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Red Bull distributor closes LI facility shedding 44 jobs

BY DAVID WINZELBERG

The long-time third-party distributor for Red Bull has shuttered its operations on Long Island after losing its contract with the energy drink giant.

The Beverage Works NY, Inc., which has been a third-party distributor of Red Bull for the past 24 years, has laid off 44 workers here, part of 166 layoffs at its facilities in Brooklyn, Peekskill and on Long Island, according to the New York State Department of Labor. The company recently closed its 24,000-square-foot warehouse and distribution operations at 16 Dubon Court in East Farmingdale.

An executive of The Beverage Works has yet to respond to a request for comment.

In April, Beverage Works, headquartered in Wall, N.J., sued Red Bull North America Inc. in New Jersey federal court claiming that the company unfairly terminated its distribution contract for the New York and New Jersey area and violated the New Jersey Franchise Practices Act. The lawsuit argues that Red Bull required Beverage Works to make significant financial investments, including equipment, marketing events, mandated discounted pricing and advertising “that went well beyond the payment for Red Bull products that Beverage Works sold to retailers.”

Because Red Bull would not allow Beverage Works to distribute any other products, the company claims termination of its

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Courtesy of Schuckman Realty

A group of local real estate investment firms are planning to transform the Broadway Commons Mall in Hicksville to an open-air lifestyle center.

\$100M redevelopment aims to reimagine Long Island mall

BY DAVID WINZELBERG

Just five months after a group of local commercial real estate investment firms acquired the Broadway Commons mall in Hicksville, the new owners plan to transform it into an open-air lifestyle center.

The ownership group, which unveiled its \$100 million redevelopment project at a meeting of the Northwest Civic Association of Hicksville on Monday, plans to raze the shuttered 300,000-square-foot Macy’s store, consisting of

five stories over a lower-level. In addition, about 100,000 square feet of the mall’s interior will be demolished as part of the plan to turn the mall inside out and create the new open-air concept that will be renamed The Shoppes on Broadway.

An as-yet-unnamed national retail tenant will be occupying a new 100,000-square-foot store, which will also include gasoline service and electric vehicle charging stations. Other new offerings at the Hicksville complex will include new restaurants with outdoor seating and additional experiential and entertainment tenants, according to

Kenneth Schuckman, one of the property’s ownership group principals.

Also part of the redevelopment plan are internal roadway improvements and new way-finding signage aimed at upgrading the overall shopping experience at the 68-acre property. The Shoppes on Broadway will have increased security with new lighting and cameras, new landscaping and open spaces.

“This will be a complete transformation and

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Cricket World Cup in East Meadow keeps hotels, restaurants busy

BY ADINA GENN

This year marked the first time the T20 Cricket World Cup came to Long Island. And while it’s too soon to report specifics on its economic impact, local leaders say the 2024 qualifiers at Eisenhower Park in East Meadow are giving the region a boost.

“We didn’t know what to expect,” said Frank Camarano Jr., president of the Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce. “Based on what’s hap-

pened so far, it’s a winner all around.”

For fans, cricket is serious business. Sunday’s India-Pakistan match, for instance, brought more than 34,000 to the temporary cricket stadium at Eisenhower Park. Many of the people attending the tournament, which spanned from June 3 through June 12 on Long Island, need a place to sleep and eat, keeping hotels and restaurants busy.

In Nassau County, the tournament is expected

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AP photo by Adam Hunger

India’s Jasprit Bumrah celebrates the dismissal of Pakistan’s captain Babar Azam during the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup cricket match between India and Pakistan at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury.

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LONG ISLAND BUSINESS NEWS



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TOP STORIES

Red Bull distributor closes LI facility shedding 44 jobs



LIBN photo

Following the termination of its third-party distributor, Red Bull will be distributing the company's products itself across the New York/New Jersey territory.

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contract destroys its business and results in hundreds of employees losing their jobs across New York and New Jersey, according to the lawsuit, which is still pending. An attorney for the plaintiff declined comment and attorneys for Red Bull have yet to respond to a request for comment.

After terminating its third-party distributor, Red Bull has now taken over the territory and will be distributing the company's products itself. Towards that end, a Red Bull af-

iliate has leased about 50,000 square feet of warehouse and distribution space at the newly built, 178,134-square-foot Bristol Logistics Center at 49 Mall Drive in Commack, according to real estate sources. Red Bull is currently advertising job opportunities on employment websites for warehouse workers and drivers at its new Commack facility.

Red Bull is owned by the Austrian company Red Bull GmbH. The company sold over 12 billion cans of its energy drinks last year with 2023 net sales of \$10.9 billion, according to published reports.

\$100M redevelopment aims to reimagine Long Island mall

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reimagining of the property. It will be more shopper friendly, more pedestrian friendly and more community friendly," Schuckman told LIBN. "You go to work, you go home, and this should be the third place you go to."

The project team for the redevelopment includes two Long Island architecture firms, New Hyde Park-based Rosenbaum Design Group and Woodbury-based Spector Companies. Huntington-based R&M Engineering will provide civil engineering services and Frank Filiciotto is the project's traffic engineer.

Attorney Bram Weber, of Melville-based Weber Law Group, is representing the Hicksville redevelopment.

"We're going to be making an application to the Town of Oyster Bay this summer for the approvals needed to implement this redevelopment plan," Weber said. "Right now, we're doing the important work of building community support for the plan."

