

SODO PAST PRESENT FUTURE

Posted by [admin](#) on Tuesday, October 23, 2012 · [Leave a Comment](#)



To most of us that reside in Orlando, 306 E Michigan St. is the home of Ross, whose mission is to offer customers the best name-brand bargains possible. For those that were traveling the streets of the City Beautiful in 1957, they recall this address as the original location for Publix? A lot has changed on S. Orange Ave over the years and as it continues to grow we investigate the past and how technology is leading the future.

In 1925 the Caruso/Walsh family came and incorporated Southern Fruit. By 1986 Southern Fruit had grown to multiple plants and reported \$95 million in sales. As the company ranked fifth on “The Golden 50 of Central Florida”, the family sold the rights to Bluebird label in 1987. The Caruso/Walsh family then started Pineloch Management Company and has led the path in developing the S. Orange Ave Area.

The property that currently holds Ross and Panera was owned by the family since the 1950’s. When their main business was fruit, their ties and vision helped bring business to our community. The family had a relationship with Charlie Jenkins, founder of Publix. Through this relationship, they encouraged him to open the sixth store in all of Florida at this location. As our city grew, so did Publix. The space was expanded twice, and still outgrew its walls. Our South Orlando Publix was ready for a new home. The Caruso/Walsh family also owned the adjacent orange groves just to the south. Publix and Pineloch Management Company took a visit to Bradenton to look at what was then a new “open air concept”. On March 4, 1994 The Marketplace at Southside and Publix South Orlando opened its doors.

Retail centers go through a 20-25 year cycle. Over the last 20 years, technology has been the focus of most companies as they look to expand or redevelop. After 18 years and modern development just to the north on Orange Avenue, the split face design was starting to show its

age. In order to attract new business and continue the redevelopment of South Orlando, Cuhaci architects were asked to design the new remodel which began this summer. Now we all get to enjoy the new look and new shops it has attracted.

As we launch into the new exterior facade, the businesses it houses are bringing new technology and modernization to the interiors as well.

Publix itself is also taking this opportunity to complete an interior renovation. Get ready for fall as Publix rolls out its new soup bar! The interior signs and colors are being updated. The produce department is getting all new tables and lights. The floral area is going to be completely renovated

Peach Valley Cafe unveils their first “urban” store in November. The servers will be taking orders on Kindle Fires. The order goes directly from table side to the kitchen. When you are finished with your food, you will be able to pay the check with your smartphone, without waiting for a server to bring the check. Peach Valley expects this will cut a 5-10 wait time from each dining experience. Peach Valley will be located in the old Blockbuster location.

Otown Tan, which recently held their grand opening, features a 12 room modern high end tanning salon. Currently Otown Tan is the only salon in the state to feature the newest cutting edge technology in spray tanning. The PURA Sunless sprays the customer with a prep spray which insures the solution will go on brown and long lasting. The customer is also able to shower in 4 hours vs older technology which required a 12 hour sit time. The solution is scented and goes on in 4 minutes standing in just 2 positions.

All the rumors are true, Neighborhood Walmart has signed a lease and are in the permitting process with the City of Orlando. The old Albertson’s building will be completely demolished and an entire new building constructed. The store plans open the third quarter of 2013.

The Marketplace at Southside is a testament to our past and our rapidly growing future. Downtown South is one of the fastest growing communities on the City of Orlando Historic neighborhoods. Sodo News has lots of insight on development plans to come, stay tuned for next month’s edition.