

# DCG plans mall renovations; chip fab impact outweighs weak retail market

BY MICHAEL DeMASI  
THE BUSINESS REVIEW

DCG Development Co. will add even more retail storefronts to its mall in Clifton Park and build a hotel there despite the sluggish economy.

The developer will transform the vacant Steinbach's at Clifton Park Center into 10 to 15 individual storefronts, creating an additional 40,000 to 45,000 square feet of leasable space.

DCG also plans to build a 120-room

hotel. Town planners already approved the Steinbach's renovations and are scheduled to review the final drawings for the hotel on April 14.

DCG hasn't yet decided on the hotel brand.

A cost estimate wasn't available for either project, but DCG will likely benefit from the slowdown in commercial construction because there will be greater demand among contractors to do the work.

The redesign of the Steinbach's will be similar to the changes DCG made to other sections of the enclosed mall a couple of years ago to create storefronts that shoppers can access directly from the parking lot.

  
**CLIFTON PARK  
CENTER**

EXIT 9 CLIFTON PARK, NY

The facades have bright colors, awnings and other features that give part of the mall more of an urban look, similar to a downtown street.

But the new look isn't readily apparent to people driving on the mall's main access road because of where the empty Steinbach's is located. The building blocks much of the view of the mall for drivers on Clifton Park Center Road.

Renovating the old Steinbach's will remove that physical barrier, said DCG Vice President Donald MacElroy.

The developer is negotiating with prospective tenants but has no signed leases.

MacElroy said the available space will range from 1,500 to 10,000 or 15,000 square feet. He didn't specify the lease rates, but noted other parts of the mall rent from \$15 to \$30 per square foot, plus insurance, taxes and maintenance.

He said 70 percent to 80 percent of the new storefronts that were created two years ago are occupied.

Three tenants already closed their doors—Bella Maternity, Salsarita's Fresh Cantina and Couture 77—but replacements were quickly found for two of them. Talks are underway with a third.

One of the existing tenants, **Mocha Lisa's Cafe**, said business has slowed lately but hasn't fallen at the coffee shop the way some merchants have suffered.

"I think the nationals are really bracing right now," said co-owner Jeff Lescinsky. "I don't think there's a lot of growth in larger chains. Our niche here is smaller independents that offer a niche product."

MacElroy acknowledged the weak retail environment but said southern Saratoga County was in a relatively strong position, especially since the plans for a computer chip fabrication plant in Malta are moving forward.

He said a lot of "fence-sitters" are taking action now that construction of the \$4.2 billion facility seems imminent.

**GlobalFoundries Inc.**, a spinoff of **Advanced Micro Devices Inc.**, is building the chip fab.

"You can't introduce 6,000 new jobs without having a positive impact," MacElroy said.

The chip fab is expected to employ about 900 people when it opens in 2012 and 1,400 when fully operational in 2014. Officials estimate another 5,000 spinoff jobs will be created.



**NORTH ELEVATION**

A rendering of the planned renovation of the former Steinbach's at Clifton Park Center. Lease rates in other parts of the mall range from \$15 to \$30 a square foot, triple net.