The first step in the project's community outreach was the presentation before the Northwest Civic Association of Hicksville, which attendees said was met with overwhelming support. State

Sen. Steve Rhoads and Nassau County Legis. Rose Walker were at the meeting, and both expressed support for the plan, Schuckman said.

The new ownership group of the Hicksville property, K/BTF Broadway LLC, which closed on the \$40 million purchase in February, includes Rockville Centre-based BTF Capital; the KABR Group, headquartered in Englewood, N.J., and AJM BRE Ventures, a joint venture of Long Island firms AJM Real Estate, headed by Adam Mann, and Burman Real Estate, headed by Scott Burman.

Besides being a principal of BTF Capital, Schuckman is also principal of the commercial real estate brokerage firm Schuckman Realty, which will continue as the exclusive leasing broker for the Hicksville retail complex. He said the redevelopment is attracting national and regional tenants that would not have considered coming to the mall in its current state.

"There has also been interest from former tenants considering a return to the property," Schuckman said.

The 240,000-square-foot Ikea store, which Ikea owns, and the 137,000-square-foot Target store, which Target owns, will remain at the new Shoppes on Broadway.



Courtesy of Schuckman Realty

An artist's rendering of The Shoppes on Broadway.

First opened in 1956 as an open-air retail center called Mid Island Shopping Plaza, the center was enclosed in 1968, renamed Broadway Mall in 1989 and completely redeveloped in 1995. Vornado Realty Trust acquired the Hicksville property in 2005 for \$153 million and sold it to KKR & Co. for \$94 million in 2014. In 2017, the property was renamed Broadway Commons and KKR sold five parcels for over \$60 million, according to a source familiar with the transactions. KKR fully exited in 2018 and the mall was operated by Pacific Retail

for its previous owner UBS, before the local ownership group took it over earlier this year.

The "de-malling" of Broadway Commons is part of a national trend to design more walkable, consumer-friendly shopping experiences. Here on Long Island, the former Huntington Square Mall in East Northport was turned inside out 17 years ago and the former SunVet Mall in Holbrook is currently being redeveloped into an open-air shopping center. The Sunrise Mall in Massapequa is also facing an upcoming redevelopment project.

Cricket World Cup in East Meadow keeps hotels, restaurants busy

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to generate more than \$150 million in economic activity, said Darcy Belyea, commissioner of Nassau's Department of Parks, Recreation & Museums.

"Hotels in Nassau County are doing very well, and demand pushed into western Suffolk," said Dorothy Roberts, president of the Long Island Hospitality Association.

The final numbers won't be released until after all the data is collected and analyzed, which takes about two weeks, Roberts said.

Last time this year, hotel rates in Nassau were in the \$200 range, whereas over the past week rates were between \$400 to \$750 per night, Roberts said.

Airbnb on Long Island saw a surge in searches of nearly 500% for stays between June 10-16, compared with the same period last year, according to the company. It added that guests traveling to Nassau for the tournament hailed from Florida, Arizona, California and England; in addition, some traveled from Rochester, N.Y.

International travelers tend to have a longer length of stay than domestic travelers, Roberts said.

"Long Island has a lot to offer," Roberts said. "It's not just the beaches in Nassau and Suffolk. There's golf, beautiful parks, historic sites, dotted villages across the North Shore, spectacular restaurants

and entertainment venues. There's a lot to do.

The larger hotels on Long Island were booked by larger groups—and that could include teams as well as their support staff—whereas the smaller venues tended to be booked by individuals, Roberts said.

June is a busy time for the hospitality sector on Long Island, Roberts said. People travel here for weddings and graduations, as well as sports events. Next week, for example, is the LI Lax Fest, she said, bringing in more visitors. And the cricket tournament increased demand for the sector, serving as a boost especially this year when the Belmont Stakes had been relocated upstate to Saratoga Springs.

Belyea said many of the surrounding businesses "have seen a lot of foot traffic over the last days," and that the tournament aimed to give them a boost, especially after COVID.

Frank Borrelli from Borrelli's restaurant said he charged for parking on game days, and that fans appreciated that because the closer it got to start time for the matches, the trickier it was to park. He gave them \$10 vouchers to eat at the restaurant, and at least half would come back for a meal. He also handled catering and takeout orders, including one for 200 people.

People came from New Jersey; Maryland; and Ontario, Canada. Some were repeat customers during the tournament, he said.



AP photo by Adam Hunger

Players of both teams walk into the field before the start of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between the U.S. and India.

During Sunday's India-Pakistan match, the restaurant was also hosting a christening and a baby shower. That day, he seated guests on the patio and at the bar and encouraged takeout.

"We had to hustle and be creative," he said.

For Jim Roggio, the owner of Burger City in East Meadow, new foot traffic came from the Suffolk and Nassau police, NYPD, federal security teams as well as construction workers and others working on the stadium.

The way the traffic flow was directed, he said, spectators didn't seem to pass by his eatery.

Still, he was ready to handle boosted demand,

and was accustomed to that based on increases he'd seen having been named best burger two consecutive years from Bethpage Federal Credit Union.

For the tournament, "we didn't know what to anticipate," Roggio said. "I told our vendors that I might need to call for food backup. But that never happened."

Camarano said he has heard from chambers that business was up in Massapequa, Hicksville, Farmingdale and Merrick.

The boost in business, he said, "radiated out farther than we expected."