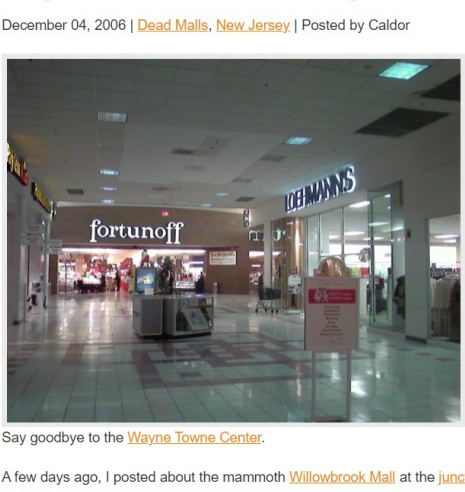
Labelscar
The Retail History Blog

Wayne Towne Center; Wayne, New Jersey

December 04, 2006 | Dead Malls, New Jersey | Posted by Caldor



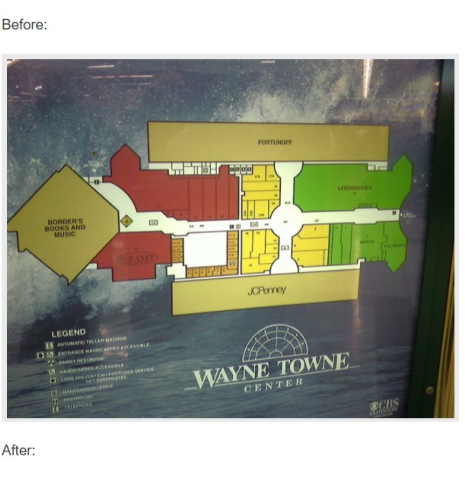
Say goodbye to the Wayne Towne Center.

A few days ago, I posted about the mammoth Willowbrook Mall at the junction of US46 and route 23 in Wayne, New Jersey. The mall is so large that it has an annex mall in its parking lot–the younger Wayne Towne Center, which had been known as the West Belt Mall until sometime in the late 1980s. The 653,000 square-foot enclosed mall is anchored by large JCPenney and Fortunoff stores, as well as junior anchors such as Borders, Old Navy, Daffy's, and Loehmann's. Unfortunately, as of my visit two weeks ago, there was quite little else. The food court, in particular, had emptied out completely and was boarded up and isolated from the remainder of the mall.

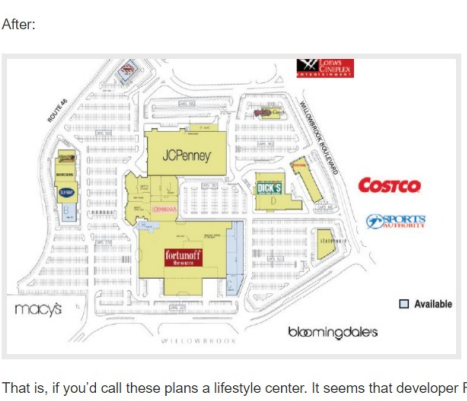
As you'll see from the pictures, Wayne Towne Center isn't an unattractive mall, but its interior space is quite small, with most of its square footage belonging to one of its two behemoth anchor stores. Similarly, unlike some successful annex malls like the Court at King of Prussia in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, Wayne Towne Center was not designed in such a way that it's easy to walk between it and Willowbrook. There are no adjacent entrances and no pedestrian promenade, so it's necessary to drive between the two centers. This undoubtedly hurt Wayne Towne Center, and I would say they should change it by connecting the two with an outdoor "lifestyle" promenade, if…

…It wasn't for the fact that the mall is going to be torn down to be turned into a lifestyle center.

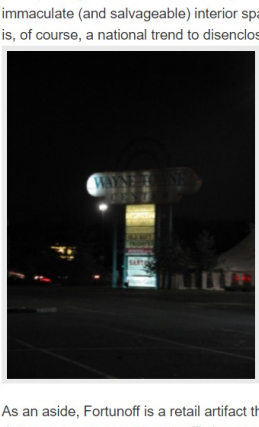
Before:



After:

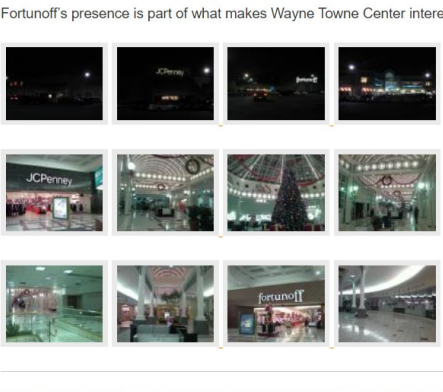


That is, if you'd call these plans a lifestyle center. It seems that developer RKF's plan, according to this PDF, is really just to demolish the interior portion of the mall and replace it with parking, and add little else beyond a small decor refresh. The place doesn't really need more parking, to be honest, and the plans seem to involve tearing down the vacant yet immaculate (and salvageable) interior space in favor of an unnecessary parking expansion. It is, of course, a national trend to disenclose struggling, smaller centers like this one, but Wayne Towne Center could've been revived through an improved connection to its neighbor. A pedestrian connection also could've delivered a far trendier and more marketable lifestyle component, while positioning the two malls even more strongly against their siblings in the crowded North Jersey market. The big-boxing planned for Wayne Towne Center seems disappointingly uninspired.



Still, there's no denying that this little mall isn't pulling its weight. Even during my first visit in 2000, it seemed surprisingly sleepy, though given the size of its neighbor it wasn't all that shocking. Fast forward to 2006, however, and there's little to draw patrons beyond the anchor stores. If you're in the area, visit both malls–before it's too late for this one.

As an aside, Fortunoff is a retail artifact that's unique to the New York area. The large department store seems to traffic in some of the same goods that Service Merchandise once did–heavy on housewares and jewelry, no apparel–yet unlike Service Merchandise Fortunoff employs the look and feel of a full-line, classic department store. Their Wayne Towne Center store is quite large, possibly in excess of 200,000 square feet. Sadly, it's a rare treat nowadays to visit a mall and find a unique department store that's not available everywhere, and Fortunoff's presence is part of what makes Wayne Towne Center interesting.



90 Responses to "Wayne Towne Center; Wayne, New Jersey"

XISMZERO
December 4th, 2006 at 3:24 am

Heh… the lack of indoor shopping might explain why they decided to reformat to "Towne Center". The place looks elegant around Christmas; simple decor that brings out the overall simplicity of the center. Just by looking at the new layout, the mall will promote walking; unfortunately for northeastern weather that's not very attractive. Oh and another thing – I just despise the euphemism "lifestyle center". Is "mall" really a dirty word these days?

[Reply]

Informer Reply:
August 23rd, 2009 at 3:17 pm

Just for information. The Wayne Towne Center will soon be sold off to another holding company due to a lack of funds. The current holding company miss spent funds and is now in the hole for millions.

Dicks which was supposed to be a freestanding building located where the old Old Navy was situated. Dicks will not be coming because the stipulation was that there need to be two anchor stores. Since Fortunoff went out of business Dicks wanted a large percentage of their rent reduced. They didn't get it so they left. So millions have been spent on hammering in telephone poles into the foundation, rebar work and pouring in concrete only for a building that is not coming.

Oh what about the building which was supposed to house Ulta Cosmetics, Motherhood, The Malls Loss Prevention Office and The Art Gallery. I guess that won't be built too since demolition on Fortunoff has not even started yet. And who knows how much the demolition is going to cost since the building is riddle with asbestos.

Now let's talk about who is suing the holding company. Well lets see. First there's March Contracting who now has a lean on the entire property, then there is a small paving company (which I will abstain from using their name) who is owed money, another contractor who plows the mall who has not been paid.

