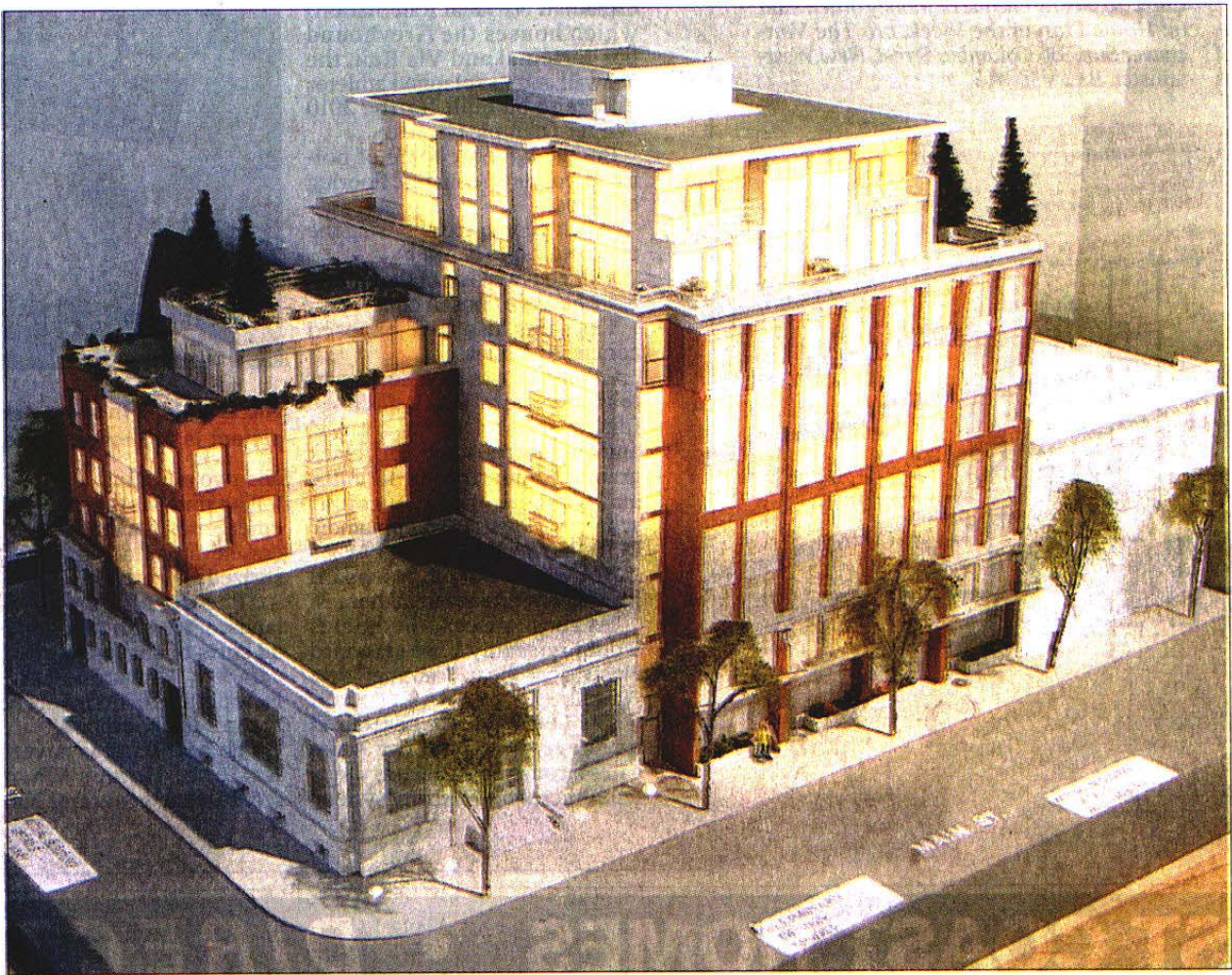


13



IAN LINDSAY/VANCOUVER SUN

The Left Bank condo project will incorporate the old Bank of Montreal building at Main and Prior.

Classic renewal

NEW HOMES PROJECT PROFILE

The Left Bank

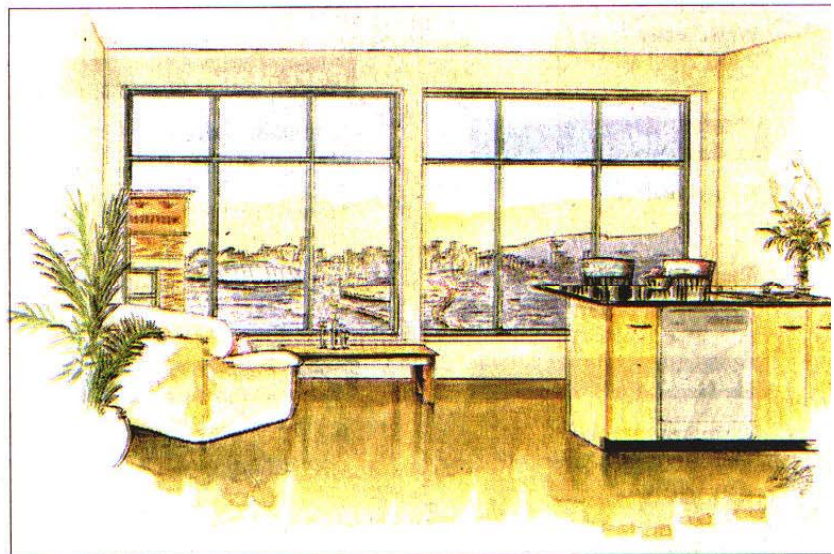
Address: 919 Station St., Vancouver.

