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MONDAY, JULY 14, 2025 | METROWESTDAILYNEWS.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Caroline Bunnell
The MetroWest Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Ireland company selected by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to rebuild and operate 18 highway service plazas throughout the state says it's ready to get to work.

Dublin-based Applegreen said it's investing \$750 million to rebuild nine plazas and renovate the other nine. The

work is expected to be completed over a three-year period (2026-28). Construction on the first six sites will begin Jan. 1.

"We design, we build, and then we operate these plazas," Applegreen co-founder and Chairman Bob Etchingham said. "We have relationships with all the major food brands. We focus (on that) pretty much exclusively — 95% of our revenue (comes) from food and beverage and travel plazas. That is what we do."

No two consecutive plazas will be closed at the same time, he said.

"We're committed to building world-class travel plazas in the state of Massachusetts," Etchingham continued. "We see these as locations where an impression is formed by visitors of the state, and

they need to be right up there with the very best that is available.”

Applegreen owns more than 400 sites in the United States, United Kingdom and Ireland. The company has nine state contracts in the United States and more than 700 branded food and beverage outlets across global brands.

Waltham company urges MassDOT to reconsider decision

MassDOT's awarding of the contract to Applegreen, which followed an 18-month process and included five other bidders, did not come without criticism.

See PLAZAS, Page 2A



The Natick service plaza on the eastbound side of the Mass Pike (Interstate 90) is among those scheduled to be rebuilt as part of a \$750 million project by Dublin-based Applegreen.

ART ILLMAN/DAILY NEWS AND WICKED LOCAL

“We’re committed to building world-class travel plazas in the state of Massachusetts.”

Bob Etchingham
Applegreen co-founder and chairman

A group of people are enjoying a day in a park. On the left, two children wearing helmets are riding bicycles on a paved path. One child is in a red shirt and the other is in a grey shirt. In the center, a man wearing a red shirt and red shorts is standing and clapping. On the right, a man wearing a blue shirt, khaki pants, and a headband is sitting on a wooden bench, playing a guitar. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background features a large, ornate building with a clock tower, a tall monument, and lush green trees. A black lamppost stands near the path.

Street Performer Nancy, of Ashland, receives applause from young bicyclists on the Natick Common on July 8. Nancy was practicing for an open microphone night at the Morse Institute Library later that evening.

ART ILLMAN/DAILY NEWS AND WICKED LOCAL

**UMASS MEMORIAL
MEDICAL CENTER**

Regulators OK merger with Marlborough Hospital

Alison Kunitz
State House News Service

Public health regulators approved the merger of UMass Memorial Medical Center and Marlborough Hospital on July 9, with the licensing overhaul deepening an existing affiliation that's expected to improve patient care and reduce operating costs.

The UMass Memorial Health system encompasses UMMC, an academic medical center, and four community hospitals, including the 79-bed Marlborough Hospital. All hospitals in the system are licensed independently, and Marlborough Hospital is the smallest of the facilities, said Dennis Renaud, director of the Determination of Need program at the Department of Public Health.

The Public Health Council approved UMass Memorial Health's DoN application for a transfer of ownership, allowing Marlborough Hospital to become a licensed campus of UMMC. Marlborough Hospital, while formerly

See MERGER, Page 2A



Kevin Meehan
Owner

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