

Mausert Block Developers Present Preliminary Facade Plans

Staff Reports

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ADAMS, Mass. — The town's design review committee has given the go-ahead for facade work on the Mausert Block, one of the first steps in renovating the historic building.

Constructed in timber with new signage, lighting and energy-efficient glazing, the new storefront design on Park Street will remove architectural barriers to allow access by persons with disabilities.



Initial plans for the revamped facade of the Mausert Block will include green awnings and new signage for expected retail units.

The ad hoc Office of Community Development panel, which reviews designs for compliance with the Community Block Development Grant program, OKed the initial application plans for the federal grant program on Tuesday. Building developer REDPM is required to present the final facade design prior to the project being publicly bid. The project will be part of the town's ongoing Downtown Facade and Signage Improvement Program.

That work is part of the larger redevelopment of the former Woolworth building. The existing four retail units will be renovated into potentially six distinct retail spaces with new entrances and storefronts. The units will range in size from 464 square feet up to 2,100 square feet and will create links to Armory Court and the Ashuwillticook Trail.

The 23 Park St. unit will allow a restaurant to open onto a new outdoor seating area looking onto the rail trail. The rear of the former Woolworth store at 19 Park St., currently used as a self-storage area will be converted back into a retail unit. An arcade will link the 19 Park St. entrance and new storefronts on Armory Court. The retail work is slated to be completed by the end of the year.

A new entrance and enlarged foyer to the apartments will be created on Armory Court as part of the reconfiguration of the fire stairs. New internal fire stairs through the building will allow the removal of the exterior steel fire escape. The 18 vacant apartments will be reconfigured into 10 high-quality, two bedroom apartments for rent. The units will be renovated to comply with LEED-certified standards aimed at improving

performance on all aspects of green building. The residential work is slated to be completed by the end of the 2012.

Braytonville Properties LLC, a real estate holding company based in North Adams, purchased the Mausert Block on March 4 and selected REDPM, its property management arm, to develop and renovate the building. Established in 2004, REDPM has renovated four previously vacant rental properties in North Adams since 2007 to comply with the current building code. REDPM continues to manage each property for the respective owners.

For more information on retail leasing opportunities at the Mausert Block, contact Peter West on 413-822-2571.

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