

IN THE REGION/New Jersey

Developing a 'Final Frontier'

By ANTOINETTE MARTIN

EVEN in a tough real estate market, certain niches are considered evergreens for developers — and Hoboken rental property is clearly one. The latest evidence is a local builder's plans to erect a 113-unit rental tower on a vacant lot beside the light-rail tracks on the west side, starting work as soon as possible next year.

The builder, Lawrence Bijou, bought the parcel at Monroe and Ninth Streets last July from Tarragon Properties, which was in bankruptcy. It is in a redevelopment zone on the western edge of the city, an area that a city planner recently called "Hoboken's final frontier."

"We are very excited about rentals in that part of town," Mr. Bijou said.

His company, Bijou Properties, will build a nine-story tower to meet gold-level green-building standards, with features like a planted roof and solar-energy generators, he said. Two years ago in downtown Hoboken, Bijou built the Garden Street Lofts condominiums, which became the first mixed-use high-rise project in the state to be awarded gold certification from the United States Green Building Council under the LEED rating system.

The new building will also have a pool, a health club, a gym and a spa, Mr. Bijou said.

Another Hoboken developer, Dean Geibel of Metro Homes, whose Metro Stop condo project sits adjacent to the Bijou lot, at Jackson Street and Ninth, said he was thrilled to see a rental structure coming into the neighborhood at a time when "nobody" is building condos.

Mr. Geibel's project, which opened two years ago, is now about 75 percent sold, he said. He recently leased the 4,500-square-foot glassed-in ground floor space to a popular restaurant, the Melting Pot, which will move from its current riverfront site.

The new apartment building will help galvanize development of the former industrial area as a neighborhood, Mr. Geibel said.

Debate has persisted for several years about what the overall



AARON HOUSTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A CLIMATE FOR RENTALS

A lot along the light rail in western Hoboken, where a 113-unit rental is planned next to a condo.

redevelopment plan for the western edge of Hoboken should look like — how much residential, how much office space and green space. As the discussion has evolved, in planning meetings, public hearings and grass-roots gatherings, and in the face of economic woes burdening the building industry, developers have continued to press for opportunities to build residential rentals.

Only two weeks ago, the Ursa Development Group mounted a campaign — complete with newspaper advertisements and posters and public statements at community meetings — in favor of weighting the redevelopment plan toward residential construction as much as possible.

The Bijou lot has approvals for the 113 units; construction won't have to wait on finalization of the overall redevelopment plan. "That is a major reason why I wanted to pick up the property," Mr. Bijou said. "Because we are able to move ahead with it."

In light of concerns expressed by the city planner and community groups about the density of the plan, however, Mr. Bijou said he had asked a Hoboken architect, Dean Marchetto, to redesign the

project to scale it down and add green space.

In preliminary drawings, the new design has 9 stories instead of 12, as had been approved for Tarragon.

Between the Bijou building and the light-rail tracks at the end of Ninth Street, there would be a small public park. Also, the building is set back 20 feet from Ninth, to "widen the pedestrian approach to the light rail and the park," Mr. Marchetto said.

There would be shop space all along the street level on Ninth to create a retail arcade for light-rail passengers, the architect added. "The whole idea is transit-friendly design," he said.

Mr. Bijou said the design sought to reduce the need for parking, although there will be space for residents' cars behind the structure. Also, Mr. Bijou said, he plans to offer Zipcar service.

"This is a transit hub," he said, "and the beauty of it is that you can get anywhere without owning a car."

Mr. Geibel said many of the 2,000 or so passengers using the Metro Stop light-rail station next to his building every day actually

arrived by elevator, coming from atop the Palisades cliffs. A six-story lift built into the side of the cliff, with a glass-enclosed skywalk over the tracks, gives light-rail commuters easy access from the west, as well as from the immediate neighborhood, he said.

Both Mr. Geibel and Mr. Bijou also mentioned the opening last year of Hoboken's only film theater, the Clearview, at 14th and Grand Streets, as having helped draw traffic to the western edge of town. The theater was built by Tarragon before it lost its financial footing.

Also in the vicinity, Ironstate Development — a longtime powerhouse builder in Hoboken, formerly known as Applied Companies — has bought another vacant property, on Monroe Street. A spokesman for Ironstate said no development plans had taken shape for the property, which had figured in earlier plans to create an arts district.

But Mr. Geibel said he was heartened to see that Ironstate was gaining a stake in the neighborhood. "They are well-heeled builders, and we know they will put something substantial and high-quality there."

"Green Apple" Award



900 MONROE STREET HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY

OWNERS:

BIJOU PROPERTIES

ARCHITECT:

INTERCONTINENTAL DEVELOPERS, INC.

