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As Colonial Park Mall comes up for auction, Lower Paxton and state officials working to assist in redevelopment

Lower Paxton Township, PA (June 19, 2024) – Should the Colonial Park Mall sell following next week's online auction, Lower Paxton Township officials already have zoning in place to assist new owners with redeveloping the site.

Additionally, two bills in the state Legislature – authored by Rep. Justin Fleming and Rep. Joshua Siegel – would provide a mix of grants and tax incentives to help revitalize ailing malls statewide.

Between June 25 and June 27, the 31.25-acre central section of the mall owned by Kohan Retail Investment Group will be listed on the Ten-X auction site, www.ten-x.com, at a starting bid of \$2.1 million. Not included in the auction are Boscov's, which owns its building; and the former Sears store; the former Sears Auto location; the former Enterprise location; Red Lobster; Longhorn Steakhouse; and Mountz Jewelers, which also has a different owner.

Realizing that new zoning similar to King of Prussia's town center would make the Colonial Park Mall site more attractive to potential developers, Lower Paxton's Board of Supervisors in 2020 approved its own Towne Centre ordinance. The ordinance allows a blend of residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, and entertainment uses.

"The Colonial Park Mall was once a jewel in our township, and we believe with the right redevelopment plan it can shine again," said Township Supervisors Chairman Robin Lindsey. "Just as we have worked with the current owners of the land, our Township is ready to work with new owners to create what we hope will be a regional destination."

More recent flourishing town center-type developments in Lancaster -- Shoppes at Belmont and The Crossings at Conestoga Creek – further show the concept works.

Recently, legislation by Rep. Justin Fleming passed the state House (HB 2174) that would create a mixed-use development fund administered through the Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) that will provide a combination grant/loan program to incentivize the purchase and revitalization of these large commercial properties.

Another bill introduced by Rep. Joshua Siegel (HB 1799) would create tax abatement programs local municipalities could use to foster redevelopment and tax credit programs for businesses investing in struggling malls. Additionally, it would use a portion of tax revenue generated by businesses in redevelopment sites to establish a Shopping Mall Infrastructure Fund.

"I'm committed to working with municipalities such as Lower Paxton Township to ensure large properties, like the Colonial Park Mall, don't fall into blight and disrepair," said Fleming, who also supports Siegel's bill. "I believe we can transform these drains on our economy into thriving places to live and work."

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Lower Paxton Township is the largest municipality in Dauphin County and the 13th largest in Pennsylvania, covering a 28-square-mile area. To learn more, visit www.lowerpaxton-pa.gov and follow Lower Paxton on Facebook @LowerPaxtonTwp, Twitter @LowerPaxtonTwp & Instagram @lowerpaxtontownship