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MOVIN' ON UP ON BROADWAY



Meridian Developments unveiled Thursday the plan for its high-end condominium development located at the corner of Broadway Avenue and Ninth Street. The LUXE will include a total of 24 condo units starting in price at \$450,000 and ranging to an estimated \$1.3 million for one of three 2,400-square-foot penthouse 'sky estates.' A branch of Affinity Credit Union will be the ground floor tenant. Please see story on **Page C9**. (Concept drawing by jason lowe visuals)

Broadway condo has New York feel

□ Units start at \$450,000 on former Safeway site

By Murray Lyons
SP Business Editor

Manhattan meets the Prairies in a commercial-residential building on Broadway Avenue that developers are calling “hip” and “contemporary.”

More than a year after clearing the Broadway and Ninth Street site, Meridian Developments Inc. has settled on a design for the building.

The LUXE, as it has been dubbed, is firmly aimed at the higher-end condo apartment market in Saskatoon, although Meridian partner Colleen Wilson says the starting price for 15 units is competitive with other projects, starting at around \$450,000.

In total, 24 condo units will be developed, with the three penthouse “sky estates” units likely priced at more than \$1.3 million, albeit with 2,400 square feet of living space.

Broadway evolving

“The sky estates will have huge windows, 12-foot soaring ceilings and the very best of material such as exotic hardwoods and granites,” Wilson said.

Wilson and partner Karl Miller don’t expect the prices will deter potential buyers looking for a unique, urban feel. They said the condos, located in an active retail and entertainment district, should appeal to those looking for a Manhattan kind of experience in Saskatoon.

“It’s a niche in the market that is not being filled,” Wilson said. “We hope that people who have been looking for something a little bit different — hip, contemporary and very luxurious — will enjoy these varied floor plans and spacious sizes.”

Ken Achs, the third partner in Meridian, said he believes the design reflects the way Broadway has evolved during the six-plus decades he has observed the area.

“Broadway has come a long way, par-

ticularly in the last 20 years, thanks to the Broadway (business improvement district),” he said. “This is just going to extend Broadway and the uniqueness of the street closer to Eighth Street.”

Meridian engaged Saskatoon architect Charles Olfert in the design, which features large windows, balconies of various shapes and a mix of modern cladding materials with a Rocky Mountain shale brick facade at the lower level.

“I think it’s contextual in that reflects the character of Broadway and the neighbourhood,” Olfert said of his design.

The street level of the building will house a new Broadway branch of the Affinity Credit Union, which will offer more services. At 5,400 square feet, it will be twice as large as the existing branch in the same block of Broadway, says Ian Bank, facilities manager for Affinity. He says Affinity will likely find a buyer interested in redeveloping the existing branch building.

The building sits on the site of what used to be a retail building that once housed one of the city’s first Safeway stores. While once considered unique because of a Spanish-style facade, most of the building’s character had long ago been altered. Until its demolition, its roof was home for many years to giant advertising billboards.

After Meridian tore the building down, the company was working on plans for a building at least four storeys higher than what was unveiled Thursday, as the area’s zoning allowed for it.

However, the company backed off because construction costs are much greater for structural work the higher a building goes, Miller said.

“The (condo) pricing in Saskatoon at that time — a year and a half ago — was nowhere near where it is today,” he said. “If we had known where the pricing was going for housing in Saskatoon we would have been fine to build that building.”

“At the time, the indication was that pricing would never get to this level.”

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