

# The Journal News

Thursday  
October 19, 2006

LoHud.com

SERVING THE LOWER HUDSON VALLEY SINCE 1850

## Saw Mill to finally see the light of day

### First phase of Yonkers \$3B plan envisions towers, ballpark, shops

Michael Gannon  
The Journal News

YONKERS — Today, it is easy to forget the Saw Mill River even runs through this aged industrial city's downtown, hidden behind shuttered mills and under a century's worth of concrete.

Within a decade, however, three developers envision a revitalized Saw Mill as centerpiece to a \$3.1 billion plan — including new residential towers as high as 50 stories — stretching from the parkway that bears its name to where it flows unnoticed from an underground flume into the Hudson River.

"If downtown Yonkers looks like that, ultimately,

Please see PROJECT, 14A



#### Speak out

What do you think of Cappelli's plan? Visit the "Yonkers" forum at LoHud.com.

## 1st phase of Yonkers plan unveiled

PROJECT, from 1A

at the end, all I can say is, 'Wow,'" said Councilwoman Dee Barabato, R-Yonkers, who was briefed along with other council members on the plan Tuesday night. "But we do have a long way to go."

The long-awaited details of the first phase of a plan were unveiled this week by Struever Fidelco Cappelli LLC, the partnership between developers Bill Struever of Baltimore, Marc Berson of Milburn, N.J., and Louis Cappelli of Valhalla. The partnership had been outlined generally in February.

The plan includes some 3 million square feet of new retail and housing, including 1,500 new apartments in four new towers that will define the city's skyline: two 50-story buildings overlooking a planned minor league ballpark at River Park Center, the new name the developers have given a city-owned parking lot known as Chicken Island, and two, 25-story towers on the river at the end of Prospect Street, which the developers have dubbed Palisades Point.

Under an agreement with the city signed in May, the partnership must by mid-November submit a master plan for the area stretching from Nepperhan Valley through Getty Square and down-

town to the Hudson River. The developers have held several public forums over the course of the year and plan to continue to tweak it over the final weeks, said Joseph Apicella, a senior vice president of development for Cappelli Enterprises.

"We're going to the public, the administration and the City Council to view this early and asking them to give us input," he said.

The project's \$1.5 billion first phase would include three components: River Park Center, Palisades Point and uncovering the Saw Mill River where it runs underneath a city parking lot in Larkin Plaza. Later phases would tackle the waterfront along Alexander Street, the Ludlow Park neighborhood and the network of old carpet mills in the Nepperhan Valley.

"Daylighting" the river, a plan endorsed by environmental groups like Scenic Hudson, would be funded by \$34 million from the state. Gov. George Pataki has long been a proponent of the plan, and the budget the state Legislature fashioned and he signed earlier this year included the funding.

The Larkin Plaza daylighting plan initially would not include new retail or housing, only new parks and walking paths, Apicella said.

River Place Center also features

the Saw Mill winding through a public promenade and restaurants at places where it is currently underground. There are, however, other public amenities, Apicella said.

The developers will move the city's fire headquarters on School Street and a municipal office building at 87 Nepperhan Ave. onto the property of the Cacace Justice Center across the street. The municipal offices will be in a new building that will also include a hotel at Nepperhan and South Broadway, opposite City Hall.

The partners also will rebuild the Government Center garage and infrastructure associated with the project.

Palisades Point would include extending Prospect Street down to the waterfront and enlarging the existing Sculpture Park at the end of the promenade, already developed further north along the Hudson, Apicella said. Those plans also include public attractions like a kayak launch and possibly small cafes, he said.

Apicella said the developers expect formally to introduce new zoning proposals and a site plan and to initiate the environmental review of the project on Tuesday. He said he believed the project could break ground by May.

Members of the City Council and environmentalists, however,

### On the Web

For more information about the projects, visit the developers' Web site at <http://www.sfcyonkers.com/>.

said not so fast.

Councilman Dennis Robertson, the 3rd District Democrat who chairs the council's Real Estate Committee that was briefed on the plan this week, said the council still had a lot to learn about the developers plans to finance the project. He also said the tall buildings were a concern.

The developers have sponsored four public forums to solicit thoughts on the plans since earlier this year and met with more than a dozen smaller groups. Many residents adamantly made clear they did not want to see tall buildings on the waterfront.

Scenic Hudson President Ned Sullivan reiterated yesterday the organization's own discomfort with the 25-story towers. He called their inclusion in the plans "very disappointing" and said they detracted from parts of the plan that excited environmentalists, like the daylighting and revitalized waterfront.

"If it looks like Miami Beach or any other city in Westchester, that potential will be squandered," he said.

Reach Michael Gannon at [mgannon@lohud.com](mailto:mgannon@lohud.com) or 914-694-5080.