Mibo a cleaning company who had been cleaning the mall for years was recently told to hit the road. So the mall hired two eighty year old men to walk around the mall parking lot in eighty degree whether to pick up garbage. Don't believe me? They are there just about everyday. Go take a look for yourself.

Ah yes then there's Valor Security who has been protecting the mall for years. Now they too have been given the boot because the holding company owes Valor over $80,000. So the hard working security guards who have family to support were given half a weeks notice. Nice huh? So you might ask who then is protecting the mall? Well since the holding company had no choice but to have security on property (since the law requires) they had to hire Wayne Police at a rate of over $100 an hour. Make sense huh? Hire police and pay them ten times what security would cost. But then again I guess it does since Wayne PD will eventually be screwed out of money also.

[Reply]

Rob Reply:
September 18th, 2009 at 9:35 am

@Informer

You seem to know alot about the current situation.

I was involved with the redevelopment and
reconstruction of this mall from the former
West Belt Mall from 1987 to 1989 and know
all the details from that time.
.

[Reply]

Mike Reply:
June 22nd, 2017 at 9:29 am

@Rob, do you remember the name of the night club that was situated across from the JCPenney auto center which is know Firestone ? This is the late 1970 's before USA skates was there ?

[Reply]

keith Reply:
October 11th, 2009 at 8:24 am

@Informer, were did you get your information from?

[Reply]

Caldor
December 4th, 2006 at 3:27 am

I agree with you, and I think that unfortunately "mall" has become kind of a vilified term. I hate "lifestyle center," why not just call it something more descriptive like "downtown-themed"?

I also hate how many (most?) "lifestyle centers" are really just big box centers with greater ornamentation. I think it's that local zoning boards are more receptive to these faux-upscale centers at the moment, so everything is being branded as such.

[Reply]

Allan
December 4th, 2006 at 4:07 am

Second the comment from the last two posters about the word "mall" being vilified as if its some sort of vulgar word to use. At least that word hasn't been vilified to the point that other descriptive words have, such as the case with the word "liberal"(where most Democrats now brand themselves as "progressive" instead), since over time, Republicans used the word in a negative way to attack Democrats. Not of course trying to make this a political post, but stating a case where this sort of thing has happened(and that it's a shame it did).

Anyway, back to the subject I begun this comment talking about, I was at The Shoppes of College Hills(aka the former College Hills Mall in Normal, IL, + documented on deadmalls.com) a few days back. Anyway, the development company(forget the name of it) that owns this "lifestyle center"(which was a former enclosed mall), plus another one in Peoria, IL that also used to be an indoor mall(Grand Prairie Mall, but not featured on deadmalls.com, unlike College Hills) and was turned into a "lifestyle center" is marketing gift cards with the tag "Where outside is in style!" I just found that a little bit creepy and mildly funny at the same time, especially since Bloomington-Normal just got our first major snowfall and cold snap of the year a few days back(and also shut down portions of the major east-west interstate connecting both areas). Give me an enclosed mall over one of those phony "lifestyle centers" any day of the week!

[Reply]

Allan
December 4th, 2006 at 4:16 am

And as for Wayne Towne Center itself, it's a shame it's about to soon be torn down for a crappy "lifestyle center". The same thing occurred to a mall I used to occasionally go to(Brickyard Mall, + featured on deadmalls.com) in Chicago, IL!!

[Reply]

Allan
December 4th, 2006 at 4:25 am

One very last thing I also meant to say in that post above(silly me for forgetting), the developer who owns the struggling Lincoln Mall in Matteson, IL(south suburban Chicago) is currently constructing a "lifestyle" promenade addition to that mall(and of course, keeping the existing enclosed mall in place), in an attempt to revive this mall. Hopefully, they do end up succeeding in filling up more space within that mall, and that their strategy works.

Its clearly what the developer who owns Wayne Towne Center and Willowbrook Mall should've done, rather than tearing down a very nicely constructed mall(Wayne Towne)!!

[Reply]

DayGlo!
December 4th, 2006 at 4:46 am

I remember when Wayne Towne Center was still West Belt. (I think the rename happened in 86 or 87, because it had transpired by my sophomore year in high school, which was 88.) Distinctly remember getting a really bad nosebleed while doing back-to-school shopping with my mom at J.C. Penney, actually. It's been slow ever since I can remember. There just wasn't much interior space other than the anchor stores, and even then, Willowbrook was such a leviathan that most people only went to West Belt if they absolutely needed to go to Penney's or bargain-hunt at Fortunoff. It was a pretty short walk to Penney's from Stern's (now Bloomie's), but we rarely made it because we always parked by Sears, which is at the opposite end of the mall. That fateful back-to-school trip is one of only maybe half a dozen that involved the rest of the mall, which incidentally looks exactly the same as I remember it from late high school/college. In high school, we'd sometimes go to the food court if we were on our way to the Loews theatre and running too late for the ordeal of finding parking at Willowbrook, or to the record store if we were looking for a sale inventory that wasn't picked-over. That was it, really. The mall was so unmemorable that I couldn't even tell you what chain the record store was (although I think it was either Listening Booth or Wall to Wall Sound), nor could I name a single eatery other than Baskin-Robbins.

[Reply]

Max
December 4th, 2006 at 4:58 am

I have two questions:

First, when did this mall open? (It looks to me like it opened sometime in the 1980's.)

Second, when will this mall be torn down?

[Reply]

Nitek Ketin
December 4th, 2006 at 6:55 am

I think the definition of a what a lifestyle center entails has become quite muddled. A lifestyle center is definitely *not* a series of category killers anchoring a small promenade of non-upscale in-line tenant space, with a handful of entertainment and dining destinations. That is more along the lines of describing a power center or power town.

A lifestyle center usually features a substantial array of upscale retailers, such as the Williams Sonoma, Ann Taylor, Abercrombie and Sharper Image nameplates. The retailers should be dedicated to selling high-end specialty brands. Anchoring these retailers are upscale department stores, entertainment venues and no more than two big box merchants. This development is usually set in a highly landscaped environment– not far from affluent communities.

[Reply]

Matt
December 4th, 2006 at 10:40 am

I've got one word for these so-called 'lifestyle centers'.

Boring!

Likewise for 'big box' centers, though in a way considering they have large stores mixed with strips of smaller retailers, either connected together or surrounding a large parking lot, reminds me of the old strip-styled shopping centers I seen in pictures in the 1950s / 1960s.

A project called 'Bayshore Town Center' in Glendale / Whitfish Bay, WI (north of Milwaukee) just finished recently. It started life as "Bayshore Shopping Center" in 1956 as a strip mall, enclosed in 1976 (retitled Bayshore Mall), and remodeled in the early 1990s. The latest changes combines a half-existing former Bayshore Mall and Kohls, and linking it all together with a new 'streetscape' section that took up half of the former mall (which was razed) and most of the parking lot. They had to build out new parking garages.

Now those kind of projects I don't mind, …and if they revitalize a dying mall, all the better. Bayshore wasn't 'dying', per-se, but it didn't have the retail mix the nearby affluent residents wanted. They had to go all the way to Mayfair or even down to Chicago. That should all change now and keep more dollars in the city, and the mall filled back up to 100% occupancy.

I just look at these Wayne Towne Center pics though and I'm shaking my head. What a shame……the interior is orderly and clean even if it does look simplistic in design. Like stated though, there's just not enough room for the kind of wide frontage retailers want in an interior mall setup
nowadays.

[Reply]

DayGlo!
December 4th, 2006 at 4:46 pm

Max,

Don't know the exact year, but think it was sometime in the mid- to late '70s, as the mall was there for most if not all of my childhood.

