

Walmart, village OK development agreement

Written by Mark Jaeger

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The conversion of the Saukville Walmart store into a Walmart Supercenter took a crucial step Tuesday, when the Village Board unanimously approved a development agreement with the retailer.

The agreement puts in writing many of the details of the redevelopment plans Walmart officials presented to the village earlier this year. It relies heavily on the leeway granted last month when trustees adopted the ordinance creating the Highway 33 commercial corridor, now known as the Market Street Neighborhood Plan.

In the agreement, Walmart confirms that it intends to transform its 96,000-square-foot building at 825 E. Green Bay Rd. into a 121,000-square-foot multi-faceted retail center.

Among the details included in the document is the provision that the store will be allowed to modify the south end of Market Street to better accommodate the delivery of freight. If the village determines it needs to extend the street, the store will pay all costs associated with realigning the section of roadway used to meet the store's trucking requirements.

The agreement also notes that the store will cooperate with Wisconsin Department of Transportation efforts to improve Plaza Drive, waiving any right to receive compensation from the village for needed right-of-way.

Another condition in the agreement notes that the store will install a bus shelter for use by Ozaukee County Transit Services and a bike rack for commuters.

One term in the development agreement that village officials insisted on was the provision that Walmart will maintain the site landscaping and parking lot. The village can give the store a 30-day notice to make repairs of the site, or bill the company for the work.

The deteriorated condition of the current store property has been an ongoing area of concern with village officials throughout the discussion of the expansion.

"I know Walmart is not willing to let it look run down. The outside is just as important as the inside, and in my opinion the inside is going to look spectacular," Walmart architect Bill Boyden said last month.

Store officials have said they hope to begin construction late this year, with completion by summer of 2011.