



Tuesday, February 24 - March 9, 2015

New York City Retail

Big box mergers mean opportunities in retail leasing



Just a few days into February and it's already shaping up to be a momentous month filled with new opportunities for retail leasing!

Now that Staples and Office Depot are planning to merge - if the Federal Trade Commission approves the deal, which isn't a given considering it blocked the same proposed combination in 1997 - we should see some redundant stores available around the country. Manhattan, which has no Office Depot units, shouldn't be too affected, though the deal could easily be an excuse to close under-performing units. However, the merger is a testament to the strength of e-commerce in commodities, as well as the power of discounters such as Target and Walmart, which sell these items, as well. (In fact, strong competition from these retailers may be why the deal can be approved.)

Meanwhile, some specialty space also should be coming back on the market due to Cache's Chapter 11 filing and mass closures by Wet Seal, among others. But what seems like a lot of bad news actually is a great opportunity. Metro New York City, in particular, remains such a critical market for retail expansion that brands will be clamoring for these locations!

Look at the stores that already have announced new leases. Forever 21 will take the vacated H&M space at 640 Fifth Ave. Diptyque's latest outpost will be at 87 East 42nd St. Apple will make its borough debut at Queens Center mall (90-15 Queens Blvd.) Look for an L.K. Bennett shop at 655 Madison Ave. Jacadi's French take on children's apparel will have its fifth New York City location at 106 Reade St. Lindsey Thornburg has moved from Stanton St. to 21 Orchard St. Skin Laundry will offer fitness for your face at its first New York City shop at Flatiron. After giving way to a Birchbox pop-up over the holidays, TokyoBike will return to 1 Prince St. permanently next month. Korean cosmetics brand Club Clio has come to Manhattan at 11 West 14th St. From Fifth to Madison: Diesel is relocating to Barneys country at 625 Madison Ave., reports say. Nexxus will debut first salon at 39 North Moore St. Anne et Valentin expands to Brooklyn at 200 Smith St. Target's urban CityTarget will come to New York City next year at the CityPoint development in Brooklyn.

The calendar also gets busier and busier. I'm honored to once again join my friend Esther Muller, co-founder of the Real Estate Academy of Continuing Education, and moderate the "Meet the Press" panel discussion at its winter session. Members of our real estate media will join me for an in-depth discussion on Friday, February 27th, from 2 to 3 p.m. at the 3 West Club, 3 West 51st St. For more information about the session and the Academy, visit www.realestateacademy.com.

And it's not too early to begin making plans for the International Council of Shopping Centers' annual RECon convention in Las Vegas, the largest gathering of retail real estate professionals in the world! As a proud board member of Commercial Real Estate Women's Network, I'm thrilled to note that two of my favorite organizations will once again collaborate, with the CREW Luncheon at RECon, Monday May 18th from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. at the Westgate Las Vegas hotel (formerly the LVH). Last year's CREW/ICSC collaboration was a huge success, and given that my dear friend Barbara Corcoran will be the guest speaker, I know this session will be even more spectacular! To register for this all-important conference, visit www.icsc.org.

Happy Shopping!