

DEVELOPMENT

'Green' houses start taking shape at Forbes Industrial Park

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Starting next week, residents will begin to see activity at the Forbes Industrial Park, where developers of the planned eco-loft community there will begin demolition of some of the older, smaller buildings. At the end of the year, Davis Design/Development Corporation officially purchased the 18-acre property and Blair Galinsky of Davis Design said phase one of the innova-

tive 225-unit project will be ready in about a year.

"We're working out there now, inside the buildings, doing a lot of cleanup," said Galinsky.

Galinsky added his team also is working on securing financing, completing architectural plans and working through some of the other paperwork for the project. But most importantly, they are focusing on creating a "sense of place" for the

development.

"[The development should become] a refuge, where people are not aware of what's going on in the outside world," Galinsky said. "It will be held together by historical buildings that connect us with the past. ... There could be a sign there saying you are someplace special, but you wouldn't need the sign to know that."

The "special" components to the project are what make it unique. The mill-style loft condominiums will be earth friendly and constructed of durable, natural, renewable materials. The development also will draw on revolutionary water and heating systems, and Davis Design is looking into reopening a closed commuter rail system adjacent to the property, encouraging its residents to drive smaller, more eco-conscience cars and giving owners access to a fleet of Smart cars that get 60 miles per gallon of gas.

To the city, this is exactly the type of development the administration is hoping to attract. City Manager Jay Ash is pinning the city's economic future on the prospect of new residential development, and he said the city chose Davis Design as its preferred developer for the Forbes project early on. The project, he said, is a great example of a development that will change the landscape of a currently mixed industrial and residential neighborhood.

"Gone will be the industrial presence that has caused trucks to rumble through the Mill Hill neighborhood for generations ..." Ash said. "Ten years from now, Forbes Industrial Park will be a faded memory, while Forbes Residential Landing will be a green community whose eco-lofts have caught the eye of the entire commonwealth."

Galinsky said working with Ash and the City of Chelsea has been a pleasure, and the positive working relationship has made it easier to achieve some of the design team's goals. "[Ash] is one of the best civic figures we've worked with in any town, any city," he said.

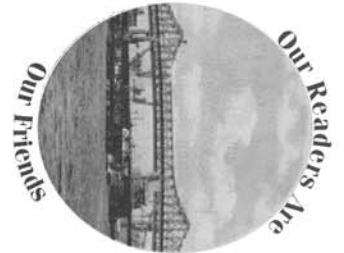
Galinsky added he has enjoyed getting to know some of the local residents. He said interest in the project seems to be high, and he's appreciated residents reaching out to ask questions and offer input. For example, the design team was recently schooled by historian Nadine Mironchuk in the Forbes Industrial Park's history - from the Revolutionary War Battle of Chelsea Creek to its part in printing paper during World War II. Galinsky sees big potential for the city.

"There's no doubt in my mind that Chelsea will explode in the next few years," he said.

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