

The Metuchen Times



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Two Dollars

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Report from the Berlin Film Festival
Meet Zeus!



Opening Soon:

Metuchen's downtown will soon become home to a number of new businesses—including a steakhouse and a ceramics shop. According to Dawn Mackey, the executive director of the Metuchen Downtown Alliance, such new businesses have proven vital to making Metuchen's business district so dynamic and desirable.

•Duke's Steakhouse, an upscale eatery, will be opening this spring at 413 Main St., the former home of Mariachi Restaurant. Chef and owner, Duke Estime, explains: "Metuchen does not have a steakhouse, and we are going to completely revamp the inside. It's going to be very sleek and contemporary." Mackey added, "It will also be BYOB and I think people are going to love being able to

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The Metuchen Times

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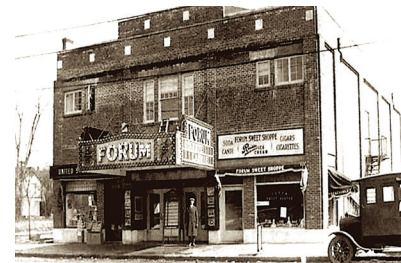
At a recent Council meeting, longtime Borough Planner Jim Constantine and DEVCO CEO Chris Paladino shared important updates on revitalizing the Forum Theatre.

Phase 1:

- Reconstruct the Forum Theatre into a flexible state-of-the-art performance space.
- Acquire the former gas station site next to the Forum for additional arts-related uses.
- Secure the remaining funding needed to build the Forum while creating a sustainable revenue source for its long-term success by permitting the development of The Residences at the Forum, these will be new apartments and will include a Boro-owned parking garage on the Halsey Street lot. These residential units will include a 20% set-aside for affordable housing for adults with disabilities and veterans' preference.

Phase 2:

- Transform the gas station property into The Spot!: designed to resemble the old service station that stood on this property for generations. It will feature food and beverage venues, studio/gallery spaces, and maker-spaces.



The Boro of Metuchen took a necessary step towards acquiring the former gas station property on the corner of Main Street and Amboy Avenue by filing a legal action against the property's owner. This property, abandoned since 2016, has fallen into disrepair and suffers from soil and groundwater contamination. Its strategic location, adjacent to the Forum Theatre, makes it a critical piece in plans to develop an Arts District. Despite years of Boro attempts to negotiate with the property owner in good faith, the owner has insisted on unreasonable terms. With no other viable options, the Boro has initiated condemnation proceedings. This action will allow the Boro to acquire the property at fair market value, factoring in the environmental cleanup costs at the expense of the property owner.

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