

# Aldi adding new South Jersey locations

MAXWELL REIL, Staff Writer | Posted: Monday, April 25, 2016 2:51 pm

Low-cost, no-frills grocery store chain Aldi plans new locations in Cape May and southern Ocean counties as the company seeks to expand its national footprint by 25 percent in the next three years.

Aldi expects to open in a long-vacant space in a shopping center on Route 9 in Rio Grande, Middle Township in the second half of 2016, said Bob Grammer, Aldi Center Valley Division vice president.

## Cumberland County Acme to close with two others

Acme Markets says it will close three grocery stores, including one in Cumberland County.

And Stafford Township gave planning approval for a store on Martin Truex Jr. Boulevard.

The only other locations in the Press coverage area are both in Cumberland County: one on South Delsea Drive in Vineland and another on Cornwell Drive in Bridgeton.

Aldi operates on a low-cost model designed to reduce needs for manpower, including requiring a 25-cent deposit on shopping carts that is released when the customer returns the cart.

Matt Casey, president of Matthew P. Casey and Associates in Clark, Union County, specializes in supermarket and retail real estate research. He said the Aldi's model works for multiple reasons.

"They have a very unique business model and have very limited stock keeping units (SKU) which is basically the number of items in the store," Casey said.

Casey said an average Aldi only employs 10 people, and only four of those workers are working at a time.

"They don't need to do a whole lot of revenue to break even. They have a store in Toms River on Route 37 that does extremely well," Casey said. "Think about it: You have a ton of seniors living there on fixed incomes, that business model will be extremely attractive to them."

Mary Cole is one of those senior citizens who enjoy the supermarket. Cole, of Laurel Lake in Commercial Township, said she goes to the Vineland Aldi at least once a week because of the prices.



## ALDI

Customers coming out of the Aldi in Vineland. Aldi's is adding two new locations in Rio Grande and Stafford Township, which is part of an ongoing 5-year expansion plan to have a total of 2,000 U.S. stores by 2018. The company currently has about 1,500 in 33 states.

“I’m paying 85 cents for hot dog rolls, \$2 for mayonnaise and \$1.79 for whole grain bread here,” Cole said. “I’m thankful. They don’t have a lot of employees but they get the job done, too.”

Eddie Roman, 32, of Millville, said he doesn’t mind that he has to give a quarter for a cart when he goes shopping.

“The quarter is to make sure the shopping carts get back where they need to be so they aren’t taken or left out in the parking lot. It’s makes customers accountable, which I think is a good thing,” Roman said.

Founded by the Albrecht family, the first Aldi store opened in 1961 in Germany. Aldi US has been around for nearly 40 years, according to the company’s website.

According to the site, more than 90 percent of products are brands found only in Aldi.

Bob Grammer, Aldi Center Valley Division vice president, said the two new South Jersey locations are part of Aldi’s ongoing five-year expansion plan to have a total of 2,000 U.S. stores by 2018. The company currently has about 1,500 in 33 states.

In Middle Township, the Aldi will be located in what had been a Stop & Shop that closed in 2007 after ShopRite — which has a busy grocery store nearby in Rio Grande — bought nine Stop & Shop supermarkets that year, including that one.

Thomas Juliano, president of shopping-center owner Delco Development LLC, in Willingboro Township, said in 2014 that the Stop & Shop in Rio Grande was a competitive store before it closed.

“It did very well. It didn’t close for lack of business,” he said at the time.

Grammer wouldn’t specifically say whether Aldi rented or bought the property in Rio Grande, but said the company often leases properties in the Northeast.

“Most of the time, we join existing retailing communities. We prefer to build and own our stores, but in areas like the Northeast and Southern California, we don’t always have that option, so we will lease a retail space.”

Bonnie Flynn, Stafford Township’s community development director, said the store would be 17,825 square feet and have 94 parking spaces.

Flynn added that she thinks Stafford isn’t necessarily lacking in grocery stores, but said she is impressed with the way Aldi operates.

“I don’t think we’re lacking. It’s kind of interesting, though, the way they do it. It’s kind of like a warehouse type with their displays. Their pallets get recycled, and that’s a good thing,” Flynn said.

South Jersey has seen dramatic changes to the grocery store industry in the past five years. Acme Markets purchased former SuperFresh and Pathmark locations in Atlantic, Cape and southern Ocean counties last year from the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co., which shed many stores in Chapter 11

bankruptcy protection.

*Contact: 609-272-7258*

[MReil@pressofac.com](mailto:MReil@pressofac.com)