are a long way off, Travis said he believes the developers will reach out to the community when it hires for various positions associated with the retailer.

"It would be in our best interest to work with tenants to hire locally," he said.

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