

At development firm Lander Sherman, executives are looking toward the big picture.

Their 9th Street Lofts represent more than a capable renovation of an old warehouse space into five stories of owner-occupied condominiums and an added sixth floor of penthouses. The project provides a potent addition to a neighborhood revitalization effort in keeping with St. Paul's master framework.

The 90,000-square-foot structure stands at the corner of Ninth Street and Sibley in downtown St. Paul, an area marked by the city for redevelopment through greater residential density, the addition of urban green space and a more established community image.

To that end, Lander-Sherman already has developed five blocks in the area, replacing surface parking with a city park, two 38-unit condominium buildings and two rental apartment buildings that include affordable housing components.

"In looking at the overall redevelopment, this was a perfect complement to what was already going on there," said Wren Aigaki-Lander, marketing director for Lander-Sherman, a collaboration between Lander Group and Sherman Associates.

Built in 1909, the building served as a print shop and later played host to government offices and educational facilities. In its \$9.5 million renovation effort, Lander-Sherman counted upon the early-century warehouse architecture to offset the newer construction in the neighborhood. "We like to have a range of architectural styles that are complementary within an area," Aigaki-Lander said.

The developer has maintained much of the original detail in its renovation of the


REDEVELOPMENT/EXTENSIVE RENOVATION

FINALIST

9th Street Lofts

Redevelopment contributes to revitalization efforts in downtown St. Paul

By Adam Stone | Contributing writer



space. The preserved interior space includes original concrete ceilings, and concrete columns that bell out at the top and bottom. The original interior brickwork remains in place in most of the spaces, while floors have been constructed of new-poured concrete for soundproofing. The project also includes an underground heated parking garage and a rooftop deck.

Richard Hanson and Steve Rodgers hope

to be enjoying a wider vista by late summer or early fall, as owners of a penthouse in the Ninth Street Lofts. In addition to the panoramic views, Rodgers said, "I like the true loft style, the way that some of the units will have exposed hardware and piping. It is more of the true definition of a loft."

With a renovation cost of \$93 per square foot, the 49 loft condominiums will be priced from \$179,000 to \$449,000, with penthouses

Project Credits

PROJECT VALUE: \$9.5 million

PROJECT SIZE: 90,000 square feet

DEVELOPER: Lander-Sherman Urban Development

ARCHITECT: Art Bartels, Elness Swenson Graham Architects Inc.

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Kraus-Anderson Construction Co.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS: Bob Close and Andrew Caddock, Close Landscape Architecture

INTERIOR DESIGNER: Martha Dayton, The Lander Group

priced higher still.

For Hanson and Rodgers, the architectural attractions of the new lofts are perhaps bested only by the opportunity to be part of a dynamic moment in a neighborhood's history, as developers and city authorities work together to revive downtown's northwest quadrant.

"The city of St. Paul is really putting a lot of emphasis on this quadrant of the city, promoting it as a family living area," Rodgers said. "They are spending a lot of time trying to make this a welcoming and safe area of the city."

The project is important not just for its reuse of a former commercial space, but also for the energy it injects into the overall neighborhood, said Bob Schreier, downtown southwest team leader at the St. Paul Planning and Economic Development office. It creates more retail opportunities, which in turn makes the community and downtown St. Paul more vibrant.

Adam Stone is based in Annapolis, Md.