

"Good locations, bad corporations," Mayor Walker speaks regarding recent store closing

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
January 8 2018 10:30 AM



ALTON - Directly adjacent to [another recently-defunct storefront](#), yet another business closed in the Alton Square Mall.

Vitamin World closed sometime last week, and that closure was brought to the attention to Riverbender.com Thursday. Alton Mayor Brant Walker said Friday afternoon the

closure was due to a corporate bankruptcy issue causing Vitamin World to close several locations - Alton being among them. Walker said the store in the Alton Square Mall was not a failure, adding many stores in the building are profitable for their corporate offices.

"This is a case of good business, but a bad corporation," Walker said. "Most of the stores in the mall are making profits."

As in previous interviews with Walker regarding the Alton Square Mall, Walker said he was optimistic in the coming multi-million dollar investment coming this year from the mall's ownership, the Georgia-based Hull Group.

That work, [which was revealed in March 2017](#), has begun in earnest with the demolition of the Macy's building, which began in the waning months of 2017. Once completed, that area where the building once stood will be seeded by grass and become as much as 30 acres of "prime real estate" facing Homer Adams Parkway.

In the coming months, Hull Group will invest in interior redesigns within the mall, including utilizing the second floor for "unconventional retail" as well as big box establishments, while leaving small storefronts on the lower level.

Those plans also made room for a movie theater, in which several Altonians have expressed increasing interest since the 2016-17 mayoral races and upcoming demolition of the former Alton Cine.

Calls to Vitamin World's corporate lines were not returned at this time.

In previous interviews with Riverbender.com, Walker said the remaining mall properties, which include: Game Stop, Spencer's, Maurice's, JC Penny's, Claire's, Ross Dress for Less, the Cookie Factory, [which expanded](#), a branch of the Hayner Public Library, GNC, Payless Shoes, Finish Line and the [newly-reopened Hallmark Store](#), were under long-term lease agreements, which Walker said had just begun or were in the middle of their times.