[Reply]

Michael Reply:
May 14th, 2011 at 11:12 pm

The mall opened in the early 70's when I lived in NJ. Approx '73-'74. Had JC Penny and a Nathans and a record store. My father once bought pipe tobacco at a smoke shop there and it was stale because of the store's poor sales and lack of inventory turnover. I recall West Belt Mall being doomed from its start.

[Reply]

Scott
December 4th, 2006 at 6:10 pm

Finally, a mall with some passionate opinions!
The overused and popular "lifestyle" term is loosely defined. No one really know what it means, but in terms of marketing, it's what "everyone" is doing and like any other name, it's cylindrical. It'll eventually fade. "Mall" will come back around at some point.
In terms of what they are doing to this little gem, it's a travesty! Rip out the mall and put in a parking lot? Sounds like a Joni Mitchell song. Encouraging the use of the automobile to travel from one store to another is counter-productive. It's easier to just drive home! What a disgrace!
Worse yet, the mall will replace small stores with large big-box national retailers. What is available in New Jersey is also available in Idaho. The Homogenization of America "Generica!"
So much for climate-controlled shopping comfort.
Give me a mall anyday.
Scott

[Reply]

Prangeway
December 4th, 2006 at 7:22 pm

Regarding "Lifestyle Centers" and the like: Do people in the northern tier of states honestly prefer walking around in the bitter cold for several months out of the year? That's not fun.

Also, many of the arguments center around the fact that you can park in front of your favorite store. They say malls are too demanding of time, and today's consumer doesn't have as much time. S/He wants to get in, buy stuff, and get out. I still see lots of people who appear to be making an entire day of shopping, especially around the busy holiday season. Why accomodate people who In addition, the way many of these elaborate Lifestyle Centers are set up design-wise, you can't park right in front of a specific store and have to walk the equivalent of several blocks to get there, not to mention the fact that there are lots of people there so even if you could park in front there probably isn't a space.

[Reply]

Chris Whittaker
December 4th, 2006 at 11:20 pm

If you do the lifestyle center as a mixed use project, with residential and office components, ala Bayshore Town Center or to a lesser extent, Winter Park Village in suburban Orlando (on the site of the former Winter Park Mall), and design it right it's not too offensive. It's when you have retail only is what offends me, especially with large parking lots surrounding the center (Destin Commons in Destin FL is the example that comes to mind) since all you have is a mall with a street running down the middle of it instead of an enclosed walkway at that point, instead of a community.

[Reply]

Caldor
December 4th, 2006 at 11:23 pm

Agreed, and this is where the "lifestyle center" moniker is truly representative. If you choose to live in such a retail/entertainment district, then you are making a decision about your "lifestyle," not just the place where you do your shopping. Using the term to apply to centers that don't incorporate at least two uses (retail/residential or retail/office) is misleading at best.

[Reply]

Nitek Ketin
December 4th, 2006 at 11:39 pm

I think many enclosed malls would benefit by emulating certain aspects of lifestyle centers. Most regional malls sport very cold, inhospitable facades, while others are simply hideous, multi-leveled dogs. Why not accentuate the various entrances of malls with lifestyle promenades flanked with landscaped open plazas and water features? A nice entertainment component, featuring a large bookstore, multiplex and casual dining restaurants could replace a faltering anchor…or five.

[Reply]

Scott
December 5th, 2006 at 2:37 am

Nitek is right… I've seen some examples of this already. It seems to work well, especially since they rarely de-mall the mall. Roseville Galleria in California is a combination uber-chic enclosed mega-mall with an outdoor "lifestyle" center. It has your usual big-boxes in the lifestyle portion. Same as everywhere.
Prangeway, you are right on the mark. Who the hell likes an outdoor mall when it's 26 degrees out? Or, rain… RAIN! Hello… it rains in Northern California… the outdoor malls are deserted when it rains. Oh, and heatwaves? The enclosed malls are packed those days.
The trend to tear off the roof is shortsided, which often is the case with the hastily-built power centers. On the other hand, I suppose retail changes so often, they don't care that the building could only last ten years.
I also enjoy the argument about people being too busy to "walk" store to store when it's easier to buy everything in one place (BTW, my one-stop choice this year is 7-11. Everyone is getting Slurpies!). The irony is that most of the people in this country are overweight. For god's sake, people complain endlesslessly about not being able to loose a few pounds while simultaneously complaining that they can't get a "close" parking space. I've shopped with a number of people who move the car with each store in the center. Could probably save a little time (and gas) not doing that, I suppose. Must be a perception problem.
Could you imagine a day when the most popular part of a parking lot is the area farthest from the stores? Wow, burning calories! Hey, the mall could use that as the latest marketing craze… Burn calories while you shop!
Being a mallrat isn't a lifestyle choice, I was born this way! 🙂
Scott

[Reply]

XISMZERO
December 5th, 2006 at 4:29 am

As a Connecticuteer, I enjoy indoor malls because in weather like today; harsh winds at 25 degrees, I prefer to stay climate-controlled. I noticed this today when I was walking around outside at the somewhat disjointed East Brook Mall in Willimantic, CT.

[Reply]

bobby
December 5th, 2006 at 12:51 pm

Kind of a stupid demalling if you ask me. Really uninspired to boot.

That mall doesn't look too desperate either. That's what bugs me, when they demall unnecessarily. Like Landmark Mall in Virginia – that one doesn't look TOO bad, I honestly think demalling that one is a waste.

[Reply]

DayGlo!
December 5th, 2006 at 5:21 pm

The record store in West Belt/Wayne Town Center was a Disc-O-Mat. At some point it became something else, but I'm hard-pressed to remember when that was.

When it comes to lifestyle centers…ugh. The big one around here, Avenue at White Marsh, is beyond overrated. When the developers decided to revisit the Main Street concept, they forgot to leave out the same lack of parking that eventually killed off all the Main Streets. The Avenue is adjacent to White Marsh Mall, and I find it somewhat ironic that my rare trips there almost always involve walking from the mall parking lot because the Avenue lot is packed solid with cars. As I read this, I thought a lot about White Marsh and the Avenue. White Marsh is the type of average, middle-of-the-road mall that typically suffers at the hands of big box and lifestyle centers. Still, thanks to its very strategic location, it's one of only four Baltimore malls that is consistently successful. With only one other, much smaller and less accessible mall between Delaware and Baltimore proper, people come from pretty far afield to shop at White Marsh. The Avenue hasn't killed it, nor has the monolithic big-box center about a mile away. If anything, they seem to coexist peacefully. I look at White Marsh and Golden Ring and see what Willowbrook and Wayne Towne Center could be. But with Paramus not too far away, the latter duo just doesn't have the captive audience of the former, and the immediate area is totally saturated with other retail options. All hail poor planning!

[Reply]

DayGlo!
December 5th, 2006 at 5:23 pm

Um, meant White Marsh and the Avenue. The Big Box Center Formerly Known as Golden Ring is a can of worms unto itself. 😉

[Reply]

Chris Whittaker
December 5th, 2006 at 11:41 pm

Was the other option, bridging these two malls together with a new concourse, ala The Mall at Greece Ridge Center in suburban Rochester NY (the combination of the former Long Ridge Mall and the adjacent Greece Towne Mall) viable here?

[Reply]

DayGlo!
December 7th, 2006 at 2:24 pm

The two are certainly close enough together for that, but the malls are at the epicenter of one of the worst flood zones on the East Coast, so I suspect there are laws in place to keep any expansion in check.

