

Do It Center begins remodel of old car dealership in SLT

By Kathryn Reed

Work has begun on transforming the old South Shore Motors building into a Do It Center.

The locally controversial chain store based in Southern California is expected to open this summer – a year later than it had wanted to. Disagreements between store owners, South Lake Tahoe officials and nearby businesses led to months of back-and-forth arguments and petitions to ban the store from opening.



Shane Guzman works on the exterior of the Do It Center this week.

Photos/Kathryn Reed

The City Council finally ruled that a general merchandise store could go in at the Lake Tahoe Boulevard location. Ace Hardware, which is kitty corner to the new store, is considered general merchandise.

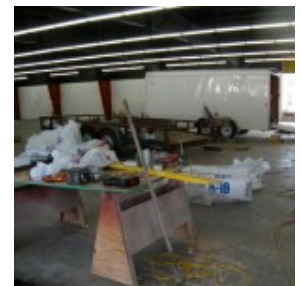
It was another 3-2 vote last fall to deny the last appeal.

Only this time it was Councilmen Bill Crawford and Bruce Grego in the minority.

Scotty's Hardware and Meeks Lumber were vocal that Do It Center would bring unfair competition to their respective businesses as well as other construction/home improvement related stores in the area.

The one thing Do It Center can't sell as a general merchandise store is lumber. This means Meeks Lumber continues to have a monopoly on that product.

The irony is John Carricaburu, the general contractor from Gardnerville hired to remodel the building, is going to Meeks for his lumber needs.



It's a construction zone inside the old South Shore Motors building.

Carricaburu this week told *Lake Tahoe News* that Do It Center officials want to use as many local workers as he can hire and told him to buy local when possible. Axelson Irons Shop Welding will be doing work and South Shore Glass has a contract.

Mike Mauck, senior vice president and general manager for Do It Center, had little to say when contacted by *Lake Tahoe News*. He wouldn't confirm the projected opening month of July.

Work on the exterior will begin May 1 when the building season begins in the Lake Tahoe Basin per Tahoe Regional Planning Agency regulations. The crack-filled asphalt parking area extends to the Cardinale auto dealer building.



John Carricaburu shows what the building will look like.

Carricaburu said it's possible all the parking lot work the city wants done could cost \$100,000. He didn't have an estimate for how much money will be spend on getting the interior and exterior of the building suitable and looking more appealing.

On the roof, a 20-foot-by-20-foot tower will be built for the store's sign.