

Tanger files plans for outlet mall in Tradition in Port St. Lucie

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PORT ST. LUCIE — A planned outlet mall originally expected to open this spring is moving to a new location in the western part of the city.

North Carolina-based Tanger Outlet Centers submitted plans to the city earlier this week for a 350,000-square-foot outlet mall in Tradition. The mall's eight buildings would go on a 32-acre site east of a new charter laboratory school and just north of The Landing, a shopping center with 600,000 square feet of stores.

When they met with city officials in May 2007, Tanger representatives said they hoped to have Treasure Coast residents shopping in a new mall by now.

Tanger was planning to build the outlet center on 35 acres split off from the Home Depot site east of Interstate 95 and south of Gatlin Boulevard. However, issues with wetlands on the site forced the company to move to Tradition, said Mayor Patricia Christensen.

Vice Mayor Jack Kelly said he's just excited the outlet center is moving forward — no matter where it will be. Kelly expects the mall to help boost the city's property tax base as the residential real estate market continues dwindling.

Christensen added the center should be a boost to the city's economy. She's also looking forward to shopping at the high-end outlet stores that she's seen at one of Tanger's malls in Tennessee.

"It's something that would be a great asset to the community," Christensen said.

The company has not announced which stores will be included in the Port St. Lucie center. Some of the stores featured at its other centers are Gap, Liz Claiborne, Tommy Hilfiger, Reebok, Nike, Polo Ralph Lauren Factory and Izod.

The city's Site Plan Review Committee will review the site plan June 25. It could go before the City Council as soon as late August.

Christensen has not heard of a new projected opening date, but she said she assumed it would be in spring 2009 because Tanger officials wanted to have the mall ready within a year of breaking ground.

No one from Tanger could immediately be reached for comment.

Tanger currently owns or operates 31 outlet centers in 22 states. Its only Florida mall is in Fort Myers, although the company used to operate the Outlets at Vero Beach.



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