

Developer eyes Knight Building in downtown Brockton for residential redevelopment

\$8 million project with 25 apartments planned at historic building

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Posted Mar 01, 2011 @ 06:00 AM



BROCKTON — A downtown Brockton building where workers once cranked out uniforms for the original six NHL teams could soon see new life.

Capstone Communities, a Cambridge-based development firm, has submitted plans to the city's Planning Department to renovate the 110-year-old Knight Building at Lincoln and Montello streets into a 25-unit apartment building.

The four-story building, constructed in 1900, was the longtime home of the Stall and Dean Co., which manufactured sporting goods equipment worn by Ted Williams and Bobby Orr.

Most recently it housed Geo Knight, which manufactures heat-press machinery. The company relocated to Perkins Street about 10 years ago.

The proposed development, called Station Lofts, would consist of 16 two-bedroom units, four one-bedroom units and five studios.

Of the 25 units, 17 would be reserved for tenants who earn \$34,000 to \$58,000 a year. Five would have no income restrictions and three would go to tenants who earn between \$17,000 and \$22,000 a year.

Rents would range from \$900 to \$1,200 a month.

"We're very early in the process," Capstone Communities principal Jason Korb said.

He is applying for a range of government financing, including state and federal historic tax credits.

The total cost of the project is about \$8 million, Korb said.

Preserving the history of the building is key to qualifying for the tax credits. Plans call for an interior that will include exposed original brick in the hallways, exposed ceiling beams, refinished original wood floors, refinished original bead board ceiling on the fourth floor, and a preserved historic stairwell in one duplex unit.

The original brick would be preserved, and new, replica windows would match the existing historic ones.

Korb said he's been working on the project since last fall, and was drawn to the challenge the property represented.

"I enjoy downtown revitalization work. It's the reason why I established Capstone," said Korb, who started the firm last fall after six years with Beacon Communities Development.

Korb submitted his development application to the Planning Department last month. That application is under review with the city's various permitting departments, and the review is expected to be complete by June.

The application for historical tax credits is a competitive process. If all goes well, Korb said he would be able to break ground in about a year.

City Councilor Dennis DeNapoli, whose Ward 5 includes the Knight Building, called the project "a great fit."

"I think it can work," he said. "It'll bring tax revenue to the city and people to downtown."

"It is always encouraging to have developers come to the City of Brockton and see the assets I see every day," said Mary Waldron, executive director of the Brockton 21st Century Economic Development Corporation. "It's a cyclical thing. You've got to bring the people here to bring the Starbucks or Marylou's."

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