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SERVING CHICAGO'S NORTH SIDE NEIGHBORHOODS



City Hall sees alternative Goldblatt's plan

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Special to Inside

An alternate plan to building a Borders and high-end condominiums on the former Goldblatt's property, which is part of the Broadway/Lawrence TIF redevelopment project, was introduced to Commissioner of Planning and Development Alicia Mazur Berg on Feb. 27. The alternate plan would develop all three buildings on the property, creating both an entertainment terrace and moderately priced condominiums.

The plan calls for restoring the Plymouth Hotel, the southernmost building of the property, into newly built low-income housing for rental and sale.

The building would have approximately 50 to 86 studios, with the possibility of including some one and/or two bedroom units. The plan would allow for the re-introduction of the atrium within the Plymouth, and provide for a solar atrium and gardens surrounding the living space.

Compatible commercial retail would be on the ground floor. The upper portion of the middle building in the complex would become high-end condominiums ranging from \$155,000 to \$200,000. The basements of the middle and south buildings would hold approximately 90 parking spaces. The roofs of all three buildings would have gardens.

The project includes 23,000 square feet of retail space. Letters of intent have been obtained from True Nature grocery to anchor the site and provide employment for adults and youth in the community.

Campagnola Restaurant, in Evanston, has signed on to provide a bistro and restaurant terrace. In addition, they plan to use a balcony as a summer outdoor area for music performances or provide a "beer garden" setting.

The Voltaire Theater, currently under the directorship of Lisa Dowda in Los Angeles, is determined to re-open a performance space in Goldblatt's. This will give opportunities for 10 or more local theater groups to perform per year as well as countless other solo artists, improv groups, playwrights and musical groups.

In addition to all this, several local bookstores and cafes are ready to expand their space in the community, joining hands to create an International Café and Bookstore. The café would be staffed and run by youth in the community. Kinko's Copy Shop has also expressed interest in joining the project.

"While we applaud efforts to develop the area, from our perspective, the plan presented by Joseph Freed and Associates seeks to replace existing cultural strengths and historic civic appeal of the community, imposing a generic version of urban re-development. We believe that the Freed Plan will make the area largely indistinguishable from other developed neighborhoods, thereby losing a valuable opportunity to create a lively, eclectic center of gourmet and specialty shops, theater and

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