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Press Release

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[Metro-North](#)

IMMEDIATE

Hastings Station Gets New Cafe

Hastings Station, a century old, classical brick building, is being leased to long-time Rivertowns resident, Avi Schwartz, who plans to open a cafe.

The waiting room, with its oak benches and wainscoting, iron chandelier and marble baseboards will remain open to the public under the terms of the 10-year lease.

Schwartz of Dobbs Ferry plans a menu that will revolve around "the perfect cup of coffee." The Hastings Station Cafe will serve cappuccino, espresso and other coffees made from beans ground and roasted at a specialty New England roaster, freshly baked breads and pastries, salads and sandwiches. He also plans to operate a small newsstand and to maintain the honor-system book rack that is under the auspices of the Hastings Public Library.

Opening a cafe "has been a life dream of mine, fueled by a passion for great coffee and a love of good, simple food," said Schwartz, an engineer, who has lived in Dobbs Ferry for a decade and in Ardsley before that. "I'm going to have a lot of fun."

The Hasting Station Cafe will occupy the entire 1,600-square foot main floor as well as outdoor seating on the plaza in front of the building.

Metro-North Railroad's 1,100 daily customers will have use of the waiting area and restrooms when the cafe is open. The tenant is required to open the building weekdays from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. Currently the building is open from 6:10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. weekdays only.

In addition, the tenant plans to open on weekends and hopes to cater to the village as well as commuters.

Tuesday September 18 was the last day of operation for the ticket window. Since the introduction of user-friendly ticket vending machines in 2002 and 2003, sales at the window have dropped dramatically to just 1,300 a month. In contrast, the two TVMs at Hastings sell 7,000 tickets a month.

Once the building is empty, Metro-North intends to remove asbestos from old pipes and strip lead paint, at an estimated cost of \$75,000. The abatement should take about two weeks.

Then the tenant plans to make about \$100,000 in improvements to the building including upgrades to bathrooms, increased seating, upgrading the electrical system, installing a new heating, ventilation and air conditioning system. The build-out is subject to review and approval of Metro-North.

Since the building is eligible for inclusion in the State and National Register of Historic Places, the improvements also will be subject to the review and approval of the Office of Parks and Recreations NYS Historic Preservation Office.

The lease will improve customer amenities, increase the hours the waiting room is open to the public as well as shift utility and maintenance costs to the tenant thereby reducing railroad operating costs. The lease will provide rental income to the railroad and further enliven downtown. The cafe is expected to open in about three months.

Included in the lease are two parking spaces on the north side of the building for the cafe owner and its employees.

Hastings also is in the midst of an extensive, multi-million dollar upgrade with new, relocated platforms, canopies, staircases, elevators, shelters, lighting, benches, landscaping and fencing. The outbound platform is complete and the inbound platform will be complete by the end of the year.

At the village's request, the inbound platform was moved southward to be better aligned with the outbound platform and is one of the key elements of the Village's Local Waterfront Redevelopment Plan.