



People take pictures with their phones Wednesday as the ground is ceremonially broken for a new Market 32 grocery store off Route 146 in Sutton. T&G STAFF/RICK CINCLAIR

Sutton forerunner

Groundbreaking starts work on Market 32 store

By Lonnie Shekhtman
CORRESPONDENT

SUTTON — Golub Corp., the family- and employee-owned company behind 135 Price Chopper supermarket stores in the Northeast, broke ground Wednesday on the first in a series of stores to be rebranded as Market 32.

A sleek, new store is planned at 171 Worcester Turnpike Road (Route 146), with a façade of wood paneling and elegant, digital displays featuring fresh produce. It will be an upgrade from Price Chopper's 40-year-old utilitarian, discount-store image symbolized by the chopping axe in its logo.

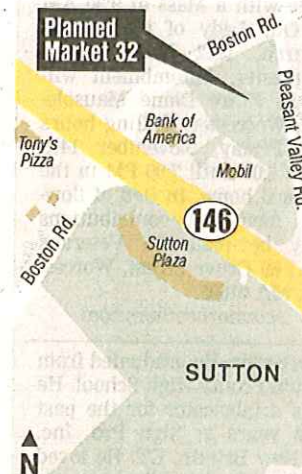
MARKET 32
BY PRICE CHOPPER

Over the next nine years and at a cost of \$300 million, the Schenectady, N.Y.-based company will modernize, rebrand and rename its stores to Market 32 to acknowledge the company's founding in 1932, said Jerel Golub, the company's chief executive.

The revised brand and corresponding product and service offerings will satisfy the changing consumer preferences toward healthy, locally sourced foods served by knowledgeable and friendly staff, Mr. Golub said.

When the 54,000-square-foot Sutton store opens next summer, it will offer local and organic produce, beer and wine, and a Star-

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T&G Staff/DON LANDGREN JR.

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bucks counter.

"There are times in a company's evolution that you know instinctively that things are changing," said Mr. Golub, the great-grandson of the company founder, Lewis Golub, an immigrant from Russia.

At the groundbreaking, Mr. Golub told the audience of several dozen local and state officials and business leaders, "We realized we needed to make some changes to our stores to keep up with our customers."

Market 32, which will employ 180 people, said Mr. Golub, will be the first supermarket in Sutton and the lynchpin for other retail development on a 20-acre site off Route 146.

"This town has been starving for something like this," said Kenneth Stuart, chairman of the Board of Selectmen.

At the construction site, he pointed to display boards showing the fully developed parcel, which will include a bank, restaurant and possibly a home improvement store.

"This is the first anything in Sutton," Mr. Stuart said. "It's time to have something here."

Mr. Golub said many Price Chopper stores will begin offering new products and services long before they're redesigned and renamed.

He hesitated to reveal specifics about the new design or product offerings, for competitive reasons, but he did offer

some highlights. For instance, the stores will have expanded produce sections with more organic offerings and they'll be reorganized for a "more intuitive" shopping experience, which could mean bagged salads placed near rotisserie chickens in the prepared foods department for people looking for quick dinner options. Mr. Golub also mentioned made-to-order salad bars and a phone app that will allow shoppers to order sandwiches from the deli before they come into the store.

Despite a shift towards a more upscale shopping experience, typically associated with Whole Foods and other gourmet or specialty markets, which have been widely criticized for unreasonably high prices, Mr. Golub was adamant that the one thing the company won't change is its focus on low prices.

"We're still going to help our customers save money; we see that as very important," he said, explaining that the company's discount and loyalty programs will stay intact.

Golub Corp. is renovating three stores in Clifton Park, N.Y., Wilton, N.Y., and Pittsfield. Its 22,000 employees in New York, Vermont, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and New Hampshire own 47 percent of the company's privately held stock.

Mr. Golub said the Sutton store will begin hiring employees several months before it opens next summer.