



Making Provisions

The Westside has no problems attracting shoppers and diners, and a new development is hoping for residents and workers, too.

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It's a breezy fall Saturday afternoon, and the westside of Midtown is hopping. As usual, the line at Taqueria del Sol stretches out the door. Across the parking lot at Howell Mill and Huff roads, shoppers stroll through boutiques and peruse gourmet goods at Star Provisions.

Developers hope these established businesses will attract residents and workers as the former **WHITE PROVISION** meatpacking building nearby is transformed into condos, offices and more retail space over the next few years. It's the first residential project in the immediate neighborhood.

"This seems like it's going to be a real community and a real destination," says Scott Reilly, owner of **RETROMODERN**, who plans to reopen his modern design mecca this month on Brady Avenue, next door to White Provision, after moving from Peachtree Street in Midtown.

Next fall, the existing 1910-era building, which hovers behind Westside Urban Market, home to boutiques and restaurants such as perennial Atlanta favorite Bacchanalia, is slated to reopen with offices and retailers.

The 380,000-square-foot project will add 99 one-, two- and three-bedroom condos, priced from \$280,000-\$700,000, and shops and restaurants in a new building next door, expected to be complete in spring 2009.

As part of the \$70 million project, a pedestrian bridge will lead from the lobby of White Provision, span the railroad tracks and end between Bacchanalia and the courtyard at Westside Urban Market. "Our goal is for people to make a day of it," explains Chris Faussemagne of White Provision Development Co., a partner in the project with Weaver & Woodbery Co.

ATLANTA'S "CHELSEA DISTRICT"

"[The Westside's core customers] are already predisposed to know, like and appreciate the area for its current merits, and they want a residential experience. We're treating the building like an extension of that environment," says Michael Phillips, a partner in the project with Faussemagne and Mike Millett.

Buyers are expected to be single professionals and empty nesters from 28-65

years old. To help plan the interior design details they wanted to include in the condos, the developers sent a box of samples and finishes to about 90 people in the city, including customers of Westside shops and others whom "we think are interesting and have great aesthetics. We asked them what they thought the first residential project in this Westside neighborhood should be," Phillips says.

The result of the community-wide effort: dark wood and seagrass floors, and terrazzo and subway tile are among the lineup of features. Also, storage units will be on each floor instead of in the basement, and most residents will be able to access the parking deck without stepping onto an elevator.

Several upcoming residential projects are expected to add 2,000 units to the area, but don't expect high-rises. Faussemagne says the development on Peachtree and adjoining Midtown streets is like Times Square, while Westside is like New York's Chelsea district. "You might have Stella McCartney and Jeffrey next to a guy selling fish in the back of a truck," he says. "It's not such a far stretch."

"ALTERNATIVE" RETAIL

Retailers in White Provision will focus heavily on home furnishing, accessories and showroom spaces, complementing current shops that have a strong interior designer base of customers, Phillips says. **KNOLL** has signed on to be the first anchor showroom tenant, moving from midtown.

"We're building our core Westside neighborhood to be the alternative retail to the trade section of the city. It's an alternative to ADAC and the merchandise mart," he says.

The neighborhood's next culinary step will be three restaurants, and possibly a fourth on the roof of White Provision. Phillips says they're talking with prominent Atlanta chefs and a New York chef.

As one of the newcomers to this side of Midtown, Reilly says he is drawn to the area's glamour and grittiness. "It reminds me of old Soho or the meatpacking district in New York. There's something adventuresome about it," he says.