

Construction, Design & Engineering

Milender White builds KTGy-designed affordable Capitol Square Apartments

Milender White is building Capitol Square Apartments, which will provide 103 income-restricted residential units one block from the Colorado State Capitol Building on the corner of 13th Avenue and Sherman Street, near downtown Denver's central business district. Developed by Denver-based Mile High Development and Chicago-based Brinshore Development, the new six-story, state- and city-supported, multifamily rental community is expected to be completed in 2022. The project was designed by KTGy.

"Capitol Square exemplifies the kind of innovative public-private partnerships that can be utilized to deliver quality affordable housing in walkable, amenity and transit-rich neighborhoods such as Capitol Hill," said David Brint, founding principal of Brinshore Development LLC.

"We live and work in this wonderful community and it is truly exciting to have a



The six-story multifamily rental community is expected to be completed in 2022.

meaningful role in bringing new, high-quality affordable housing in an amenity-rich neighborhood near transit and employment," said Terry Willis, AIA, LEED AP, a principal in KTGy's Denver office. "Attracting both young workers and empty nesters looking for a walkable, urban home, Capitol Square features unit sizes that address the ever-increasing need for affordability in the downtown core."

According to Willis, the modern, multigenerational development takes its design cues from the surrounding neighborhood. The residential building's clean lines relate to the adjacent civic buildings and intentionally contrast to the highly detailed and ornate historic capitol building. The steeply sloped site provided designers the opportunity to create a basement parking level, saving on construction

excavation costs. The U-shaped design opens the interior units and courtyard to views of the Denver Art Museum and the mountains beyond, while encouraging social connections.

"The overall design concept was also very important to gaining support and approval from the Colorado State Land Board, the owner of the 1/2-acre site, to enter into a long-term land lease with the developer team," said George Thorn, president of Mile High Development. "We felt from the initiation of our concept for an affordable housing development on this site that Capitol Square's location in the shadow of the state Capitol sent a very positive message to the community that this type of project would be well received by the state, city and other civic leaders, and the neighborhood, and that has proven to be the case."

Capitol Square's amenities include a leasing office, com-

munity space and fitness room at ground level as well as a landscaped outdoor terrace at the second-floor courtyard. Parking will be provided for 68 vehicles at the ground and basement levels. The project will seek Enterprise Green Communities certification.

All apartments are income-restricted exclusively for households earning 40% to 80% of the area median income (up to \$54,950 for a single-person household). The building includes 73 one-bedroom units and 30 two-bedroom units.

"Many residents in this Capitol Hill neighborhood walk to work in downtown Denver or take advantage of the Broadway/Lincoln as well as 12th Avenue and Colfax transit corridors for bus service. It is only a short walk (three blocks) to Civic Center Station and connection with regional buses, the downtown circulator bus to Union Station and the 16th Street Mall Shuttle," said Willis.▲

Land Development

Tale of 2 projects: Metro districts fund critical infrastructure

In Part I of this series published in the May 5-18, 2021, issue of CREJ, we provided the history of the Panorama Metropolitan District, organized to provide public improvement financing and limited improvement maintenance to the developing suburban Panorama Business Park. That article ended where this begins, with the discussion of the need for a way to provide the additional public improvements, services and programming in public spaces required to serve a portion of the business park that previously was called The Jones District and very recently was rebranded as The District, an urban mixed-use project planned for the redevelopment of the Jones Intercable Headquarters building and surrounding property located in the middle of the business park.

By 2018, Louise G. Larrick, original owner and developer of the business park, had conveyed her homestead to Glenn Jones, the Larrick home and Jones Intercable building had been demolished, and the property was ready for redevelopment. In that same time period, Panorama Metropolitan District was anticipating the repayment of all its bonds by December 2023, had a commitment to fund an additional \$15 million in public improvements to support the remaining development in its boundaries, and had a limited annual budget to manage for ongoing maintenance of medians, monuments and a detention pond.

It was in this context that the

discussions began regarding the funding needed to construct the infrastructure required to serve The District.

