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Downtown Giant will not be replaced

After 70 years, grocery open for its final day today

BY GEORGE BASLER • GBASLER@GANNETT.COM • STAFF WRITER • AUGUST 15, 2009

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BINGHAMTON - Binghamton Mayor Matthew T. Ryan cooled hopes Friday that a grocery store will ever return to a downtown Binghamton site that was home to a market for 70 years.

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There's "zero chance" a grocery store will stay open at 56 Main St., and there's nothing the city can do to control a [business decision](#) to close the store, the mayor said during a press conference outside the Giant Market, which will shut its doors today.

After this week's announcement of the closing, Ryan said he reached out to the representatives of the Akel family, who are the Giant's principals, and Weis Markets Inc. of [Pennsylvania](#), which assumes ownership of the Giant stores on Aug. 23.

"I don't have good news. It appears Weis will not have a market here, and they're not open to negotiations," Ryan said

The store doesn't fit with their business model, he added.

Some Binghamton residents who were at the press [conference](#) voiced anger about the closing, with much of the anger directed at the Akel family.

"It's a slap in the face to the community," said Susan McAnanama. The elderly and residents who don't have cars will find it difficult to get to the next nearest grocery store, located about a mile away on Main Street, she said.

But the Akels deserve some [credit](#) for keeping the store open as long as they did, Ryan said.

Ryan said his administration is looking at other possibilities to serve the downtown neighborhood. One possibility is opening a food cooperative, he

said. A committee with the Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition is exploring the possibility of starting a food cooperative and wants to work closely with the mayor's office on this, said David Currie, vice chairman of the group.

At this point, however, no plan is in place for a cooperative, Ryan said.



GEORGE BASLER / Staff Photo

Susan McAnanama expresses anger at the closing of the Giant Market. She called it "a slap in the face." ([Buy this photo](#))

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"Do Teeth Whiteners Work?"

Republican Mayoral candidate Rich David, who was at the press conference, said the mayor should form a bi-partisan group of residents and business owners to work with Weis Markets or work to find another tenant.

Ryan said: "I'm not going to lie or pander to people," by saying a grocery store will ever reopen at 56 Main St.

We reviewed the top 6 teeth whiteners. See 2009's "Shocking" winner.

www.top-teeth-whitening-reviews.com

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TwilightJourney wrote:

Replying to BinghamtonBest:

Replying to FriendBinghamton:

He did NOT get results on the Northside in finding a grocery store for the folks on that side of town.

During the floods and the shootings at the immigrant place he LACKED leadership and compassion.

His luck with this store thing doesn't look good.

Ryan is a USELESS Mayor.

That is very true. Ryan is a dumb man and a Worthless Mayor.

Guess you have not been paying attention and hearing just what you want to hear.

There Is No Grocery Store Going In On The NORTH SIDE For Sure.

The \$ 150,000.00 GRANT was for a STUDY - the same one done several years ago. END RESULTS will be the same and posted after the elections, just like last election --BIGGEST SMOKE SCREEN EVER.

The area is sitting on the old city dump. NO GROCERY STORE.
8/17/2009 10:16:27 AM

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daver40 wrote:

Replying to WordsWarriorNY:

Replying to qwerty38:

Replying to FriendBinghamton:

I have to give Ryan credit for trying to help. He did get results on the Northside in finding a grocery store for the folks on that side of town.

Either way it is so nice to live in a place where the mayor cares about everyone. During the floods and the shootings at the immigrant place he showed leadership and compassion.

I wish him luck with this store thing but it doesn't look good.

Ryan is a good Mayor.

Absolutely.

I agree 100%

Ryan is the worst mayor Binghamton has ever had. He and his "Citizen Action" group are draining what's left of the life blood of the city. If it wasn't for the fast approaching constitutional tax limit, the city would already be dead.

8/16/2009 12:26:02 AM

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daver40 wrote:

Replying to BestDays:

Replying to Tommydoc:

When it comes to the poor,rich people like Akel could give a damn!

That is an inaccurate and mean statement. Giant Market and the Akel family have donated hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years. They have sponsored so many events that have benefited the community and those less fortunate. Many "rich people like the Akels" do care about the less fortunate.

I agree. I have been involved in several charity events where the Akels have donated generously.

8/16/2009 12:17:30 AM

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BestDays wrote:

Replying to Tommydoc:

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8/15/2009 6:34:05 PM

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