MECHANICAL ENGINEER:

MARCHETTO-HIGGINS-STIEVE, PC

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:

WSP GROUP

CONSTRUCTION MANAGER:

GACE CONSULTING ENGINEERS

CONCRETE CONTRACTOR:

TISHMAN CONSTRUCTION (AN AECOM COMPANY)

READY-MIX CONCRETE SUPPLIER:

COLLAVINO CORP.

CEMENT SUPPLIER:

EASTERN CONCRETE MATERIALS, INC.

FINE AGGREGATE:

LAFARGE NORTH AMERICA

COARSE AGGREGATE:

EASTERN CONCRETE MATERIALS, INC.

LIGHTWEIGHT AGGREGATE:

TILCON NEW YORK

ADMIXTURES:

NORTHEAST SOLITE CORP.

POZZOLAN SUPPLIER:

BASF ADMIXTURE SYSTEMS

FORMWORK SUPPLIER:

SEPARATION TECHNOLOGIES, LLC

DOKA USA, LTD.

Western edge development continues

'The Vine' opens with a public park, is steps from light rail

by Steven Rodas

Reporter Staff Writer

Jan 31, 2016 | 1219 views | 0  | 22  |  | 

DEVELOPMENT



[view slideshow \(5 images\)](#)

The opening of The Vine at 900 Monroe St. this past week serves as a significant step in realizing Hoboken's vision for its western edge. The new 11-story, 135-unit rental residence is nestled in a bustling commuter neighborhood adjacent to the city's Ninth Street Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Station.

There was a time in the 1990s that new residents tried to avoid the "presidential streets" on the westernmost side of Hoboken, but with development blooming in every part of the city, old housing and factories are being transformed into new neighborhoods.

Last July, Hoboken-based developer Bijou Properties opened the doors to Park + Garden at 1450 Garden St. connected by a 373-car parking garage. The 12-story residential mixed-use development's garage, referred to as an automated vehicle storage and retrieval system, consolidates a 10-story conventional parking garage into four stories.

Residents may also have noticed a large development at the corner of Willow Avenue alongside the 14th Street Viaduct, built close to the corner. That's the Advance Realty luxury residential development known as Willow14. The seven-story complex, which is slated for completion this year, will include 140 luxury apartments.

The high-end development will have a chain store at its ground floor, and sources say the store will be a Trader Joe's.

More transit and recreational opportunities may follow the development beginning to sprout on the northwest side of town

Bijou Properties got the go-ahead last year to construct a development at Willow Avenue and 15th Streets, which will replace a vacant single-story warehouse with 14,000 square feet of small office space, a retailer, and The Gravity Vault indoor rock climbing gym.

New services and restaurants are also rising. The Mile Square Theatre plans to open a performing arts center at 1400 Clinton St. in March.

The Vine

The Vine held a ribbon cutting for its grand opening this past Thursday, Jan. 28. Mayor Dawn Zimmer joined fellow municipal officials, union leaders and development principals in celebrating the opening of the building. In addition to the new residences, the building will feature 13,500 square feet of street-level retail space, partly occupied by a daycare center.

The developers have also built a 7,000 square foot public park abutting the property, which will open soon.

Intercontinental Real Estate Corporation and Bijou Properties headed the project.

"We are very pleased and excited to open the doors to 'Vine,' the newest luxury apartment development in the Hoboken neighborhood," said Peter Palandjian, chairman & CEO, Intercontinental Real Estate Corporation, in a statement. "We are fortunate to have partnered with Bijou Properties in this deal and look forward to more New Jersey development projects on behalf of Intercontinental's union and public pension partners, for whom we are grateful to work, seek to create investment returns and fair wage and benefit jobs."

Upscale one, two, and three-bedroom apartments will be available for immediate occupancy.

"We're delighted to introduce Vine to Hoboken and to see our collective vision for this new residential offering become a reality," said Larry Bijou, managing partner of Bijou Properties.

Developed by Hoboken-based architects Marchetto Stieve & Higgins, the building offers rental residences with energy-efficient features, including sustainable bamboo flooring, oversized windows, kitchens and baths with modern fixtures, granite countertops and modern cabinetry. The automated parking facility will have room for 135 cars.

"People from throughout the region are drawn to live in Hoboken, and what drives us as a company is taking a broader approach to neighborhood development by creating properties and complementary amenities and services that promote a healthy, sustainable, transit-oriented -lifestyle that benefit our residents and the community at large," said Bijou.

At the ribbon-cutting, Zimmer said she wants The Vine to serve as a model for future buildings in the city in regard to its energy efficiency.

"Thank you for choosing the city of Hoboken and thank you for choosing northwest Hoboken and making this an even hipper place to live," said Zimmer. "Vine includes green features that are really important. This building has a green roof, a co-generation system and a backup generator, and I'm looking forward to it becoming a role model for our city, our state, and our country."