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### Frozen yogurt shop will replace Segway company

#### Tour company leaves, unhappy; second Segway business will return in spring

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SALEM — The retail space at the corner of Lafayette and New Derby streets is trading Segways for frozen yogurt.

An Orange Leaf Frozen Yogurt franchise will begin renovation at 76 Lafayette St. this month, with a goal of opening in early March.

Salem Seggliders, a Segway tour company that rented the space for the summer and fall, has closed for the season.

Al Danley, public relations representative for Salem Seggliders, said the company is in discussions with different landlords in Salem about possibly returning next year in another location.

Andover resident Dave Pierre opened his first Orange Leaf franchise in his hometown over the summer. With the courthouse, Salem State University and waterfront close by, the Lafayette Street location is a good fit for the Oklahoma City-based yogurt franchise, he said.

"We like the town, we like being surrounded by restaurants," said Pierre, a native of South Africa. "I have for years been coming to Salem. I just love the town."

The yogurt at Orange Leaf locations is self-serve, allowing customers to mix flavors and customize their own serving. In addition to the Salem shop, Pierre plans to open a third location in Newburyport.

The building is managed by RCG properties, and Orange Leaf's new space is roughly 2,700 square feet, said Alex Schnip, who manages RCG's Salem portfolio.

"(Orange Leaf) is going to be a great addition for that corner," Schnip said. "(Salem Seggliders) were a good tenant, (but) we were looking for someone that will be there long-term."

Previously, the space had been a West Coast Video.

Salem Seggliders is operated by Florida-based Orlando Gliders Inc., which also has a thriving tour business in Boston. Segways are two-wheeled, battery-powered personal transportation vehicles.

Overall, the 2011 season went well in Salem, Danley said, but the company left, hurt by what he called "political-driven issues."

Salem Seggliders marketed a combination package, where people staying in Boston hotels could take the Salem ferry to Salem for a Segway or electric bike tour. Without warning, the ferry cut its schedule to only weekends in mid-September, Danley said.

The company had already booked weekday tours in advance and had to call the clients back to refund or reschedule, he said.

Also, the company had hoped to set up operation right at the ferry landing, catering to people arriving on the boat. It was issued a business certificate in January but was told in March it wouldn't be allowed to operate at the city-owned landing, Danley said.

Salem Seggliders was one of two companies that ran Segway tours in Salem this year. The other, Witch City Segway, operates out of a warehouse on Derby Street behind Brother's Deli.

Last year, Salem adopted an ordinance laying out rules — no more than six Segways on one trip — and routes the tour operators can follow.

While Salem Seggliders felt supported by the local Chamber of Commerce, that was not the case with city government and Destination Salem, the city's tourism office, Danley said.

"We would love to come back to Salem, but what we need as a company is support from Destination Salem and new economic programs," he said. "What's very clear is that it seems like a very political issue. Even though they're toting the flag of creating economic development, they're not doing that."

Destination Salem Director Kate Fox said her organization was not involved in the business certificate issued to Salem Seggliders or the ferry's schedule cutback.

Salem Seggliders, unlike Witch City Segway, did not advertise or do industry events with Destination Salem.

"We had very little interaction with (Salem Seggliders)," Fox said. "We're a collaborative organization. I'm sorry if (Danley) has a negative impression, but it wasn't intentional. We would have loved to work with him more."

Witch City Segway, the other Segway tour company in Salem, reported a successful first season in Salem and said it will reopen at its same location on Derby Street in the spring, possibly April 1.

"For our first season, we were very happy with it," said Jeff Langone, co-owner of Witch City Segway. "We had a great season. ... We had a good amount of people that came into Salem just for the Segways."

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