Future Development: Jones Metropolitan Districts/Jones District Community Authority Board

The board of the Panorama Metropolitan District and organizers of the proposed Jones Metropolitan Districts (which were represented by landowners within The District) worked together to create a plan where the goals of the Panorama Metropolitan District and the Jones Metropolitan Districts were both met. The Panorama Metropolitan District goals were to assure the remaining \$15 million in improvements it was committed to fund would be funded and constructed as a priority by the to-be organized Jones Metropolitan Districts at a capped property tax rate, and that the increased operating burden for the operation, maintenance, repair and replacement of new community amenities, public spaces and programming in The District would not be borne by the taxpayers in the existing business park. The Jones Metropolitan Districts' goals were to assure the Panorama Metropolitan District had a binding commitment to pay the previously contracted promise to fund \$15 million in improvements – to no longer have the property tax burden of funding operations of the Panorama Metropolitan District while assuming the property tax burden of funding the operation and maintenance of

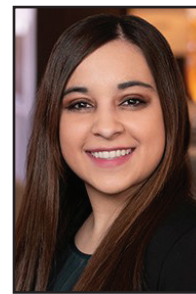


MaryAnn M. McGeady
Shareholder,
McGeady Becher PC

new community amenities, public spaces and programming guided by the needs of the Jones Metropolitan Districts' commercial and residential taxpayers over time.

To assure the objectives of both Panorama Metropolitan District and the Jones Metropolitan Districts were met, a series of agreements were entered into between the parties that committed Panorama Metropolitan District to include in their certification of mill levy annually 5 mills of property taxes, beginning in 2024 when their current bonds are completely repaid, and to remit the revenues received from the 5 mills to the Jones Metropolitan Districts. The Jones Metropolitan Districts agreed to the construction of two roads, designated as Road A and Road B, as a priority out of their first bond issuance. In reliance on these agreements, the Panorama Metropolitan District adopted a resolution supporting the organization of the Jones Metropolitan Districts. The city of Centennial approved the service plans for the Jones Metropolitan Districts in February 2020, and they were subsequently organized in June. The property in The District was excluded from the Panorama Metropolitan District in September.

To best coordinate the financing, construction and operation



Courtney L. Diguardi
Associate, McGeady
Becher PC

and maintenance of public improvements that would not be dedicated to other governments in The District, the Jones Metropolitan Districts entered into an agreement to form the Jones District Community Authority Board in June 2020. It is anticipated that each parcel within The District will be included within one of the Jones Metropolitan Districts as it develops. The establishment agreement for the community authority board also provides for each of the Jones Metropolitan Districts to have representation appointed by its board on the CAB.

The CAB closed on its first issuance of bonds in October. Property taxes from the Jones Metropolitan Districts and the revenue from the 5 mill pledge from the Panorama Metropolitan District were all pledged by the CAB to the repayment of the bonds. As promised to the Panorama Metropolitan District, proceeds of the bonds sufficient to fund Road A and Road B were encumbered to construct Road A and Road B. Completion of these two roads is imminently expected.

The first bond issuance also funded the first phase of public improvements to support development in The District and groundbreaking on vertical devel-

opment is anticipated to occur in the third quarter. Future bond issuances will fund the remaining public improvements that will support the full build-out of The District.

The District is approximately 35.6 acres and is anticipated to contain, at build-out, approximately 1,800 residential units, including for-rent apartment units and for-sale condominiums, approximately 30,000 square feet of retail space, approximately 2.5 million sf of office space, and one hotel with approximately 200 rooms – all interwoven with walkable streets, vibrant public spaces, transit connectivity and diverse amenities, including a central plaza with public gathering areas, landscaping, water features, trails, benches, seating areas, shade structures and playground equipment.

As illustrated in this series of articles through the case study of Panorama Metropolitan District and the Jones Metropolitan Districts and the Jones District CAB, metropolitan districts are critically important to support future development that meets the demands of a growing workforce and the demands for diverse housing opportunities and amenities that impact the quality of life in Colorado. As also illustrated, that metropolitan districts, either working independently or together, can fund the installation and operations and maintenance of public improvements in ways as unique as the communities they serve.▲