

Sausage lovers needn't fear, Gene's is here

Old World deli to replace Meyer's in Andersonville

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Sausage lovers who've been missing Lincoln Square's Delicatessen Meyer since it closed in March are getting a bigger and better Old World deli.

"There's big movement to go back to fresh made products with no preservatives, even with national brands."

Derek Luszc

Gene's Sausage Shop, famous for its 110-foot deli counter in the Belmont-Cragin neighborhood, has bought the Meyer property and is tentatively scheduled to open its second location in time for the holidays. The Luszc family, who has operated its Northwest Side deli for 36 years, will rename the shop Gene's but are looking into ways to incorporate the Deli Meyer name.

"We're still working out the legalities. Deli Meyer had a great name in the neighborhood and we'd like to continue it, but we don't know to what degree we can do that," said Derek Luszc.

Luszc said that his family is pushing forward to be open for the holidays, depending on the construction timeline.

"We're still in the preliminary design stages, and will pursue permitting and licensing when the designs are ready," he said.



The new owners of Meyer Deli, Derek Luszc (left) and his sister Yolanda Luszc, will re-open the store to be located at 4750 N. Lincoln Ave. — Keith Hale/Sun-Times

The new store to be located at 4750 N. Lincoln Ave. will feature an 80-foot long deli counter that will carry a wide assortment of lunch meats, cheeses, salads, homemade prepared foods, fresh meats and an all-inclusive line of European sausages.

"Chicago is a big melting pot of many different ethnicities and we like to open ourselves to everybody," Luszc said.

To meet the needs of the growing organic food market, Gene's will also expand its line of organic and Amish products that include naturally made egg noodles, cheese and butters.

"There's big movement to go back to fresh made products with no preservatives, even with national brands," Luszc said.

When Meyer's closed, Alderman Gene Schuler, 47th, said he was "besieged by developers that wanted to knock it down. Other people wanted to put in restaurants." But residents, by and large, told Schuler they wanted to save the deli.

The Luszc family were already scouting out Lincoln Square for a second store when the chance to buy the property arose. Once

Gene's opens for business, the Luszc family promise to be actively involved in business and community events.

"Meyer's was a great store and we hope that we can continue the tradition over there and make it better than before, if that's possible, and I'm sure it is," Luszc said.

—With reporting by Sun-Times Media Group