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Piazza seeks to build new auto mall near I-95



Jacob Owens August 3, 2023

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Piazza Auto Group, which owns three luxury dealerships in Delaware, including this one in Newark, has filed plans to build a new auto mall off I-95. | DBT PHOTO BY JACOB OWENS

CHRISTIANA – The **Piazza Auto Group**, a major regional vehicle dealer with three luxury brand dealerships already in Delaware, has plans to develop a new auto mall near the Route 273 and Interstate 95 interchange.

The property, most recently planned to be an industrial warehouse, was acquired in May by a Piazza Auto subsidiary for more than \$32 million, marking the second largest property sale statewide this year, according to Delaware Business Times records.



Piazza Auto Group filed these plans for a more than 40-acre parcel off Eagle Run Road in Christiana. | PHOTO COURTESY OF NCC

Plans filed last week with New Castle County show three potential dealership locations aligned in a row with five rental or service locations as well. It's unclear whether Piazza may develop new dealerships or consolidate its existing Mercedes-Benz, Land Rover and Porsche dealerships that currently stretch from the Wilmington suburbs to [Newark](#).

In more than a dozen other dealerships in the Philadelphia suburbs, Piazza has relationships with companies like Honda, Acura, Hyundai, Mazda, Volkswagen and Subaru.

The company has not returned email and phone call requests for comments regarding the property over previous weeks.

The 45-acre property at 600 Eagle Run Road across from Delmarva Power's headquarters off Route 273 was last slated for development as two nearly 300,000-square-foot warehouses by New York-based industrial developer Kimco Realty in a project known as Promenade at Christiana. The firm acquired the site back in 2014 for \$13.3 million from Sears & Roebuck, which had once had a scratch-and-dent sales warehouse on the property.

The land that rings Eagle Run Road, connecting Routes 273 and 7, had long been planned for retail development to complement the Christiana Mall, but they never came to fruition after the Great Recession.

Now a 43-acre parcel just to the northeast of the Piazza parcel is still working its way through the county planning process toward development of a 442,000-square-foot warehouse by Pennsylvania-based Equus Development.

Founded in the 1960s by Vincent Piazza Sr., the father of **baseball Hall of Fame catcher Mike Piazza**, the Piazza Auto Group has grown from its Norristown, Pa., roots to one of the largest auto groups in the Delaware Valley. Today, Vincent's sons Tony and Daniel Piazza run the auto group.

The advancement of the auto mall project in Christiana also leaves unanswered questions about what Piazza may do with the former 7-Day Farmers Market property on Lancaster

Pike that it acquired for \$8 million in January. The 4.5-acre property sits adjacent to Piazza's current Mercedes-Benz of Wilmington dealership, but so far the company has not put forth any plans for the land.



Piazza Auto Group also owns this Land Rover dealership on Kirkwood Highway, although it's unclear if it may move under the new plan. | DBT PHOTO BY JACOB OWENS