

Publix to open first Northeast Florida GreenWise Market in Nocatee

By Karen Brune Mathis
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The specialty organic grocery store will operate in Nocatee Town Center.

Northeast Florida's competition among natural foods grocers will heat up next year as Publix Super Markets Inc. opens its first Northeast Florida GreenWise Market in Nocatee.

Lakeland-based Publix spokesman Dwaine Stevens confirmed the St. Johns County location Thursday as developers announced plans to develop an extension of Nocatee Town Center to include the market.

"GreenWise Market is a specialty, natural and organic store," said Stevens, Publix media and community relations manager of Publix Super Markets Inc.

He described the store's offerings.

"In addition to a beverage bar featuring kombucha, locally roasted coffee, wine, local beer and smoothies, the store offers local and unique products, indulgent gourmet treats, body care and bulk items," he said.

Jacksonville-based Skinner Bros. Realty and The PARC Group announced Wednesday that Nocatee Town Center will feature both the first GreenWise Market in Northeast Florida as well as a Publix, which operates in the Nocatee Town Center.

An almost 61,400-square-foot Publix was built in 2010 at 120 Marketside Ave. at Nocatee Town Center. The store is about 55,000 square feet of interior conditioned space. Publix is remodeling that location at a cost of \$875,000, according to a permit issued by St. Johns County.

Construction of the new shopping center is scheduled to begin in the next few months and is expected to open in early 2020.

The center is an extension of the current Town Center and will be east of Crosswater Parkway and south of Nocatee Parkway.

The first phase of the new shopping center will comprise two buildings totaling 40,000 square feet of grocery, dining and retail spaces. GreenWise will lease 25,150 square feet, according to Skinner Bros. Realty.

Additional tenants for the center will be announced soon, the news release said.

“We remain committed to meeting the lifestyle needs of our residents and our growing community. The success of Nocatee is making it very attractive to popular local and national retailers,” said Michael O’Steen, director of Planning and Development at The PARC Group, Nocatee’s master developer.

The shopping center will feature golf cart parking as well as walkable waterfront space, according to the release.

Skinner Bros. previously developed the Town Center East retail space south of the new shopping center, which includes five buildings and tenants such as South Kitchen & Spirits, M Shack and Dunkin’ Donuts, among others.

“It’s been rewarding to see the tremendous success and popularity of our first phase of development at the Nocatee Town Center,” said Riley Skinner, vice president of Skinner Bros. Realty.

“We’re looking forward to continuing our partnership with The PARC Group in expanding the Nocatee lifestyle with new retail and dining options,” he said.

GreenWise Market has been expected at the center. St. Johns County named the company last year as part of Nocatee Town Center East.

Letters among the St. Johns County Zoning Department and Miami-based law firm GreenspoonMarder, as it represented Publix Super Markets Inc., identified a Greenwise Cafe for the location.

Plans showed that Nocatee Town Center East is planned on 8.26 acres along Crosswater Parkway that would be anchored by a 25,098-square-foot grocery store. Publix GreenWise stores are about 25,000 to 28,000 square feet, about half the size of the traditional Publix stores.

Publix.com said the GreenWise Market focuses on the specialty, natural and organic sector.

Plans show the Nocatee store would anchor the 40,589-square-foot Nocatee Town Center East, Phase 1.

Publix opened three GreenWise stores about a decade ago but revamped the concept.

The first new GreenWise Market opened Oct. 4 in Tallahassee. Nine more are planned.

Six are expected to open this year in Lakeland; Boca Raton; Fort Lauderdale; Marietta, Georgia; Mount Pleasant, South Carolina; and Mountain Brook, Alabama.

Publix announced three more Wednesday: Nocatee, Odessa and Lexington, South Carolina.

“We’re creating a community gathering place where high-quality natural and organic products are the center of what we offer,” said Publix President Kevin Murphy in the news release. “And we’re helping our customers support their healthy lifestyle with convenient in-house prepared meals and grab and go options made from organic and antibiotic-free ingredients.”

GreenWise will open in Nocatee as natural foods and organics stores expand throughout the area.

Whole Foods Market has one store and plans a second; Earth Fare has two stores and plans a third; Sprouts Farmers Market identified two locations; and Lucky’s Market has one and plans a second. Trader Joe’s, a specialty neighborhood market, has two locations.

Jacksonville-based Native Sun Natural Foods, which opened before any of the national companies moved into the market, operates three stores in Mandarin, Baymeadows and Jacksonville Beach.