

Decades Old Brooklyn Business Announces February Closure

BY: Brandon Sapienza

For nearly 44 years, Costello's Ace Home Center has been serving the Dyker Heights community as a convenient spot for all hardware needs. In the beginning of January, store owners announced that the location would be closing at the end of February to the dismay of many residents.

Costello's was formerly known as Polestein's before Ace Hardware purchased the location in 2018 and made substantial renovations in the process. Nonetheless, the store remained a fixture on 13th Avenue, the main street of the small Brooklyn neighborhood.

Like any hardware store, they sold tools, paint and everything in between.

During the holidays, Costello's was best known for lighting up 13th Avenue with a wide-array of holiday themed lights and lawn decorations for sale, going in theme with the rest of the famous Christmastime neighborhood.

"I can't really get into the details of why we're closing," said the store co-manager who wanted to only be referred to as JR. "There's too much red tape and possible legal ramifications if I speak to anyone about it, so all I can say is we're closing and that's that."

With heavy liquidation discounts now in place, a store once filled with dozens of rows of products are now barren with little left on the once occupied shelves. This only comes just less than a month after local residents received a postcard in the mail informing them that Costello's would be closing permanently.

Loyal customers are now faced with a dilemma about where to conveniently get products they need for their home in a timely manner as the nearest hardware store is in Coney Island, just over three miles away from Dyker Heights.

"Unfortunately I'll have to go to Home Depot for some items," said Angela Pizzino. "But I'll most likely order most of my stuff from Amazon, and I'll have to find a local paint store as well for my painting needs."



Costello's total space occupies four buildings, and with the closing of the store, 13th Avenue will now have eight unoccupied storefronts, all within a radius of just three blocks.

"The closing of Costello's Ace Hardware is definitely a loss to 13 Ave and to the Dyker Heights community," said Fran Vella-Marrone, President of the Dyker Heights Civic Association.

"My hope is that the location will not remain vacant and that some other establishment will fill the site quickly. Empty storefronts are not good for the avenue or the community."

Residents aren't too happy about this either and attribute the decline in businesses on greedy landlords across the neighborhood.

"The rents are way too high," said Margaret Defina. "Property taxes, heat, insurance, and repairs are high too. Landlords are waiting for chain store tenants who have the bucks."

With the loss of Costello's, 13th Avenue has very few stores for current residents to patronize, and because of this, the neighborhood itself is changing according to some.

"Dyker is just not what it used to be anymore," said lifelong Dyker Heights resident Matthew Sypa. "It was always away from it all, but now there's just nothing and it's ridiculous and sad. All we have here is nail salons and 99 cent stores. I don't know what the incentive is for people to stick around here instead of move."

"This closure says a few things, mainly that the neighborhood is changing and so are business models," added Pizzino. "Costello's, although convenient, is a bit pricey for some items. Most business or property owners are selling out for the almighty dollar!"

Regarding the impact of the store closure, local government officials including Councilmember Justin Brannan and State Senator Andrew Gounardes did not respond for comment.

While the shutdown of Costello's leaves Dyker Heights residents questioning the future of the neighborhood, the overwhelming feeling around the area remains that of sadness for the loss of the local pillar.

"It's very sad this store is closing," Pizzino said. "My mom loves the store, and so do I, and my neighbors as well. Were they a bit expensive? Yes, but when you broke your toilet bowl seat or something and needed a new one as soon as possible, Costello's always had it."