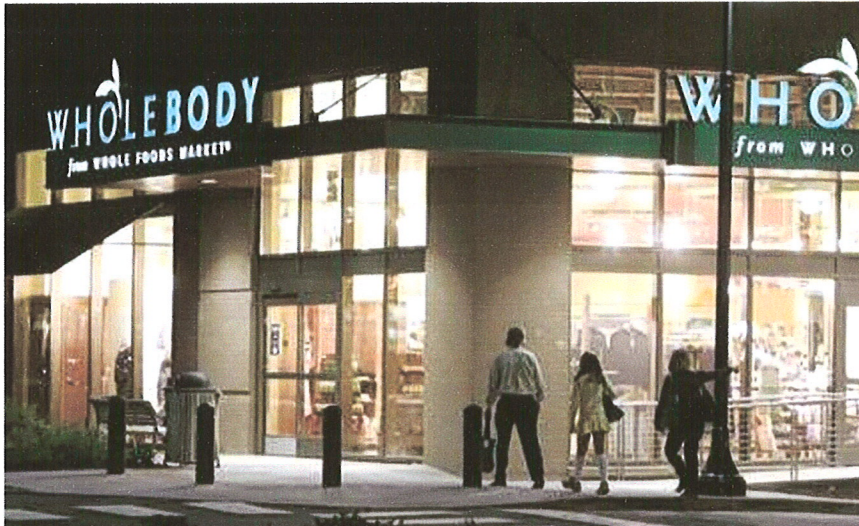


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Outdoor Hill Center opens as holiday season heats up *Cooler temperatures, effect on Mall at Green Hills not expected to be dramatic*

By Danica Wright Booth



Shoppers stroll past the WholeBody store at the Hill Center (SHELLEY MAYS/THE TENNESSEAN)

More stores have opened their doors at the Hill Center in Green Hills just in time for the holiday season.

The grand opening of locally owned Posh will be Friday, Nov. 9, and Johnston & Murphy's celebrations will be Monday, Nov. 12.

Jake's House opened with owners (and brothers) of the Life is Good line coming to town last Friday, to share in the celebrations.

The much talked about Whole Foods kicked off the last week in October with tours of the store before opening its doors to customers last Thursday, the same day the founders of Mitchell Gold & Bob Williams were in town to welcome customers into the latest store under their names.

With all the celebration, owners and shoppers are not concerned about the effects of the coming winter on shoppers.

Many think customers will dress warmly and head out to the outdoor lifestyle center anyway.

"I think that's probably the answer," said Jimmy Granberry of H.G. Hill Realty. "I think the only effect cold weather will have is maybe a little on outdoor dining. People were sitting out there. You see the drop off in the lifestyle centers where it's truly bitterly cold, but not here. I don't really see unless it's a subzero windy, windy day."

Neither the snow nor the rain . . .

Juliana Snowden, a teacher at The Covenant School, was out shopping with her mother on a rather chilly Thursday afternoon.

She and her mother decided 40s may be a little cold to come, but then, casting her eyes at Anthropologie, Snowden changed her mind.

"You know, if it was snowing, I'd probably come," she said jokingly.

"People get out and go. I don't think weather's a big deterrent," Granberry said. "They just dress differently. Look at the Pancake Pantry. You see them waiting on a Saturday morning in rain."

Mall expects more customers

And the manager of the Mall at Green Hills, Hank Woerner, hopes that perhaps those customers who shop at the Hill Center will then warm up in the mall.

"I would say in general I think the Hill Center actually helps us," Woerner said. "It does bring more customers to the Green Hills area, because the Hill Center does have some pretty unique stores that the mall prides itself on getting also, so that if you're living in Cool Springs or Franklin, this is the only place to go for that, and it kind of keeps these folks coming up here."

With specialty, designer shops such as Tiffany & Co., Louis Vuitton and Sephora, Woerner feels customers will continue to frequent the mall seeking out the unusual products offered there, and the Hill Center will simply draw more of that type of clientele to Green Hills.

"I'd much rather have them so close to us. If it had been built in Cool Springs, it would be a different story," Woerner said. "It seems like their leasing strategy and ours complement one another," he said. "What we're going after is kind of the same demographic, and therefore, their customer and our customer is going to be the same. We do complement one another."