[Reply]

Bruce
June 8th, 2007 at 9:52 pm

well, i have to admit, i had a horrifying experience at Wayne Town Center… It was in january and my aunt was taking me to willowbrook, but she took the wrong offramp and we ended up at this place, which really reminded me of movies from the 80's that had a mall scene, its truly horrid in person

[Reply]

mallguy
July 24th, 2007 at 11:13 pm

I remember Wayne Town Center after its grand reopening/transformation from West Belt Mall and what they had done was quite impressive. It's sad to see the state of this mall today. I noticed the above plans to change WTC and unlike the developers, I think it can be saved in its current format. We have seen in the northeast malls that are located in a close proximity be quite successful (ex: Roosevelt Field and Mall at the Source, Woodbridge Center and Menlo Park, The Plaza and Court at King of Prussia).

In the case of Willowbrook and Wayne Town Center, what must be done first is that the companies that own/control the malls (two seperate companies in this case) must work together to come up with a solution that will benefit both their properties. This includes the construction of a covered walkway between Fortunoff and Macy's to encourage walking between the malls. This will make going to the mall a little more accessible to the Willowbrook shoppers. Then, the mall must remerchandise because except for Borders, Fortunoff, Fridays and JCPenney, it is dead. Stores it should attract consist of restaurant/entertainment attractions that want to be in this area and that will benefit from the Willowbrook shoppers, as well as get their own clientele. AMC should relocate over here and either build on or utilize some of the vacant mall space to open a better theatre, this mall would be a good location for Dick's, Steve and Barrys, Dave and Busters and similar dining/entertainment establishments. This mall is at a prime location and with a proper merchandising and adequate complement to Willowbrook, there is no reason this mall should be troubled.

[Reply]

SEAN
August 31st, 2007 at 12:54 pm

I couldn't say it better!

First AMC must move then the rest will fall into place.

[Reply]

mallguy
September 21st, 2007 at 7:18 pm

I was there yesterday and while the design of the mall is still much nicer than most, it is a sad place. There are very few stores left inside the mall and the A/C wasn't even on.

[Reply]

SEAN
October 24th, 2007 at 9:38 am

Who owns the mall?

[Reply]

SEAN
October 27th, 2007 at 12:04 pm

Check out the Promenade @ Edgewater on river rd. Now that is a lifestyle center. Ofcourse when i went there a month ago it was raining. They have housing above the retailers & 90% of the parking is under the buldings.

It's funny to me that for one thing if the weather is realy bad who is going to shop there? you mean they will bypass GSP just to be outside, i don't think so. If it is bad out there there going tio the cinema next door instead. Another odd thing is if you need to go grosery shopping it is a bit of a hike to Edgewater commons, about 5 blocks. When the weather is nice no problem, but it could be huge issue unless you have a car & can handle the traffic there.

It amazes me row after row of condo complexes, shopping centers & the like & very few people ever walk from place to place even when the weather is nice.

That's my 2 cents

[Reply]

Chrissy V
November 17th, 2007 at 2:27 am

SAVE OUR SANTA
SAVE OUR SANTA
SAVE OUR SANTA

The one thing that always brought business to this mall. Save our Santa in the center of the mall near Beesley Event Photo, another fnatastic store. If the owner cared enough, he would have made the mall work another 20 years!!!

[Reply]

Chrissy V
November 17th, 2007 at 2:29 am

OWNER OF THE MALL THAT IS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

[Reply]

mallguy
November 17th, 2007 at 3:05 pm

Sean,

The Lifestyle Center craze has truly caught on. Many prefer their convenience of rather than having to go to Garden State Plaza to battle the traffic and crowds to search for a spot (it took me a good 20 minutes yesterday…and it was the afternoon…but I digress). Me personally, I think they are a good supplement to the mall, but not a replacement.

While I have never been to the Promenade at Edgewater it sounds nice, but for a lifestyle recommendation, I would suggest The Grove at Shrewsbury in Monmouth County, NJ's original lifestyle center.

On the Wayne Town Center note, I stepped in there since I was at Fortunoff and there was hardly anyone in there (Fortunoff was mobbed though).

[Reply]

SEAN
November 21st, 2007 at 10:55 am

Mallguy,

if you have a chance take a drive over to the promanade @ Edgewater & tell me what you think. Be sure to walk behind it & take the stairs down near the Hudson river. The path goes behind the multiplex & next to sunrise assisted living. It is just south of Edgewater commons on River Road.

If you cant park on street level take ramp down to garage.

HAVE A HAPPY THANKSGIVING.

[Reply]

mallguy
November 21st, 2007 at 7:59 pm

I don't make it out to eastern Bergen County much, but I will check it out next time I'm over there. I was at The Grove earlier today and it was hopping…a new JCrew, a new Brooks Brothers and MAC are the stores bringing in the crowds on top of their other great lineup…and it's only 3 miles from downtown Red Bank which is usually hopping itself! My only complaint about The Grove is that they need more places to eat…Starbucks and Pasta Fresca aren't enough and unfortunately, as it is wedged between a condo complex, the North Jersey Coast Line RR and route 35, there is not too much space to grow.

Happy Thanksgiving to you as well, Sean.

[Reply]

SEAN
November 22nd, 2007 at 12:27 pm

It may be funny but … you use to be able to judge a mall by the department stores it kept, now it is what restaurants you have. And this happend in just the past few years. Have you notice this to?

[Reply]

FormerNJguy
December 18th, 2007 at 4:44 pm

Just to correct Mallguy, this mall isn't in Bergen County. It's in Passaic County.

Anyways, all I remember is that first you'd go to this mall, be there for probably less than an hour (the majority of the time staying in Fortunoff) and then head off to Willowbrook afterwards. At least, that's how I used to do it, haha.

[Reply]

mallguy
December 18th, 2007 at 4:50 pm

FormerNJguy,

"Eastern Bergen" was in reference to the location of the Promenade @ Edgewater. Willowbrook and Wayne Town Center are just over the Passaic River from Essex Co and Bergen County is about 10 miles away.

And that's the way I do it too with Wayne Town Center and Willowbrook. The tree does look nice this year @ WTC and I'm glad they are still putting it up despite the reduced traffic. I find it interesting that as per local surveys, the best rated Santa is at Wayne Town Center.

[Reply]

SEAN
December 19th, 2007 at 10:13 pm

Speaking of Edgewater, have you been at P @ E yet? I know it is a bit far from you, just wondering. I thought it was interesting how it is bounded by the sunrise senior complex & the cinema. Could they make the lots any tighter?

[Reply]

DAN FLORA
January 5th, 2008 at 6:03 pm

Wayne Towne Center is a beautiful small mall. But I think its not that busy because of Willowbrook right next store . Fortunoff and JCPenney are really nice stores

[Reply]

ghome
January 5th, 2008 at 9:42 pm

I love Fortunoff. The store has great customer service. If you want to buy wedding gifts or gifts for the home. This store has excellence in quality and upscale selection. There a chance that you might money at Fortunoof. I think Fortunoff you expand outside NYC Metro. I sure other metro areas will fall in love with fortunoff.

[Reply]

Lee
January 6th, 2008 at 8:27 pm

I shop at fortunoff occasionally in wayne nj for many years, reminds me of when I was young, back in the 80's when this mall was really hopping! If fortunoff was to move from here, this mall would go out completely. The stores at willowbrook mall are much more diverse than this mall, although wayne towne center only has 3 or 4 good stores to go to. Does anyone remember the organ store in willowbrook mall? I think it was called the gene hale organ company and Lenny was the salesman there.

[Reply]

Goldie
January 16th, 2008 at 1:56 am

I used to always go to the WTM back about 10 years ago until I moved. I loved that mall. Is it changed now or is it still the same? I was going to take a ride there but dont know if i should now if it is changed. It would take me an hour to get there. Is it worth the drive?

[Reply]

mallguy
January 28th, 2008 at 7:41 pm

I have recently observed that the Borders in Wayne Towne Center will be closing. Haven't heard definite plans if they are going to relocate in the remerchandised/de-malled Wayne Towne Center, but it's not surpsing that it's closing. Just heard that Olive Garden and Bahama Breeze will be joining a remerchandised and de-malled Wayne Towne Center.

