

Market Basket is now the future

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Another hurdle toward getting Market Basket to come into Lynn has been cleared.

Arrangements between Swampscott's Charles Patsios and the Market Basket corporation were made final Friday, helping to pave the way for a new store that will begin construction on the site of the former GE Factory of the Future around a year from now.

This has to be good news for shoppers in the city who don't have a lot of alternatives when it comes to buying groceries. And it's also good news for Lynn as it continues to attract new business.

The agreement among Patsios, company executives and the city seems to have been an old-fashioned team effort. Patsios couldn't say enough about the roles played by Mayor Judith Flanagan Kennedy, EDIC Executive Director James M. Cowdell and Office of Economic and Community Development Director James M. Marsh.

Everybody connected to this project has worked in tandem. The seeds were planted in 2011, when negotiations between the city and General Electric began, and two years later, Patsios purchased the property — after the City Council voted to change the site's zoning from light industry to business.

Under the agreement, the former GE building will be renovated into a new Market Basket, complete with a cafe.

Central to all of this was Market Basket's conviction that Lynn was committed to building a store in the city. At the same time, Kennedy said the company was just as committed to locating a store in the city.

This is another chapter in Lynn's comeback, which has been felt in the number of restaurants that have moved into the city, the rise of City Hall's auditorium as a premier entertainment venue, the lower Washington Street revitalization and successful efforts to rezone for market-priced housing.

Other than the city and its shoppers, the main beneficiaries of the new Market Basket will be the 500 people who will get jobs when the new store opens. Friday was a good day all around.