



Store Is Part of Township's Past; Looking to the Future

LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP (January 11, 2017) - For over 40 years, Salter's has been a familiar business name in Lower Providence Township. When the current owner of Salter's Fireplace, Patio, & Grill store in the Colonial Shopping Center was in need of some elbow room, he knew he'd look no further than Lower Providence. Township officials were eager to aid his search. Together they found a home for an operations center for the business just a block from the original store.

The move will keep a valued destination shop in Lower Providence and redevelop a tired property. In March, the operations center – vehicles, technicians, installers and warehousing - will move into the Culligan facility just down the road on Ridge Pike. The showroom will remain at its current location, getting a facelift as well as an additional 3,000 sq. ft. of space. In time, a two-story center will provide 18,000 sq. ft. of warehouse, training facility and operations center space at the Culligan site.

Reflecting on the search, owner Jay Stong says, "There's been great communication from the Township." He adds that the help and responsiveness of everyone from supervisors to staff made it clear that he had the Township's support. Carmen Italia, consultant to the Township's Business Development Committee, was key to getting all the pieces to fall into place. "Carmen has been phenomenal – it's a tremendous asset bringing him into the Township," says Stong.

Back in 2000, Stong was approached by the Salter family offer to buy the business. While he had been running their shop since 1993, the timing was far from perfect, but Stong couldn't refuse. He credits the family and Barry Salter in particular, with getting him through the purchase process. Success came quickly for the new owner and the business, which specializes in custom fireplace products, grills and furniture for outdoor living spaces, continued to grow, expanding from six to 23 employees. "It's not the same mom and pop business as when we bought it," Stong says and emphasizes that unlike most of his competitors, he employs full-time, factory-trained technicians. The business does residential work and, increasingly, commercial design and installations throughout the region.

Location has played a part in the success. The business serves a five-county area and Lower Providence, Stong says, is a really great location. "We're a destination shop and draw new people to the area," he adds. Township officials are pleased that they were able to meet the needs of a business with such deep roots in Lower Providence. They couldn't find a better example of a business to represent the Township's motto - "Plant Roots, Grow Futures."

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