



February 3, 2004

DOWNTOWN BUZZ

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RENAISSANCE SQUARE

In a bipartisan news conference last week, County Executive Maggie Brooks and Mayor Bill Johnson unveiled plans for **Renaissance Square**, the single largest project proposed for the Center City in over 40 years.

Bold Concept

The mega-project would marry the Rochester Central Station, Performing Arts Center (PAC), and Monroe Community College's expanded Damon City Campus. They would be located on a 2½-block site bounded by Clinton Avenue, East Main and St. Paul Streets.

The core concept is to use the Rochester Central Station and the proposed downtown MCC campus to help leverage public funding for a PAC, and thereby redevelop one of the most challenging areas in the region.

Funding Secured To Date

With a total of \$100 million already garnered for the Rochester Central Station and MCC project components, this means that 70% of the transit center and 80% of the MCC campus funding are in place. At this time, only the PAC lacks any clear funding sources independent of the linked Renaissance Square project.

Project Integration Taps New Funds

Creating "physical and functional integration" between the three structures allows new PAC funding sources to be tapped, including the SUNY Capital Fund. Federal transportation funds can also be leveraged under the Federal Transportation Administration's Livable Communities initiative.

This approach also promises to yield significant development cost savings for all three individual projects. With the new configuration, there are a number of ways that the components can be physically and functionally integrated. These include the use of shared foundations, walls and building systems, and the sharing of demolition and other site preparation costs.

New Public Process

A new process to move Renaissance Square forward was inaugurated jointly by County Executive Brooks and Mayor Bill Johnson, who will go together to Albany and Washington to lobby for the remaining funds to complete the mega-project.

Recognizing that the three major project components bring different issues to the table, key leaders from the arts community and MCC will be engaged, among others.

(Cont'd, page 2)

(RENAISSANCE SQUARE, cont'd)

In addition, the initial transit center configuration has changed significantly with the unveiling of the multi-component concept and continues to evolve. This process will offer several key opportunities for public input and response.

A Catalyst for Other Investment

It is expected that the high activity zone created by the mega-project will spark other growth, development, and investment.

With the creation of a critical mass of students in this section of the city (MCC, SUNY Brockport MetroCenter, Eastman School of Music), the potential for market-driven student housing in surrounding buildings gains significant momentum.

Furthermore, an increased college student population and a full four seasons at the Performing Arts Center will create a very real demand for more market-rate housing, cafés, nightclubs, and boutique shopping.

Architectural Design

Preliminary renderings of the mega-project were developed for Governor Pataki in advance of his

January 2004 State of the State address. However, the overall design is expected to undergo substantial changes as the development process unfolds. The project management team will be selecting the architects of record at a later date.

Synergies

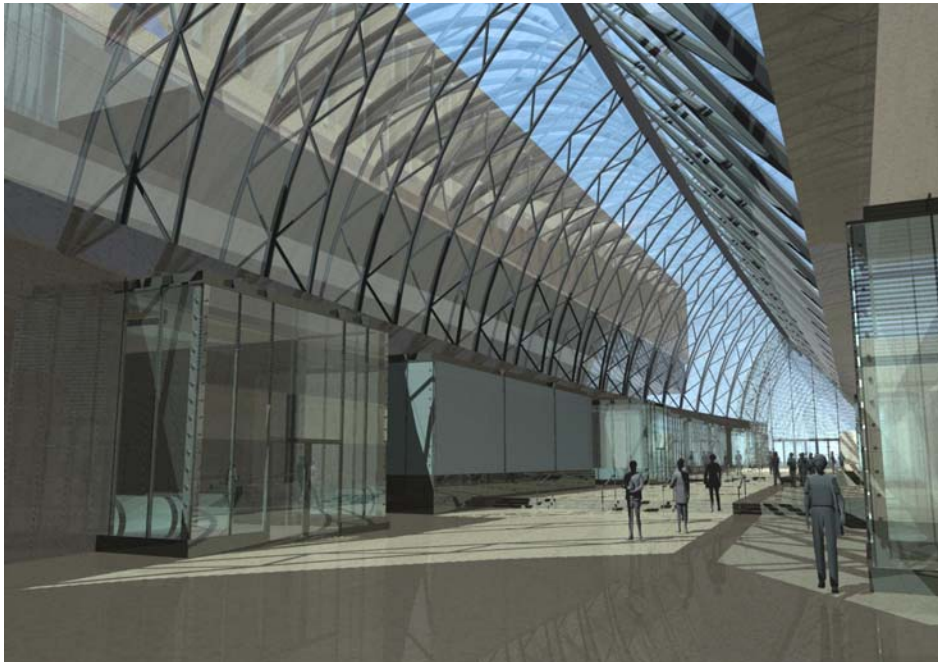
The co-location of the PAC and MCC will offer unique opportunities to deepen MCC's performing arts program, with co-ops, internships, and other partnerships. The Rochester Central Station will become the regional hub for the suburban Park-and-Ride service and shuttles to the Port of Rochester, airport, and train station.

Project Management Team

The Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA) has established a subsidiary – the Renaissance Square Corporation – to manage the development of the transit center component. Mark Aesch has been named as its Executive Director. Ultimately a vehicle will be created by the County to integrate the three major components of the project and their funding sources.



Preliminary conceptual renderings of the Rochester Central Station's street-level concourse (above and on page three) and the Renaissance Square elevation (page one) produced by the DeWolff Partnership, Rochester, NY.



Preliminary conceptual rendering of the Rochester Central Station concourse.

NEW RDDC MEMBERS

- ◆ Choice One Communications
- ◆ Development Planning Services, Inc.

*The information herein is presented to the best of our knowledge at the time of publication. Please contact the **Rochester Downtown Development Corporation** at rddc@rddc.org with any information or corrections, or to be added or removed from our e-mail list.*

OTHER DOWNTOWN NEWS

- The 125-year-old, Tudor-style **Rochester Townhouse Apartments** in the historic Grove Place Neighborhood have just sold for \$1.04 million. The 25 market-rate units were purchased by Woodlark Properties II of New Rochelle, New York and will remain in the downtown rental inventory.



- The City of Rochester continues to prepare the area around **Charlotte St.** in the East End in anticipation of the construction of a townhouse project, slated to be “for sale” units. The City’s efforts include a new connection to Richmond Street, the creation of an additional surface parking lot to serve the area, and road improvements.



- **Keys Martini & Piano Bar** has opened at High Falls in the former Chrome space. Featuring dueling pianos, Keys is a unique addition to Rochester’s dining and entertainment scene. (See www.keyspianobar.com)

Rochester Region News

- **Brü**, a restaurant and brew pub, opened in the former Empire Brewing Company space. It is owned by beer-brewing family descendent Jonathan Wehle.



- From a field of 370 urban regions, Rochester was ranked 33rd on *Expansion Management* magazine’s list of “America’s 50 Hottest Cities”. The survey asked 70 of the nation’s most prominent site selection consultants to rank the cities their clients found most attractive for corporate expansions and relocations.
- *Site Selection* magazine’s January 2004 issue cited Rochester in a special report on New York. It noted the region’s optics and fuel-cell industries, and mentioned work by GRE and the Rump Group to consolidate local economic development efforts here.