[Reply]

hangthedj
February 27th, 2008 at 12:58 pm

IN REPSpone to Lee…
I remember that store, they had organ lessons for the elderly and senior citizens, you could sometimes hear them playing throughout that side of the mall, when it was a quiet day.
I used to talk to those folks over there quite a bit almost 10 years ago, do you know what happened to that place?
I remember Lenny vaguely, I do remember an older gent with grey hair and glasses, and young woman with dark brown hair, I think they were both teachers there or managers.

[Reply]

Reyna
March 23rd, 2008 at 10:45 am

I love shopping at Wayne Towne Center Mall. If they really do go ahead and destroy the shopping center there, it would be a real shame. Fortunoff is a fantastic store. And JC Penny? I couldn't live without it. Anyway, what's the big deal with more parking space? There is no need at all for more parking space. Now, what they need to do is merge the Willow Brook Mall and Wayne Towne Center mall together. Make a passage in between the two that you could just walk over to. Sometimes it's a hassle, especially in winter, to get the kids bundled up for a two-minute ride to get to the other mall. And of course, they could pave the parking lot of the Wayne Towne Center mall. It has potholes big enough to ruin your car.

[Reply]

Max
April 6th, 2008 at 5:54 pm

Does anybody know if Border's has closed yet? I know that it is planned to close.

Caldor is correct in his assumption that the Fortunoff store is over 200,000 square feet: according to wikipedia, the store has 215,000 square feet. (JC Penney is even larger, at 241,000 square feet.) The fact that such a large Fortunoff store consists of just one level results in what feels like an absolute maze. I mean this as a compliment: it is just so cool how the store is laid out and makes for an exciting shopping trip.

Unfortunately, Fortunoff is doing poorly financially. Shortly after filing for bankruptcy, the chain was purchased by NRDC Equities. Hopefully, NRDC can turn around Fortunoff as fast as they did Lord & Taylor (which already has made a remarkable comeback). I already know that NRDC is planning to add a "Fortunoff" home department in each Lord & Taylor store.

[Reply]

Ed
April 8th, 2008 at 12:02 am

What a cute mall, I think is a shame to tear it "a new one", what's wrong with people, why spend sooooo much money to build a nice indoor mall just to tear it out, it's baffling to me!

[Reply]

mallguy
April 8th, 2008 at 12:52 am

Max,

Borders at Wayne Town Center has closed in January (along with Borders in East Brunswick and Paramus Town Square (on route 17 north))

They have already started blocking off parking lots and are beginning to build some of the sattelite buildings that will go around the perimeter of the soon to be demalled mall. It will be sad to see this place go and it's a shame they didn't take my recommendation that I made a few posts up 🙂 Wayne TC would have made a great "entertainment mall" in the same fashion as Mall at the Source and connecting Wayne TC and Willowbrook would have complemented each very well.

[Reply]

SEAN
April 8th, 2008 at 9:51 am

It still can be done Mallguy, all they have to do is run a shuttle bus between them. NJ transit has a community transit program where entities can apply for grants for purchase of shuttle busses. Here is an idea that WTC & Willowbrook can work together. Lets see how foward thinking the 2 malls are. Although you did say that the people who run Willowbrook are psycho, wich doesn't exactly leave me all that confident that something will be done.

[Reply]

Jacquie
June 3rd, 2008 at 11:15 am

I had no idea Loehmann's was closing! Stopped there last night to take a peruse and noticed the sign was down but just thought that might be because of all the work going on there. To my dismay the store was closed. Hopefully it will be in the new de-malled mall, but there are no signs for it, so it doesn't seem likely. Bummer. Looks like a bunch of restaurants and a DSW really, that's it.

[Reply]

mallguy
September 1st, 2008 at 1:26 am

Olive Garden and the new Fridays seem to be almost done and will be opening in the coming weeks. JCPenney also renovated their facade. Haven't gone in the actual mall itself, so i don't know if the interior has yet been closed off. The last time I went in there, the air conditioning wasn't even on.

[Reply]

mallguy
November 16th, 2008 at 12:12 pm

The mall interior is still open, but no Christmas tree this year in center court. DSW, Olive Garden and the new Fridays are now open.

[Reply]

breda hanley
December 1st, 2008 at 12:23 pm

Does anyone know where the Santa has relocated to? This was the only one my kids want to go see. Please respond if you hear anything.

[Reply]

mallguy
December 10th, 2008 at 12:16 am

Breda,

The Wayne Town Center Santa has relocated to the Fairfield Garden Center on Route 46 west. There was an article a couple of weeks ago about it in the Bergen Record.

Except for a cell phone stand and some other small store, there is nothing left inside the mall and it is very, very sad to see how desolate the interior is. Pretty soon that will be closed off. So far, DSW, Olive Garden, the new Fridays and Chipotle have opened. JCPenney redid their facade and Bahama Breeze will soon open.

[Reply]

diane
January 3rd, 2009 at 11:33 am

does anyone know where the new dicks sporting goods is going to be located, or is it already open? the sign is up at the west belt mall but didn't see a sore

[Reply]

Jacquie
January 13th, 2009 at 11:37 am

I was over there yesterday and saw that the entire backside of the mall has been demolished, except for Old Navy…I guess that's going to stay where it is. Anyway there was a huge fenced in area, basically from Old Navy to the Willowbrook loop road, there was a huge crane jackhammering what I'll assume are foundation footings into the ground. So I assume that's where the Dicks will be…oh and the signage for Dicks now has a Coming Soon added to it.

[Reply]

Hector
January 14th, 2009 at 10:27 am

I heard that the Dicks Sporting goods is going to be right behind the Firestone Tire place. It is supposed to be a stand-alone 70,000 sq ft store which is pretty big! I also heard that a nice, upscale restaurant is going to be added to the corner location (near the traffic light – across from Costco). The town said they do not want and "clubs" but this place I heard will have a nice upscale lounge with exterior dining too. Sounds interesting! This place is really shaping up and Im surprised that they are still able to do this during this economy.

[Reply]

Jazlow
February 23rd, 2009 at 12:46 pm

Looks like Fortunoff will be going out of business as soon as next week. Dick's could have moved into a portion of that store rather than building a new store. Every time the Wayne Center takes a step forward it always seems to take two steps back.

[Reply]

Rob
February 27th, 2009 at 10:28 pm

I remember when this mall was called West Belt Mall; it was located in the shadows of Willowbrook around Rt. 23 off of I-80. It was a small mall and I went there a few times. The only store I remember was called Azuma. It was sort of like a cleaner version of Spencer Gifts, geared towards kids and had a "world import"-type of vibe to it. Me and my sister bought these batons filled with water and glitter and they would create sparkling sensations when you flipped them over and over. This was around 1985, when we were new to NJ (having moved to Glen Rock in late 1984).

[Reply]

Frank
April 4th, 2009 at 8:20 pm

We were there today. The mall is torn down. Fortunoff is having a "Going out of business sale". Penney is still open and that's it. Everything else is torn down. The entry still looks intact and "friday's" is still there, but long closed. I think it looks like the original entry will remain and fridays structure will stay and that will all be used as some sort of pedestrian connection and indoor walkway that will connect the now defunct fortunoff with the penney store. The rest is torn down and looks like it will be a parking lot.

[Reply]

AceJay
April 4th, 2009 at 8:28 pm

What a shame. With nothing left but JCP, There's not much of a draw there. Move the JCP next door and throw some condos down or something =/

[Reply]

Larry
May 9th, 2009 at 10:19 pm

Does anyone know if Fortunoff is closed yet? I was hoping to make one last trip, but if it's gone, no need to see it a mess….

