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New Seasons Market shows off 15th store planned for Northwest Raleigh

Laura Gunderson | The Oregonian/OregonLive By Laura Gunderson | The Oregonian/OregonLive
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Portland grocer New Seasons Market released this rendering of its new store on Northwest Raleigh. The company announced it will anchor the Slabtown Marketplace development at the former Con-way freight site.
New Seasons Market

A 60-year-old, updated freight warehouse in Northwest Portland will become **New Seasons Market's** 15th store as the Portland grocer continues its planned path of expansion.

New Seasons Market announced Tuesday that the proposed 28,000-square-foot store on Northwest Raleigh Street will anchor the Slabtown Marketplace, a block-sized redevelopment spearheaded by the Portland developer **C.E. John Company**.

An open-air plaza will separate the grocery store from a planned six-story, 110-unit apartment building with another 15,000 square feet of ground-floor retail.

This is the third store New Seasons will break ground on this year. Others include a new location at North Williams Avenue, which should open in the fall, and one at Northeast Broadway near 33rd Avenue, which is set to open in the fall of 2014. The Northwest Portland store is expected to open in the spring 2015.

"People say, 'This all seems so fast,'" said **Wendy Collie, New Seasons' new chief executive**. "But these have all been in the pipeline for awhile. The company has been looking to expand for years and we've been lucky enough to have some great sites come through."

Con-way Inc. has worked since 2008 on a master plan for the 17.5 acres it holds between the Pearl District and Northwest 21st and 23rd Avenues. The freight company aims to sell off its parcels to developers like Portland-based C.E. John Co., which in addition to the New Seasons block at **2170 N.W. Raleigh St.**, plans a 40-unit apartment complex nearby and another 24-unit complex with ground-floor retail on Northwest 23rd Avenue.

Raleigh is also a leading route being considered for an extension of the Portland Streetcar, though some neighbors have objected and **the alignment was removed from the Con-way master plan**.

"We see Raleigh Street really as the bridge between the 21st and 23rd Avenue retail corridors," said Thomas DiChiara, vice president of development for C.E. John, which also owns the Cedar Hills Shopping Center property where New Seasons has a store. "The grocery store in the middle there is a key part of that strategy."

C.E. John is buying the block for Slabtown Marketplace project from Con-way in a deal that's expected to close later this year, DiChiara said.

New Seasons' store will be the first phase of construction at Slabtown Marketplace, beginning at the end of this year. Collie said she hopes to be able to keep the building's original "sawtooth" skylights and exposed wood trusses.

"We're hoping not to touch those original aspects of the building," she said, adding that the entire development aims to reflect the area's past life as an industrial center near the city's port. "It's more like we're incorporating ourselves into the building."

New Seasons aimed to grow its number of stores and turned to the Portland investment firm Endeavour Capital in 2009, to help with that goal. Endeavour currently owns a majority stake of New Seasons **following last year's departure of founder Chuck Eggert, who sold back his shares to the private company**.

-- Laura Gunderson