



National retailers are Brooklyn bound

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Sometimes, it's just great to be validated. Literally the week before my December 9th Women's Special Industry Group panel on "Building the Boroughs," at the International Council of Shopping Centers' New York National Conference, the Center for an Urban Future released a report on retail expansion around the city. The results: National retailers continue to find their place in New York City, albeit at a slower pace - and it seems as though they're all going to Brooklyn!

The New York City-based think tank's sixth annual ranking of national retailers in New York shows that citywide, chain store expansion has slowed, with the number of chain stores rising just 0.5%. The interesting story, however, is by borough, with Brooklyn experiencing the largest percentage increase in the number of stores this year, a 2.8% gain. Staten Island reported a 1.7% increase, and the Bronx a 1.6% gain. Queens and Manhattan reported losses, of 0.4% and 0.7%, respectively. The report notes, however, that much of Manhattan's drop can be attributed to the closure of Pier 17 at the South St. Seaport and other lingering effects of Superstorm Sandy.

The expansion largely comes from food and convenience stores - more Dunkin Donuts, Subway, Starbucks and 7-Eleven stores. But it's clear that national companies are realizing the great opportunities throughout New York City, not just Manhattan, and are helping to revitalize retail districts for all of us.

Of course, we have other retailers expanding around the city, too. Chocolatier Jacques Torres is popping up at The Dorchester (110 East 57th St.) through January, then will renovate and reopen. Published reports say that Nike may take over the H&M space at 640 Fifth; H&M, of course, recently opened a much larger store at 589 Fifth. Kate Spade Saturday has debuted at 152 Spring St. and in a pop-up at Kennedy Airport's Terminal 5. Dairy Queen will bring the Blizzard (the good kind) to New York for the first time at 54 West 14th St. The Aussie Invasion continues: bridal designer Karen Willis Holmes enters the United States at 7 Centre Market Place. Limelight's (656 Avenue of the Americas) latest incarnation will see it become a David Barton Gym. Noma Boutique will offer high fashion at 323 Bleecker St. Children's hair salon EdaMama will open at 568 Union Ave. in Williamsburg. Bay Ridge-born Little Cupcake Bakeshop is expanding to 598 Vanderbilt Ave. in Prospect Heights. Macaron maker Maison Adam has signed for 1 West 8th St. Home furnishings retailer Natuzzi Americas is moving to 105 Madison Ave.

The calendar will pick up again with the New Year. The New York Chapter of Commercial Real Estate Women's Network (NYCREW) will host its annual view of the year ahead, "Global Real Estate Trends in 2014," with speakers Heidi Learner, chief economist of Studley, Jonathan Woloshin, executive director and co-head of sector research for UBS Financial Services; and Dennis Yeskey, chairman of the MIT Center for Real Estate, offering their forecast for the year and beyond. The event will be held Tuesday, January 7th, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the offices of UBS Financial Services, 1285 Sixth Ave. For more information, visit www.NYCREW.org.

I'll be speaking at the private event "Shopping the Globe," a discussion of retail globalization trends being organized by my friends at Gensler for their clients and industry partners, to be held Tuesday, January 14th in conjunction with the annual National Retail Federation BIG Show. I'm looking forward to hearing what others are saying about our ever-shrinking world.

Happy Holidays, Happy New Year and Happy Shopping!

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