Project size: 59 residential homes and three commercial units.

Price and size: From \$155,000 to \$475,000; 582 square feet to 1,271 square feet.

Architect: H.R. Hatch Architect.

Developer: Ballenas Project Management Ltd.



Artist's rendering shows a suite with a west view toward False Creek.

NEW PROJECT | It's a
short walk from
SkyTrain, the seawall
and downtown



BY ROD NUTT
VANCOUVER SUN

Ballenas Project Management Ltd. has a penchant for taking on unusual projects. Last year, the North Vancouver company converted the old federal government building on Columbia Street in New Westminster into 45 condominiums and lofts.

The city's call for proposals stipulated that a new central police station be incorporated in the building, which dated back to 1900.

"We could have sold 145 homes," says Ballenas president and owner Peter Newall. "It was very successful."

The company has also undertaken "heritage" projects in other parts of Canada and in Port Townsend in Washington State.

Its latest development, The Left Bank, centres on the old Bank of Montreal building at the corner of Main Street and Prior Street in Vancouver.

"We have a Heritage Revitalization Agreement with the City," says Newall. "The bank building didn't originally have a heritage designation but Ballenas has agreed to restore it."

The Bank of Montreal building, which was built in 1929, was designed by architects Honeyman & Curtis.

"It's an example of a 'Temple Bank' which was a popular style at the time," says Newall. "It's typical of the latter phase of restrained 'Beaux Arts Classicism' preferred for institutional and commercial functions in that era.

"The proportions, detail and construction are of premier quality, particularly the cut stone cladding, fine neo-classical detail to cornices and column capitals, elegant fenestration (arrangement of windows), and well-preserved interior, including period tile work to the basement washrooms.

Newall says the bank building will become a restaurant when The Left Bank is finished.

The residential component consists of a new six-storey building that will be built behind the bank building facing Prior Street and Station Street; and a new nine-story tower that is planned for the other side of the bank facing Main Street and Station Street.

The buildings will contain a total of 59 residential strata units.

Most of the homes are on one level with the exception of lofts taking up the second and third floors and the fourth and fifth floors in the six-storey tower.

The Left Bank will have one bedroom, one bedroom-plus-den, and two-bedroom homes as well as the lofts.

They range in size from 582 square feet to 1,271 square feet and cost from \$155,000 to \$475,000; building costs are under \$300 per square foot on average.

Ballenas was attracted to The Left Bank by its location close to the downtown core.

As a result, the development is popular with young couples and single women in their 30s.

"We are getting people who have jobs downtown because they can walk to work," says Newall.

"Three Americans have purchased units, two who work partly in the U.S. and partly in Vancouver, and one who has bought for investment purposes."

Renee Villeneuve is a typical buyer. She works in one of the Bentall centres and estimates it will take her 25 minutes to walk to work after she moves in at the end of next year.

"I'm currently living on the North Shore and I wanted to get back to the Vancouver side," Villeneuve says. "I didn't want to increase my mortgage

Buyers like the quality and design of the units

From D1

and The Left Bank was definitely in my price range."

By walking to work, she says she will save on transportation costs.

Villeneuve has bought a one-bedroom home on the seventh floor.

"I really liked the design of the suites and the quality," she says.

Rob Bauman and wife Angela Han have bought a 926-square-foot, two-bedroom home on the seventh floor of the taller tower.

"We have a 1,400-square-foot deck on the roof of the six-storey building," says Bauman. "That was a key feature in our decision to buy a home in The Left Bank."

In addition, the couple liked the City of Vancouver's plan to revitalize the area, including the planned Olympic Village, and the heritage component of the development.

"It's on the edge of Chinatown and its close to downtown," says Bauman. "It's about 45 minutes by foot from where I work."

The Left Bank is close to Main Street SkyTrain Station, Pacific Central Station (previously the Canadian National Rail Station) which houses the Greyhound bus terminal and Via Rail, the Seawall and the planned athletes village to be built for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

Buyers have a choice of polished, coloured concrete flooring or carpet.

"Most people are choosing the concrete," says Newall.

Villeneuve is one of those buyers who have chosen concrete.

The units also have exposed concrete ceilings.

Other features include a stainless-steel appliance package (dishwasher, refrigerator, range, and microwave/hood fan), black granite countertops in all units, and a choice of two colour schemes — verde and cinnamon. (Villeneuve chose verde.)

Hot water radiant baseboard heating is standard in all homes.

"At these prices, the homes would normally have standard electric baseboard heating," says Newall.

The Left Bank offers secured underground parking (two gates), roughed in security system, enterphone security system,



IAN LINDSAY/VANCOUVER SUN

The Left Bank is being developed by Peter Newall. He says the project is attracting those who want to walk to work downtown.

and two elevators.

The nine-storey tower has an emergency generator, firefighters' elevator, fire pump and pressurized stairways.

"The development will be landscaped with tree grates and all sorts of shrubs to match the adjacent Thornton Park," says Newall. "It will definitely beautify the neighbourhood."

The Left Bank is covered by National Homes Warranty 2/5/10-year program, which is

underwritten by one of the largest insurance companies in the world, The Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Company.

The sales office, which is in the bank building, is open seven days a week by appointment only.

For more information log on to the theleftbank.ca Web site or call Antony Moulder at Park Georgia Realty Ltd. (604-644-7908).

Westcoast Homes Reporter
rnutt@png.canwest.com

