

■ **Baseball:** Yankees win, 8-6, C-1 ■ **Lifestyle:** Foods that may prevent cancer, C-5

Wednesday
September 10, 1997

The Courier-News

Somerset
County
Edition

Bridgewater • (908) 722-8800

A Gannett newspaper serving Central Jersey

35 cents



Source: Somerset County

C-N Graphic Gary Stelzer

Bridgewater Promenade

Proposed shopping area
near site of proposed stadium.

By DAVID BEHREND
Courier-News Staff Writer

BRIDGEWATER — The filing of plans for a shopping center at the former American Cyanamid property marks the first step in a chain reaction that could significantly alter the township's southeast corner.

Developer William Krame's proposed 700,000-square-foot complex — dubbed Bridgewater Promenade — would put 12 buildings and more than 3,600 parking spaces on about 147 acres bounded by Interstate 287, Route 28, Foothill Road and Main Street.

Developer sees a 'Promenade' in 2 years

Plans for the mostly retail complex were filed Friday with the county and township.

"It looks like all the pieces now are coming together," Mayor James Dowden said. "If and when he gets approval, all the dominoes start to fall."

The retail center could lead to more than 35 road projects, the acquisition of hundreds of acres of land by the township and construction of a \$14.5 million baseball stadium adjacent to it.

Krame has a contract to buy land

for the shopping center from American Home Products, the company that purchased American Cyanamid. Pending the Bridgewater Planning Board's approval of the project, American Home would donate about 450 acres to the township. Township officials then would give the land to Somerset County for a proposed \$14.5 million baseball stadium.

The Planning Board probably will vote on the proposal in mid-November, after a required 45-day waiting period, Dowden said.

"The question is: Can it be done in

one hearing?" he said. "I hope so."

Krame said his goal is to have construction complete by summer 1999.

The complex would house large, cost-conscious retailers rather than upscale shops, Krame said.

"The Bridgewater Commons does a very good job of meeting the needs of the community for those types of retailers," Krame said. "We're looking to fill a niche. We're not looking to compete with the Commons."

The company does not have commitments from tenants yet, Krame said.

The plans include \$2.4 million in traffic changes to 38 intersections and roads. Changes, to be paid for mostly by Krame, cover major construction to pavement re-striping. The road projects include widening the intersection of Finderne Avenue and Main Street to provide left- and right-turning lanes, and installing traffic signals at the Route 28 ramp from southbound I-287.

"We'll do whatever we have to do to mitigate any problems we may cause," Krame said.

Traffic studies included in the plans estimate motorists would make about 23,000 round trips to the center on

□ See COMPLEX on Page A-7

COMPLEX

□ Continued from Page A-1

weekdays and more than 29,000 trips on Saturdays. About 43 percent would come to the center from I-287 via the Route 28 interchange. A new road through the shopping center would be called Promenade Boulevard.

Finderne residents want a direct access route between I-287 and the stadium and shopping center.

Plans also call for the demolition of three Midland Avenue houses on the property's western side.

Homeowner Marilyn Seibert, whose house would be destroyed, signed papers Tuesday to sell his house.

Construction of the center would return the once-lucrative property to productive use and put more tax dollars in the township's coffers, Council President Robert E. Albano said.

In the 1970s American Cyanamid's property "was in fact paying 25 percent of the Bridgewater real-estate tax," Albano said. "Now it represents close to 0 percent ..."

The shopping center is not tied directly to the stadium plan, Krame said, but the two sites could fuel each other.

Courier-News Staff Writer Larry Higgs contributed to this article.