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Michael Kors to Open at World Financial Center

By SHARON EDELSON

NEW YORK — Michael Kors has signed a 1,700-square-foot lease at Brookfield Place, formerly known as The World Financial Center, a spokeswoman for the designer said Friday.

The store will be devoted to accessories, the spokeswoman added. “They want to make it a little jewel box,” said Edward Hogan, national director of retail leasing for Brookfield Place, which is undergoing a \$250 million renovation.

Kors last week said it will open its largest store in the world, a 17,000-square-foot flagship, in SoHo.

Brookfield Place’s retail property, which is slated to open in June 2014, will have a Fifth Avenue-like streetscape facing the 9/11 Memorial that will be several blocks long. The Westfield Group in May signed a deal with the Port Authority to develop, lease and operate 365,000 square feet of retail space at 4 World Trade Center and 3 World Trade Center, which is also under construction. Shopping is spread across three above-ground levels and two below.

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“They’re to some degree vying for the same tenants right now,” said Richard Hodos, executive vice president of CBRE. “Eventually, the dust will settle and some brands will go to Brookfield and some to Westfield. Both projects will ultimately be successful.”

Brookfield is hoping that the Kors deal sets the tone for the project. Hogan said, “There’s still strong interest from every national and international retailer in what opportunities are available in lower Manhattan. Retailers always want to find like brands and adjacencies with similar quality tenants.”

Lower Manhattan’s demographics have changed favorably since 9/11. “Before 9/11, there were 30,000 residents living south of Chambers Street,” Hogan said. “That’s doubled to 60,000 residents. The average household income at Battery Park City is \$140,000.”

“Michael Kors will be exposed to high-end residences and changing office demographics that are becoming more equally balanced between male and female,” said Stephen Stephanou, a principal at Crown Retail Services.

“A decade ago, stores at the World Trade Center were doing \$1,000 a square foot,” Hogan added. “Our stores will average \$1,900 a square foot.”