

Southside grocery will be “Ideal”

The Bethlehem Gadfly Southside May 5, 2021

 *The latest in a series of posts on the Southside* 

selections from [Christina Tatu, “Former Ahart’s Market in Bethlehem to become Ideal Food Basket.” Morning Call, May 4, 2021.](#)

Ahart’s Market in south Bethlehem will become an Ideal Food Basket after being purchased for \$2.3 million last week by Juan Diaz, the owner of CTown supermarket.

The new market is slated to open this year. Renovations will take about six months.

Diaz will continue to operate CTown as a separate store on East Third Street, about a half mile from Ahart’s, 410 Montclair Ave.

Redevelopment plans for the full-service grocery store include exterior and roofing repairs; demolition of the interior space; new refrigeration, heating and cooling systems; changes to the store’s layout; and new store colors and logo.

The Bethlehem location was critical, however, for an area that is considered a food desert, without ready access to fresh fruit and vegetables. City officials sprung into action to identify a buyer for the property who would keep it a grocery store.

“Access to fresh food and healthy groceries at affordable prices is paramount to Southside neighborhood residents,” Mayor Robert Donchez said in Tuesday’s news release. “Maintaining and building sustainable neighborhoods remain a constant focus for city administration. I am thrilled Ideal Food Basket chose to locate here.”

Diaz said he’s excited to expand his footprint in the neighborhood.

“The opportunity to purchase this location was too good to pass up and I am pleased to be able to offer a full-service grocery store to the residents of South Bethlehem,” he said in Tuesday’s statement.

In the meantime, as residents wait for the store to open, the nonprofit Kellyn Foundation, based in Tatamy, will operate a Real Food Mobile Market 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday in Ahart's parking lot.

The mobile market started last week and is expected to run until the new store is open.