[Reply]

mallguy
May 10th, 2009 at 12:31 am

Fortunoff is still open….not sure as to how much longer. The indoor section of the mall has been torn down and except for JCPenney, they have opened a new Fridays, Olive Garden, Bahama Breeze (which is really good) and a DSW.

[Reply]

James
May 22nd, 2009 at 8:46 pm

I grew up in Glen Ridge, about 20 minutes to the southeast towards Newark and the Oranges, and am now finishing up my freshman year of college in Chicago. We frequented this mall for as long as I can remember. My family and I liked it because of the relatively easy parking; it was a good "in and out." In my middle school and earlier high school years (like, until 2006 or so) I did my back to school shopping at this Old Navy location. It was always very, very busy there…we'd oftentimes package it with a visit to the Borders. Back to the mid-late '90s, I can remember going to that Borders, or the Fortunoff, or the Old Navy…but almost never going into the actual mall. The stores that stayed were classic "dead mall" material. There was one independent dollar store near the central courtyard that could barely fill its shelves; the area of the store was much too large for the limited enterprise, which did a poor business. There was also either a shooting or a stabbing in the mall's rather desolate parking lot c. 2006; the area leading south from the mall towards Route 23 and Little Falls is a bit sketchy, including a Hooters and lots of wig stores, for example.
The corridor of Route 46 and Route 3, stretching through Bergen, Essex, Passaic, Hudson, and Morris counties, has to be one of the most extensive retail corridors in the country. It is becoming, as well, more and more over-saturated with open air centers/"lifestyle centers" and big box plazas. Clifton Commons opened in 1999 along Route 3 near the Route 21 and 46 interchanges, becoming the primary power center or "open air mall" for the middle-class areas of northeast Essex, southeast Passaic, and southern Bergen counties. It includes a Barnes & Noble, Target, AMC Theaters, Stop & Shop, Sports Authority, and other classic tenants. There is an over-supply of big boxes further west, stretching out to Parsippany. With that sort of competition, along with the retail zoo in Paramus on Route 21, it is becoming harder and harder to survive in the North Jersey retail scene. Moreover, this mall always focused on a "discount clientele", with the exception of the Fortunoff and the Borders: families with young children and discount shoppers from places like Paterson. The really desired demographic in North Jersey is the under 25
with a new credit card…and this little mall could never attract that.

[Reply]

James
June 22nd, 2009 at 1:58 pm

*Note: My references to Route 21 were intended as Route 17.

A bit about the history of development of retail in North Jersey, particularly over the past ten years. When I was growing up in the suburbs between Newark and Paterson along the Passaic River (NE Essex, SE Passaic, SW Bergen, and W Hudson counties) in the '90s, this area was severely under-retailed. To go to a Barnes & Noble, you had to travel between 20 and 30 minutes to Totowa, near the Willowbrook Mall in Wayne, or to Paramus, or to Livingston. The area was left a bit out of the loop in the retail geography that was still surviving in the '90s, as a relic of '50s-'70s development. Back then, Paramus, Wayne, Livingston, etc. became retail centers because they were areas on the fringe of new development, but not particularly far from areas of older development. Retail tended to be concentrated in nodes like this, both in a convenient place within the schema of development and near highway interchanges. Because the aforementioned area was not close to major highway interchanges and mostly fairly old development, retail was not developed here in the '50s-'70s to the same degree. Moreover, the development boom in the '80s that created Mill Creek Mall, Short Hills Mall, and Bridgewater Commons focused on supplying areas of new exurban wealth near the "edge cities" packed with high-tech and finance office parks (by the end of the '80s, there was more office space in North Jersey than in Midtown Manhattan), or in areas growing as auxiliaries to Manhattan in the Meadowlands or near the Gold Coast, with financial back offices and luxury real estate developments. We had to travel to Wayne, Paramus, possibly Secaucus, or, at times, the more scattered retail of SW Essex, like the Livingston and Short Hills Malls and the aging Essex Green Shopping Center, which has a Macy's and AMC Movie Theatre. As well, the '90s was a bit of a development lull in North Jersey.

All this started changing around 1999, when previously neglected or aging areas of North Jersey began undergoing a real estate development boom. Unlike the '80s one, which tended to focus on new areas, much of this was focused on renewing and upscaling neglected downtown and industrial areas. Areas in between the already very developed "Gold Coast" of the Hudson River and the office park-y edge cities out near Morris County were showered with condominiums, boutique retail, performing arts centers, new "lifestyle centers" and "power centers", etc. "Midtown direct" trains to Morris, Union, and Essex counties originated first in 1996, attracting commuters to aging suburbs, the late '90s financial industry boom giving them lots of disposable income. 9/11 was only a bump in this gradually accelerating process of renovation and upscaling, combined with rising housing prices, that reached maddening proportions around 2006.

The development along Route 3 in Clifton, not too far from Paramus, Wayne, and Secaucus, followed these general timelines. Clifton Commons, a big power center anchored by an AMC multiplex, Barnes & Noble, Sports Authority, Target, and Stop & Shop, then beginning its invasion of North Jersey, opened in 1999. This attracted the youth of the Meadowlands-Passaic area heavily. This was around the same time that the huge condo development at Route 46, "Cambridge Crossings", opened further north, along with innumerable transit-oriented condos and new apartment buildings in Nutley, Rutherford, and southeastern Clifton. Around late 2006, Riverfront Center opened behind a giant Costco, a mix of a power center and a lifestyle center, with tenants like Uno Chicago, Chipotle, Bed, Bath & Beyond, Pier 1, Starbucks, Lane Bryant, Michael's…more middle-market oriented retail, but increasingly upscale and '00s in its own way. Like most lifestyle centers, it was more centered on a female crowd. Then, the Route 3 corridor in Clifton was beginning to look truly overdeveloped. Finally, the Promenade Shops at Clifton opened in late 2008, cursing its own bad timing, as the area's economy began to decline. While it was originally intended to house retailers like Victoria's Secret, New York & Company, and Bath and Body Works, that would be at home in Willowbrook or Paramus, only a few tenants, like Jos A. Bank, Chico's, Coldwater Creek, Massage Envy, and ultimately a Mandee's next door opened. It's been a colossal failure so far. Retail in North Jersey is now thoroughly oversaturated, and the Clifton area isn't really upscale enough to profit from a lifestyle center of this nature, being more of a middle-income family and single commuter oriented place with a proximity to Wayne and Paramus for more upscale retail.

This over-development, characteristic of the '00s but taking form heavily in North Jersey, was characterized, as aforementioned, by transit-oriented downtown development. Huge new condominium complexes and "transit villages" opened in downtown Montclair along Bloomfield Avenue, spreading into Glen Ridge by the last few years of the decade. In Glen Ridge, this was "redevelopment" on an abandoned quarry and Verizon building. Bloomfield engineered an eminent domain plot to kick out retailers from its mostly minority, discount-oriented downtown area to further encourage "transit development", and the movement of middle-class white, Asian, and Hispanic families into town. In a less obvious move, rentiers rose prices for retailers in downtown Montclair, kicking out nearly a dozen bookstores, record stores, antique stores, restaurants, and two independent movie theaters. The centerpiece was the "Siena", a mix of real estate and commercial development on Church Street, surrounded by upscale boutiques, that has attracted a Starbucks and little else. Similarly, the rising rents, attempting to make Bloomfield Avenue in Montclair more like Short Hills, ultimately only created lots of vacancies. Developers like Pfolker built substandard luxury houses, believing that "Montclair" would draw New Yorkers like moths to a flame, many of whom never materialized. Places like Harrison, a working-class, gritty suburb of Newark, attempted to upscale themselves by building a huge transit-oriented condominium development, and faceless condominium or townhouse complexes opened up all along Essex, Passaic, and Union counties. A former West Orange K-Mart, adjoining a Wendy's, opened as a Whole Foods in either late 2006 or early 2007, I forget which. South Orange engineered a slightly more successful redevelopment than Bloomfield or Montclair, attracting a big performing arts center and a gourmet supermarket, East Orange redeveloped the abandoned Upsala College campus as mid-scale housing for commuters, and Paterson decided to build a shopping mall, in a phase of lunatic development in the mid-late '00s.

