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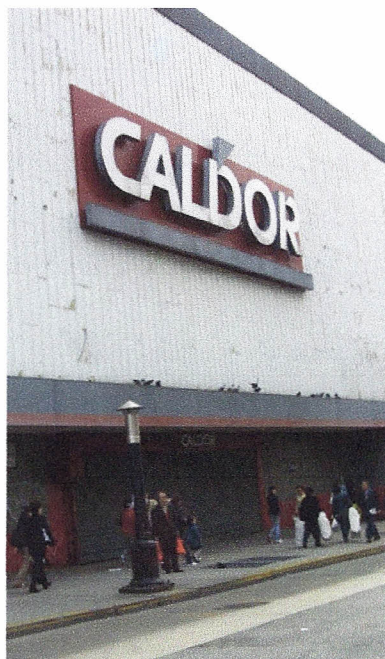
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Site Work Underway To Transform Caldor

By Joseph Orovic

Flushing residents have spent more than a decade getting used to saying "what used to be Caldor" with res Wal-mart tried to move in. other plans to rejuvenate the site came and went, but nothing stuck.



The vacant Caldor site is now bustling with activity.

about the project.

"I don't know if I'm crazy about another restaurant in there," he said, while also showing some concern about 350 parking spots. "What you're doing is you're impacting Main Street and we're trying to lower the traffic now."

Kelty had no knowledge of the project and said the board had not heard from Chang, but invited him to speak about his plans before CB7.

"I think if he wants to come in and talk to us, we'd like to speak with him," Kelty said.

Chang said the store will be a boon for Flushing residents.

"I think any use for this place is better than having it sit vacant," he said.

Reach Reporter Joseph Orovic at jorovic@queenstribune.com, or (718) 357-7400, Ext. 127.

The store formerly known as Caldor will end its 11-year dorma when a new development opens in September.

High-end hotel magnate Sam Chang has begun work on a new the community eyesore, investing \$15 million to create a "major store." It will feature retail on its first floor, a supermarket on the second and a major Chinese restaurant on the third.

"We definitely want to do it as upscale as possible, with all the money we're spending there," Chang said.

The developer promised no small vendors would be on the retail side of the building. He was quick to assert, "It's not the Flushing Mall."

The Long Island-based developer leased the space for 15 years with Vornado Realty Trust, with an option to renew for another 15.

A series of building permits have been granted since mid-December to allow renovation of the property.

The site, at 136-20 Roosevelt Ave., became a sore topic within the community after Caldor shuttered in 1999. Left vacant ever since, the site slowly deteriorated over time.

Chang said he has no plans to expand or deviate from the original plan of the site, which is zoned C4-3 which limits use to retail commercial development.

The developer also hopes to include about 350 spots-worth of parking at the site.

Community Board 7 chair Gene Kelty expressed some reservations

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