

greenwich time

By Robert Marchant

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Tyler Sizemore / Hearst Connecticut Media

Construction continues on The Mill apartment complex in the Glenville section of Greenwich Thursday. The former cotton mill is being converted into one- to three-bedroom luxury rental apartments, available this summer.

GLENVILLE GLAMS UP

Residential projects fuel luxury revamp of 1880s buildings

By Robert Marchant

GREENWICH — Big changes are coming to the Glenville neighborhood.

The sound of power drills and saws fills the local streets along the Byram River where an early industrial fabric mill once employed legions of workers. Two large new residential projects are taking shape, this time for affluent apartment dwellers with a taste for the good life.

The construction of 59 apartment units, which are set to open later this year, is likely to transform the area, where generations of eastern European mill workers once toiled to create trainloads of fabric and felt for the nation.

Developer Steven Schacter said the goal is to improve an already attractive and desirable neighborhood with upscale housing. Two buildings, one built in 1981, and the old Mill site dating from 1881, are undergoing a complete renovation.

The old Mill building will house 26 units, and the 1981 building will offer 33 units. The area previously held office space, but that market in the west end of Greenwich has softened in recent years.

“We’re basically rebuilding these two buildings,” said Schacter, a co-owner of the property. The 1981 building will be refitted with patios and cantilevered balconies. The old Mill building will retain its old industrial feel, while it is repurposed

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as living space.

"It will have exposed beams and columns and trusses. ... We want to be respectful of the building. The restored 1881 building will not look ostensibly different from the way it was first restored the first time, 40 years ago," said the developer.

The new construction is set to draw the young and the not-so-young.

"We are targeting two principal demographics. We think it will appeal to empty-nesters who want to downsize without down-scaling. And millennials, in some cases transitioning from New York City, or working in the area," said Schacter. The residence will be especially attractive to people who seek walkable communities, as there are a range of stores and shops nearby.

"We think this project is going to be huge boost for the entire neighborhood. The demographic being introduced is luxury apartment, it will be a huge boost to the local economy," said Schacter. He believes the new development will serve the area well.

"It's almost a hidden treasure in terms of Greenwich neighborhoods, and we're about a greater shine on that neighborhood," he said.

The 1981 building could be ready for occupancy in July, and the old Mill building will welcome tenants in August.

Among the changes at the Mill complex will also be the replacement of the old Centro restaurant, which fell victim to the coronavirus, with a new offering by a longtime restaurateur, Ron Rosa. The new dining establishment in the Mill complex will be called The Lion, Rosa said, and it will offer the atmo-



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sphere and décor from an African safari.

"I'm expanding the bar and concentrating on that beautiful terrace. Especially with COVID, everyone wants to sit outside," he said. The new establishment could open in May.

Rosa made a name for himself in the restaurant field in lower Manhattan, with Ecco, and later Campagnola on the Upper East Side. He then moved to Connecticut and opened Polpo in Greenwich. He has a longtime staff he works with, including a 75-year-

old waiter. "I've got a team of veterans," he said. "I guess I'm a good boss."

Rosa believes the Glenville area is a good fit for his business model. "It's a very fertile area," he said, citing its proximity to numerous offices and affluent homeowners.

Developer Aldo Pascarella is also working on a residential project nearby, at the old tool-and-dye factory at 200 Pemberwick Road, adding 15 units to the site. The old Russell, Burd-sall and Ward Bolt & Nut factory was once a major

part of Greenwich's industrial base, and it is now home to a fitness center and offices.

Pascarella said the new development in the neighborhood was following an older style of European living patterns, emphasizing good design, density, walkability and quality-of-life enhancements. Density can be a good thing, he said, "when it's well done."

The real-estate executive said he was impressed by what he saw at the Glenville development around the Mill.

"I assume it's going to be world class, which is what Greenwich deserves," Pascarella said, and it exemplified what the town and the region had to offer. "We want people who want to come to Connecticut to work hard, play hard and live well," he continued.

A local resident said the new commercial and residential activity was likely to enhance the neighborhood — though he could live without the construction noise, and the traffic it is likely to generate.

James Wesley, out walk-

ing his dog near the Mill on a recent afternoon, said he was optimistic about the new construction. "It's going to be great, except for the traffic," he said, pointing to a long line of cars snaking down Glenville Street.

"It can be hard to get out of my driveway as it is now. Traffic will be an issue, it will have an impact," he said. "But the aesthetics, and the landscaping, it will be an improvement."

rmarchant@greenwichtime.com