

Brockton's Station Lofts to break ground next week

Redevelopment of former Knight building to begin next week in downtown Brockton

By **Alex Bloom**

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What's this?

BROCKTON — The first of what city officials hope to be many downtown redevelopment projects will start construction next week.

Developer Jason Korb has secured the financing for Station Lofts, the \$9-million redevelopment of the Knight building at 124 Montello St., and construction is set to begin next week. A formal groundbreaking ceremony will take place next month.

Korb, principal of Cambridge-based Capstone Communities LLC, said the effort to redevelop the building into 25 apartments has taken more than two years.

"It's been a real team effort to be honest with you," Korb said. "It's been a great public private effort, from the mayor's office to the legislative delegation to various state offices."

Station Lofts will feature 25 apartments with a mixture of full-priced rents and subsidized housing for working families and artists.

Mary Waldron, executive director of the Brockton 21st Century Economic Development Corp., said the "terrific" project will give the city transit-oriented development.

"Having this break ground is truly amazing and he never gave up on us," Waldron said.

The project, Korb said, is financed through a mix of public and private lenders as well as housing tax credits and historic tax credits. He said the plan would not be possible without help from the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the state Department of Housing and Community Development, MassDevelopment, and construction lender The Property and Casualty Initiative.

Korb credited Brockton state Sen. Thomas Kennedy and state Reps. Mike Brady and Christine Canavan, all Democrats, for helping to secure the input of state offices.

Brady said he's supportive of bringing market-rate housing into the city.

"Anything we can do to improve downtown is going to be better for Brockton," Brady said.

Korb also thanked Mayor Linda Balzotti for her support of the project.

Across the street, the city started demolition on the Gardner building as part of Trinity Financial's \$100 million redevelopment of The Enterprise block. The two projects, city officials hope, will lead to a revitalized downtown.

"There's light at the end of the tunnel," said Ward 5 City Councilor Dennis DeNapoli, who will have Station Lofts in his ward. "I really think this is definitely going to help."

Korb, who has worked on projects in Haverhill, Easton and Cambridge, said he's passionate about restoring mill buildings and helping cities hold onto their historic buildings, despite the tough measures needed to keep them.

"We can never replicate these buildings ever again but they're inherently more expensive to rehabilitate," Korb said. "They're part of our heritage."

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DAP

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Just what the city needs more 'subsidized' housing, we will never see full market value here as long as we keep building subsidized housing. The contractor doesn't care what he builds here because the gov't is financing it.

melbrockton
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DAP-But the fact that people are taking an interest and doing something with these buildings, rather than letting them sit there and fall apart, says something about Brockton. Its about time that these buildings are put to some kind of use-the city can collect the taxes on them, they will look 100% better than what's there now, and who cares if its 'subsidized housing'? Its a start for Brockton, and I am sure that when all is said and done, the units will be full. Down town Brockton isn't going to redo its self, and people are actually taking time and money to improve the city....give them a chance and see what happens....Rome wasn't built in a day.

MikeC
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You still need two-way traffic downtown!

pekim
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As this building and others are rehabed, they should include retail establishments on the lower floor so as to make the former downtown a location where people will want to go.

5Pearls
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I can't imagine paying \$1500 (or whatever they will be charging) to live there and then learning that my neighbor pays \$500 (if even that much.) Gotta love subsidized housing. SMH.

watch dog
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The city doesn't need more apartments it needs more businesses. Businesses provide jobs and that is what Brockton needs not more high priced apartments that will likely end up as section 8. Subsidized housing! Brockton is fast becoming a welfare city. More businesses- more jobs- less welfare. The higher the unemployment rate, the higher the crime rate. The lower the unemployment rate the lower the crime rate. Brockton is not a business friendly city. They should put a sign on exit ramp on route 24 saying businesses not welcome. We need a city that works not a city that lives on welfare.

HCameron
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'Working families and artists.'

Yeah, Okay. LOL!
mike hawke
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'working families' must be some sort of code. like 'whisky tango' or 'democrats'. i can only guess what 'artists' means.

Slingblade
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It will end up like the old supermarket that was near McMenamys.

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