

Cooper House to host gelato maker, jeans shop

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Cooper House

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Downtown is about to get an ice cream headache.

A local company has firm plans to open up a gelato emporium in the new Cooper House at 110 Cooper St. Rumors abound that a second, chain-style ice cream shop will set up shop on another block downtown.

Various real estate agents and city officials said there have been inquiries but that nothing was set in stone.

Janette Sammartino, who works for Cooper House owner Jay Paul, said a local company, GelatoMania, will open in early to mid-summer. Sammartino

According to the city Redevelopment Agency, the ice cream and jeans shops will take over spaces that have been empty since the building opened up in 1999.

declined to identify the owners of the new business.

While 3,000 feet might seem like a lot of space to dish out Italian ice cream, the gelato also will be made there. Sammartino said the owners don't take their gelato craftsmanship lightly.

"One of the partners is a gentleman from Italy who is bringing his father's secret gelato recipe into the venture," she said.

The shop will also serve sandwiches.

Another new Cooper House tenant will be the Uptown Jeans Company, which

will take over another 3,751 square feet around the same time.

According to the city Redevelopment Agency, the ice cream and jeans shops will take over spaces that have been empty since the building opened up in 1999.

The 100,000-square-foot downtown building replaced the original brick Cooper House, demolished after the 1989 Loma Prieta quake. Current tenants include the O'Neill surf shop, Annieglass and Light-Surf Technology.

The new clients will fill major retail

holes, though there is still 25,000 square feet of available office space, and another remaining 1,800 feet of retail space in the Cooper House, according to the city Redevelopment Agency Web site.

The Redevelopment Agency also said a major retail tenant is close to signing a lease on the vacant Warehouse records and entertainment space, but would not reveal the company's name.

City Redevelopment Director Ceil Cirillo said the ice cream shops — assuming there will be two — will help push the downtown recovery forward by bringing more families with young children downtown.

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