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## Food Lion to open new location, create 40 jobs



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

The Food Lion name and logo is now emblazoned across the facade of the company's new location at Chowan Crossing on Virginia Road. The store is scheduled to open April 6.

## Store will be at Chowan Crossing, will open April 6

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

The new Food Lion store at the Chowan Crossing shopping center on Virginia Road is slated to open April 6, a company spokeswoman said this week.

"We look forward to serving the Edenton community at this new location," said Christy Phillips-Brown, a Food Lion spokeswoman.

The new location is in the building that previously housed Farmer's Foods.

*"We look forward to serving the Edenton community at this new location."*

**Christy Phillips-Brown**  
Spokeswoman, Food Lion

Food Lion's current store at the Edenton Village shopping center on North Broad Street is slated to remain open through April 5.

The company is holding a job fair Thursday to hire about 40

additional associates to serve customers at the new location, according to Phillips-Brown.

"We expect all associates to transfer to the new location, in addition to the approximately 40 new associates we are looking to hire to support customers at our new location," said Phillips-Brown.

Expanded product lines are being eyed for the new location.

"The new store has 32,000 square feet throughout the store and will have expanded selling areas for the expansion of products we're bringing into the

store," said Phillips-Brown. "Our new store will have a variety of expanded items for customers including a new produce cooler that will keep produce fresher longer with expanded varieties, including natural and organic products. We'll also expand products offerings in our fresh departments, including meats, produce, deli/bakery, and much more."

The Chowan Crossing area near the intersection of Virginia Road and U.S. 17 has been a hub of activity in recent weeks in preparation for the relocation of

Food Lion.

If you have shopped at Roses or eaten at Subway or Garden Buffet — or simply driven by on Virginia Road and glanced in the direction of the shopping center — you likely have noticed the work being done on the parking lot and changes occurring on the outside of the grocery store building.

It has been about a year since Food Lion announced plans to relocate its Edenton store from the Edenton Village location to the new location at Chowan Crossing.

## Developer working out financing for hotel project

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

The developer of a high-end hotel in the former Chowan County office building on East King Street is now eyeing a Fall 2017 opening for the hotel.

Bob Howsare of SAGA Construction and Development Inc. said this week that the company hopes to close on the financing and tax credits by the end of June and start construction

*"Working with the town and the county and the people of the town has been just great."*

**Bob Howsare**

SAGA Construction and Development Inc.

in August or September.

The goal would be to open the hotel for business about a year after construction

begins, he said.

The financing on this hotel project has taken longer than for most other development projects because of the complexity of the financing — especially as it relates to federal new market tax credits, he said.

Some banks are not familiar with tax credits, others won't finance projects that involve tax credits, and still others are generally skittish about hotels, according to Howsare.

That the hotel is being developed independently — it's not part of a major chain — and is located in a small town add additional challenges in financing.

But the company has found a bank that is interested and the developer has done detailed financial modeling to demonstrate the project's feasibility for the bank.

"We're in negotiations at this point with the bank that we believe is going to do the

deal," Howsare said.

The developer still has to get the allocation for federal new market tax credits.

Howsare said it's a complicated deal but one the company believes is important for the economic development of Edenton and Chowan County.

Chowan County sold its former office building on East King Street in July of last year after nearly two years of negotiating the deal.

Immediately upon acquiring the property, SAGA announced plans to return the structure to its historic use as a hotel.

Preservation North Carolina acquired the property from the county and then resold it immediately to SAGA Construction and Development. That process allowed for the establishment of historic preservation covenants that will protect

See HOTEL, 2A

## Early voting tops 2012 Primary mark

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

Voters in Chowan County went to the polls Tuesday following an early voting period in which turnout exceeded the figure for the 2012 Primary.

The total number of one-stop votes cast in this Primary was 1,132, up from 982 in 2012. This year saw the addition of a second one-stop voting site at the Northern Chowan Community Center in Tyner.

There were 932 early one-stop votes cast at the Agriculture Building on Virginia Road in Edenton and 200 at the Northern Chowan Community Center.

See EARLY VOTING, 3A

## Council OKs solar farm text amendment

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

The town council has agreed on a revised text amendment to the town's Unified Development Ordinance governing the establishment of solar farms. The action came during its March 8 monthly meeting.

Prior to the vote Councilmen Sambo Dixon and Steve Biggs expressed reservations concerning some elements of the amendment drawn up by town staff that encompassed buffering and a decommissioning plan.

Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said in a March 3 memo to the council that a principal change in the proposed amendment would only allow the establishment of a solar farm

in areas zoned IW (Industrial Warehouse Zone).

"I recommend you consider allowing in the IW, Industrial Warehouse Zone, by Conditional Use Permit, with the conditions you have been considering since December," she said. "Based on the action you took at the February Council meeting, denying a CUP for a Solar Farm in the Rural Agricultural District, I have removed that zoning district from the proposed amendment to the Use Table. I also decreased the maximum height of the Solar array structures to not exceed from 15 feet to 10 feet. And I inserted a screening requirement of a minimum height of 15 feet and a depth of 100 feet."

"I'm okay with a 100 foot buffer," Dixon said. "But I want 50 feet for

plantings with indigenous trees such as pine and oak."

He added that he would like to see the buffered area around any solar farm look like forest land.

"If it was going by my house, that's what I would want," Dixon said.

And Biggs said he was uncomfortable with a provision of the decommissioning process that would allow an irrevocable letter of credit from a bank licensed to do business in North Carolina.

Mayor Roland Vaughan then asked for a motion to approve the text amendment as prepared and presented at the meeting with the exception of requested changes to the buffer and decommissioning requirements.

The motion passed unanimously.



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