As boutique, lifestyle center, and power center retail multiplied in a market reaching saturation, Wayne Towne Centre and other small shopping malls like it were the rare casualties. Interestingly enough, Wayne seemed to be experiencing less insane growth than areas further in. Those further in areas, closer to the urban core of North Jersey, had increasingly less reason to travel to Wayne. And so, it becomes part of North Jersey's venerable retail history.

[Reply]

SEAN Reply:
June 22nd, 2009 at 5:37 pm

@James,

Well said, however transit oriented development is the future of housing. Montclair, Harrison, Hoboken & other towns where higher density housing & frequent bus and rail transit are avaleable will keep those communities viable for the long term.

As the price of oil continues to rise as it did last year, areas that are not walkable & aren't transit rich will have a tough time very shortly. Wayne is one of those towns that fall in to that latter catigory.

First of all there is no where you can really walk in the main shopping area around the Willowbrook Mall because it's all limited access highways around there.

Second The Wayne RT 23 transit center can be only reach by car or bus & there are few trains that stop at that station, making it impractical for many commuters.

Therd When that area was developed in the 1960s people were unawhere of the fact that the Passaic River is flood prone. However when that became common knowledge they still built & built & built. Now when it rains people worry just how bad the floodding will be.

[Reply]

James Reply:
June 22nd, 2009 at 9:45 pm

@SEAN,
I generally agree with that. I think that places like Wayne, Paramus, Livingston, Parsippany-Troy Hills, et. al. really peaked before the turn of the century as areas for development. Wayne was developed from the '50s through the '90s in a decentralized manner reliant on private transportation. In fact, I think it's an ideal example of the "edge city." Wayne has almost 60,000 people, several major hospitals, WPUNJ, big employers like Reckitt-Benckiser, International Specialty Products, Toys "R" Us, and BAE Systems, and huge areas of commercial development. It's really replaced Paterson as the center of Passaic County, and indeed is the center of a big area of Essex, Passaic, and Morris counties. Wayne's success as a town is more dependent on the health of the autonomous economy of New Jersey, based on whatever research, corporate, or light industrial functions are going on in the office and industrial parks.

I don't dislike transit-oriented development as a rule. It's more that I think that alot of the transit-oriented development that went on in the inner-ring NJ suburbs between the late '90s and the late '00s, and which is now concluding, was ill planned and not necessarily sensitive to the communities in which it occurred. Unlike shopping malls or most power and lifestyle centers, which tend to occur in newly developing areas, projects like the tearing down of the Marlboro Inn in Montclair, the eminent domain in Bloomfield Center, or the destructive rise in rents along Bloomfield Avenue occurred in areas that were already developed, of mostly independently owned businesses and older houses. The lack of tenants in some of these developments is astounding. Alot of the development in northeastern Essex opened between 2007 and 2009, when the real estate bubble was already bursting, contributing to the failure of alot of these projects. Town governments and developers tended to overestimate both the market for these projects among businesses and condominium owners and the prices that businesses and people were willing to pay for spaces. For nearly two years, the condo conversions near the Glen Ridge train station have sat basically empty. The only product seems to be the now omnipresent Starbucks, a classic symptom of '00s development. Nevertheless, South Orange, for example, is a comparatively successful example of '00s transit-oriented retail redevelopment, when you look at the comparative failure of Bloomfield and Montclair to totally redevelop themselves in this light, based on retail, while maintaining their distinctive characters. In Bloomfield, most redevelopment has occurred NORTH of Belleville Avenue, away from the train station. One flaw of transit-oriented downtown development is that it tends to be overly upscale for the areas that it moves to. This is something South Orange seems to have avoided.

The other areas that are flourishing with retail development are those like Route 3 in Clifton, that lacked a central downtown area and have highway access. Other examples of this are places in eastern Morris County like Florham Park, Denville, and the Hanovers that are now studded with power centers and lifestyle centers. Basically, the moral of the story I'm telling is that it is not just the power center and the lifestyle center that have detracted from the power of the shopping mall in North Jersey, but the redeveloping downtown, which is unique. Real estate overspeculation in North Jersey was not just in zones of power centers and new construction, but of condominiums, aging downtowns, and train stations. These areas were at the cutting edge of development, whereas those like Wayne and Paramus, stuck in the middle, were dragged down, characterized by shopping malls that were just not very big investment targets in the real estate development crazy '00s. It's ironic: the areas that shopping malls drew away from have drawn investment away from them.

[Reply]

SEAN Reply:
June 23rd, 2009 at 2:35 pm

@James,

True, but you overlooked the fact that menny people are tired of commuting long distences just to get to work or to go shopping for the basics. Also as the population ages people don't want to be saddled with a big house with high taxes. that is why those condos in Montclair & other towns apealed to residents who could aford higher price points. I could lower my cost of living, walk to shopping & take transit to get into the city without lowering my standered of living as the thaught goes. Of course that was before the markets tanked & everything is right now in a state of limbo. The condo projects & retail stores will fill up over time, but rates will be lower then expected lowering rateables for tax colections.

According to the Texas Transportation Institute @ UT Austin, a residential property rises on average about 40% in value when frequent transit is within a half-mile of that property. For commercial property the figure rises to about 50% on average. You could see this first hand along the Morris & Essex rail lines from Newark's Broad Street station to Dover when the Midtown Direct service opened to Penn Station in 1995. Real Estate prices jumped in all areas along the route because a transfer to path was no longer required, nore a long bus trip along congested Route 22/I-78 was nessessary to get into Manhattan. Even with the drop in values over the past 20 months or so, home prices are still higher today than in 1995.

[Reply]

Keith
September 8th, 2009 at 8:59 pm

Growing up in Wayne, I found the Wayne Towne Center to be the most unique of the indoor malls in the town. It had this sort of indefinable, dreamy quality to it and was always eerily quiet.

[Reply]

TenPoundHammer
October 21st, 2009 at 9:43 pm

Weird. Their website is still up, with a directory from ca. 2005.

[Reply]

Gail
January 6th, 2010 at 8:01 pm

it sounds to me like they are taking the elegance from these NJ malls, and building these underground stores where the quality of the merchandise will be of poor quality, and i'm hating that alot.

[Reply]

Bella
January 8th, 2010 at 1:21 am

what retail zoo on rt.17 in paramus are you talking about?

[Reply]

Glo
December 6th, 2010 at 10:01 am

Does anyone know who owns the mall now and who markets it? thanks

[Reply]

Minhaj H Reply:
March 6th, 2014 at 8:57 pm

@Glo, A company called vornado owns it they also own the outlets at Bergen towne center

[Reply]

Chris
January 15th, 2011 at 8:27 pm

The mall is gone- just a newish-looking (on the outside) JC Penney and the vacant Fortunoff, and then nothing left where the rest of the mall was.

The mall is not that far from the Macy's at Willowbrook- I agree, both centers should be connected by something- maybe the Macy's should be moved cloer to Wayne Towne Center and more mall space could be added to connect both centers.

Both malls should be owned by the same company- it makes no sense to have two uncoordinated centers right next to each other.

