

Two restaurants asked to leave Seneca

Work set to begin on Publix demolition sometime next year

BY NORM CANNADA
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SENECA — Plans for the demolition and reconstruction of the former

Bi-Lo grocery store to bring a new Publix to the Seneca 130 Plaza on Rochester Highway will cause two restaurants to have to find other locations.

Owners of the Alazan Mexican Restaurant and Atami Express Japanese Grill told The Journal on Tuesday they received letters in early November requiring them to be out of their buildings by Jan. 9.

Officials have said the former Bi-Lo in the shopping center will be

demolished and rebuilt with a tentative target to open the new Publix store in mid-2021. Publix spokeswoman Kim Reynolds said last month it generally takes 10 months to a year from the beginning of construction for a new store to be ready to open.

Wes Nalley, president of Nalley Properties, which

shopping center

owns the shopping center, told The Journal on Monday the former Bi-Lo store will be taken down and rebuilt for Publix, but the six storefronts in the plaza would be left "intact." He said Family Dollar would be allowed to continue to operate during construction and there could be "one or two" oth-

er stores operating during construction. He said his company was still working with the other three current tenants. There are also two unoccupied spaces at the site.

Alazan owner Jose Sales said he has found a new location on U.S.

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Highway 123 between Seneca and Clemson and hopes to move in next year after remodeling the space. He said he doesn't know yet if he would be able to return to the shopping center once the Publix construction is complete.

"They gave me two months to move," Sales said of the letter he received. "We are moving to a location on Highway 123 before (the) 7-Eleven (store). If the owner lets me come back, I can come back, maybe."

Wilber Gonzalez, one of the Atami owners, said

they have asked the property owners for two more months past the Jan. 9 deadline to find and move into a new location.

"We did receive the letter telling us we are going to have to move," Gonzalez said. "We have to find another place, but the thing is, they don't give us enough time to move. I don't know what to do. First of all, we have to try to find another location. Time is really tight."

A man inside Crystal Nails & Spa declined to comment about the status of his business in the shopping center.