



Lofts at Allen Street are the latest spark for Woonsocket's renaissance.

By: JOSEPH FITZGERALD Staff Writer

WOONSOCKET - If Northern Rhode Island is the new frontier for real estate development, then Brian Kelleher has certainly staked his claim at the Allen Street Historic District, where he and his business partners plan to redevelop historic mill buildings into a 64-condominium complex.

"Northern Rhode Island is fertile ground for development, and with the City of Woonsocket going through a renaissance of commercial and residential development, we're really excited to be part of it," says Kelleher, a partner with The Aspen Group, which is developing the project known as The Lofts at Allen Street. The developers are slated to break ground on the project later this month. An onsite sales office will be open shortly and reservation agreements are being accepted.

Located along the banks of the Blackstone River within the Allen Street Historic District, the project will include a mix of loft-inspired and traditional layouts to be housed in the 42,000-square-foot former Sydney Worsted Co. Mill, built in 1910; the 18,000-square-foot former E.P. Herbert Knitting Mill, built in 1922; and a third building to be newly constructed on the site.

"This is an exceptional property with two distinctive and structurally fit historic buildings ideally dimensioned for condominiums," Kelleher said. "Since we own both sides of Allen Street down to the Court Street Bridge, with the Blackstone River on one side and Truman Drive and the planned bike path on the other, we have the opportunity to create a special neighborhood that will be an integral part of the ongoing resurgence of downtown Woonsocket."

Aspen has been finalizing details and gearing up its marketing efforts led by Kate Duggan of Essex Properties. Pre-construction prices have been set for Canal House starting at \$169,900.

"With a mix of unit sizes and types, fabulous layouts, 14-foot ceilings, oversized windows, spectacular views, a river walkway and great pricing, this project offers the best value in the market area," Duggan said. "This site has the feel of a private setting, but is within walking distance to restaurants, pubs, shops and entertainment and should have broad market appeal to young professionals, artisans and empty nesters.

"We believe this is a great project," Kelleher added. "We feel that if we can offer quality, affordable housing then people will move here."

The Lofts at Allen Street will consist of 64 units to be developed within three distinct buildings named Canal House, The Landing and Gate House.

The renovated buildings will be redeveloped in conformance with state historical guidelines and will include new insulated windows, and refurbished brick walls, floors and beams. All units will include modern kitchens and bathrooms, and have central air conditioning.



Article reprinted with permission of The Woonsocket Call. Essex Properties and The Aspen Group gratefully acknowledges the author, Call Staff Writer Joseph Fitzgerald, and Photographer Ernest A. Brown.

Canal House will be the first phase and consist of an historic two-story mill building renovated into 16 one- and two-bedroom loft-style units. The building will feature expansive floor-through layouts, with units ranging in size from 700 to 1,250 square feet, and with oversized east and west facing windows providing an abundance of natural light and unencumbered river and city views.

"The great thing about the Canal House are the massive windows, natural sunlight and amazing views of the city," Duggan says.



KATE DUGGAN and Brian Kelleher discuss plans for 'The Landing'.

The Landing, the largest structure within the project at 40,000 square-feet, will include 36 studio, one and two bedroom units crafted from this historical two-story mill building. Residents will enjoy breathtaking river and city views from a mix of distinctive loft inspired layouts, with units ranging in size from 620 to 1,400 square feet.

"The buildings work well and lay out well for condominiums," says Duggan. "The Landing will house the common amenities for the project, including a great room with two-story atrium on the first floor, a multi-purpose conference-meeting room on the second floor, storage units on the lower level, and a beautifully landscaped river walkway overlooking The Blackstone River along the east side of the property.

Gate House will be a newly constructed three-story building consisting of 12 spacious open one and two bedroom units ranging in size from 620 to 1,400 square feet. Gate House will blend modern interior layouts with an exterior design that compliments the neighboring historic district.

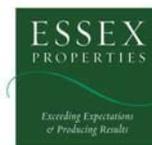
"The architecture of these historic mill buildings will be preserved, while enabling residents to live in distinctly designed condominiums within a unique urban neighborhood with spectacular river and city views," according to Hans D. Strauch, principal of HDS Architecture, the designer for the project. HDS is an international architectural design and planning firm based in Watertown, Mass., specializing in historic renovations as well as commercial and residential projects.

"More than just building condominiums, we're creating a lifestyle where people will be able to socialize with their neighbors, enjoy the bike path and river walk and be able to walk to breakfast and lunch," Duggan said.

The Aspen Group is a North Reading, Mass. real estate development and services company with projects throughout New England and which has been active in Woonsocket over the past few years. Aspen recently completed renovations of the former Save-Rite building on Clinton Street into a state-of-the-art community health center for Thundermist.

Aspen was the initial developer of the 252-unit Riverbend Apartments off Mill Street (subsequently converted to condominiums), and has been involved in a number of assignments for Landmark Medical Center, including managing the development of its new cardiac center, opened in 2001.

"The city has been great and is actively working with us to make this happen, which is something you don't see in a lot of other communities," Kelleher said. "The city of Woonsocket could not be more responsive."



www.allenstreetlofts.com

www.essexre.com
401-765-7774