[Reply]

deedee
February 20th, 2011 at 5:51 pm

this is a weird post, since jcp's is new and rebuilt and everything looks great

it's always been a hard mall , competing with willowbrook

but about 3 years ago, when borders closed, everything began changing

i had just gotten used to going there regularly, and it closed! then old navy, fortunoff etc

[Reply]

JACK
February 24th, 2011 at 12:35 am

THEY SHOULD HAVE KEPT IT

[Reply]

SEAN
May 2nd, 2011 at 1:57 pm

The Globe & Mail reported on Friday 4-29 that canadian retailer Home Outfitters will be opening stores in the US under the Lord & Taylor Home label. The first two stores will be opening in northern New Jersey, but the locations were not disclosed. Hmmm, I wonder if they will be considering there former Fortunoff stores here & Woodbridge? If successful perhaps they would also return to there former Westbury location as well.

The story can be accessed from Plain Vanilla Shell on the right side of the page.

[Reply]

rob Reply:
May 2nd, 2011 at 3:38 pm

@SEAN, Its funny you mentioned this i was on Lord and Taylors web and i t said they are trying something new. I know they have a home dept in their Manhattan store on the 9th floor. Maybe they will do that and try the former Fortunoff stores. I think Lord and Taylor is trying a new image to draw shoppers away from Nordstroms. They are opening new location in Yonkers and now outlet stores.

[Reply]

SEAN Reply:
May 2nd, 2011 at 5:22 pm

@rob, I think NRDC is trying to leverage the strength of it's canadian devision since the US market is saturated with department store locations. If Home Outfitters allows Lord & Taylor to create something along the lines of a Crate & Barrel/ Home Goods combonation, then there's a chance to revive some dead anchors & some malls along with them.

Read the article & give your impressions. Despite the economy, this maybe the best time to create a new retailing concept since shopping center owners are dieing for the next big thing & if done correctly, this could be it.

I think NRDC owns the Wayne, Woodbridge & Westbury buildings, so it could be a no brainer to reopen them first.

[Reply]

Chris Reply:
June 26th, 2012 at 8:18 am

@rob, Have any old pics of this mall before it was demolished? Or since you worked there do you have perhaps a complete store directory list? Thanks.

[Reply]

johnvalb
August 7th, 2011 at 7:19 pm

HELP!
We bought my two son's their baptism outfits at this mall. It was a small shop that seeme d to specialize in baptism gowns, communion dresses and prom gowns.
We are now god parents for an arriving nephew and want to buyhim his outfit. WOuld LOVE to go back to that store if they relocated elsewhere in Wayne or the surrounding area.
Anyone have any info???
Please email me the store name and new contact info if anyone has it

[Reply]

LCNJ
September 1st, 2011 at 8:59 am

Willowbrook mall AND Wayne Town center and the surrounding area flood all the time. Both malls are closed for a few days or a week every year. Most recently, hurricane Irene caused MAJOR flooding at and around both malls yet again. Sadly, Wayne Town Center may never recover from this one 🙁
As an aside, this mall was sooo cute and in pristine condition!

[Reply]

joan hill
June 22nd, 2013 at 7:43 pm

reading all about the wayne town center funny not one person the U.S.A. ROLLER RINK that brought a lot of kids and folks to the mall what a shame it was a fun place

[Reply]

Gavin
September 26th, 2013 at 10:19 am

Before they demolished the interior/mall portion, my friends and I used to skate outside of the entrance near the steps after school. If I recall correctly, wasn't there once a Zany Brainy inside of the Wayne Town Centre? Its rather sad that the mall never got the revitalization that they had been talking about.

[Reply]

Minhaj H
March 6th, 2014 at 8:52 pm

As a child i loved this mall good stores huge old navy, the one in willowbrook is nowhere as big decent mall area all of it is gone rumour has it fortunoff will become Costco with some smaller stores next to (No new mall!!) I think restore it add more stores create a website and advertise people can come and have an an enjoyable shopping experience

[Reply]

Leave a Reply

Name (required)

Mail (will not be published) (required)

Website

Submit Comment

seven + 8 =

☐ Notify me of follow-up comments via e-mail

«Willowbrook Mall; Wayne, New Jersey
Skyline Mall; Albert Lea, Minnesota»

FEED

Search

Get started: Browse our directory

Browse by state to find photos, histories and discussion about shopping centers throughout the U.S. and Canada., read our coverage of dead malls (the reason most people visit us) or learn why we created Labelscar.

Recent Comments:

J Hyde: Dallas Galleria is not as upscale as it used to be. I haven't been there in years…but can tell by the...

Craig Nowak: As much as I hate advertising, I have a retail blog of my own and I am trying to bring traffic to it....

June: Does anybody know the names of any of the smaller stores that were in North Hills Mall. I think there was a small 5...

Tara: Pearl Theatres, AT & T, Suglia's Pizza, and Dunham's Sports are a few of the stores left. Bath and...

Tara: This mall will be closed soon, and the rumor is that the new owners will be knocking it down. I have photos from...

Photos from Labelscar's Flickr page

Advertisements

Departments

- About Labelscar and its Authors
- All the Malls of New England
- Directory by State | News Archive
- Disclaimers
- Help Us!

Directory

- Alabama (2)
- Alberta (2)
- Arizona (6)
- Arkansas (4)
- California (23)
- Canada (13)
- Colorado (4)
- Connecticut (7)
- Dead Malls (129)
- Death Watch (14)
- Delaware (2)
- District of Columbia (1)
- Florida (8)
- Georgia (3)
- Hawaii (3)
- Humor (1)
- Illinois (27)
- Indiana (9)
- Iowa (7)
- Kansas (3)
- Kentucky (4)
- Louisiana (5)
- Maine (3)
- Manitoba (1)
- Maryland (12)
- Massachusetts (29)
- Mexico (1)
- Michigan (7)
- Minnesota (9)
- Mississippi (1)
- Missouri (7)
- Montana (1)
- Nebraska (2)
- Nevada (8)
- New Brunswick (3)
- New Hampshire (5)
- New Jersey (17)
- New Mexico (1)
- New York (32)
- North Carolina (5)
- North Dakota (3)
- Ohio (9)
- Oklahoma (3)
- Ontario (5)
- Oregon (3)
- Pennsylvania (11)
- Redevelopment (7)
- Retail News (49)
- Retail Relic (6)
- Retail Stores (39)
- Rhode Island (7)
- Saskatchewan (2)
- South Carolina (1)
- South Dakota (1)
- Tennessee (5)
- Texas (20)
- Uncategorized (31)
- Utah (3)
- Vermont (3)
- Virginia (5)
- Washington (2)
- West Virginia (3)
- Wisconsin (13)
- Wyoming (1)

Blogroll

- Acme Style
- All the Malls of Southern California
- America's Landmark: Under the Orange Roof
- Ames Fan Club
- Art in Ruins
- Big Mall Rat
- Blogko: The Wisconsin Retail History Blog
- Caldor
- Cinema Treasures
- Dead Malls Dot Com
- Department Store History
- Department Store Museum
- Discount Stores of the '60s
- Dumpy Strip Malls
- Globe St.
- Grocerying
- Groceteria
- Live Malls
- Mall Hall of Fame
- Malls of America
- Marshall Field's Tribute Site
- Plain Vanilla Shell
- Pleasant Family Shopping
- Recent Past Preservation Network
- Remembering Retail
- Retail Traffic Mag
- Retailers From Woolworth to Wal-Mart
- Roadside America
- Roadside Architecture
- Shopping Days in Retro Boston
- Sky City: Southern Retail Then and Now
- Sky City: Southern Retail Then and Now
- Sky Mall Blog
- Southern Retail
- The Caldor Rainbow
- The International Council of Shopping Centers
- The Society for Commercial Archaeology
- Vintage Retail

Flickr

Labelscar on Flickr!

Subscribe

- Log in
- Entries RSS
- Comments RSS
- WordPress.org

Copyright (c)2006-2012 Jason Damas and Ross Schendel. All Rights Reserved.