

Marriot International to build its first ClubSport hotel concept in Canada, Calgary

Hotel/resort consists of 200 rooms, a 60,000 sq.ft fitness club/social club and 55,000 sq.ft of retails space

BY MARIO TONEGUZZI, CALGARY HERALD SEPTEMBER 27, 2012

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Rendering of new Renaissance ClubSport hotel planned for the Beltline.

CALGARY — Marriott International will open the company's first Renaissance ClubSport hotel and fitness resort brand in Canada in Calgary's Beltline district, just across the street from Stampede Park.

The 160,000-square-foot, four-star hotel will consist of 200 rooms, a 60,000-square-foot fitness club and 55,000 square feet of retail space.

Calgary developer New Urban facilitated the acquisition of the development site and it has signed a management agreement with Marriott to develop the hotel in the old Victoria Park neighbourhood.

"This is a unique opportunity for Calgary that will raise the bar for the full-service hotel market in Calgary," said Dan Van Leeuwen, president and chief executive of New Urban.

He said the new hotel will have the benefit of being close to Stampede Park, the BMO Centre, downtown Calgary and Macleod Trail which is a main access route.

"This concept is very, very progressive," said Van Leeuwen. "You've got a lot of development moving toward the east end of the city through Victoria Park and East Village. There's no real hotel that is that close to the Stampede and the BMO Centre. But it also is a downtown hotel — 9th Avenue, the (railroad) tracks are not the end of downtown. There's a lot of business office development going on in the Beltline that make it a good location.

"Also, we have the ClubSport. It's a very good location for residents of the Beltline, residents of the near city and also business people driving into the city that want a convenient location to work out before lunch or after work. It's an easy site to get to from almost everywhere within the city."

New Urban will act as the development manager for the project and is working toward submitting a Development Permit application this fall. Construction of the hotel is scheduled to begin second quarter 2013 with completion in December 2015.

The hotel will be located on the corner of 12th Avenue and Macleod Trail S.E. The Enoch Sales house that currently sits on the site has been named a historical resource and donated to the City of Calgary. New Urban said it is in discussions with the City of Calgary regarding the renovation of the house and its relocation to a new public park being planned adjacent to the hotel site.

New Urban is also renovating the vacant Park Seville building in the city's Beltline district and turning it into a Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott.

The new hotel, on 12th Avenue S.W., adjacent to Central Memorial Park, will include 124 guest rooms. The 11-storey building has been empty since the fall of 2008. Construction of the hotel will begin this fall with completion slated for the fall of 2013.

"With more than 150 hotels in 35 countries, we are confident that the Renaissance ClubSport Calgary will add a level of sophistication and flair to the downtown skyline," said Manlio Marescotti, vice-president of lodging development for Marriott International.

Leisure Sports is helping to plan and develop the 60,000-square-foot ClubSport which will be part workout facility and

part social club. Membership will be open to Calgarians while hotel guests will be able to utilize the services during their stay.

The leasing of the retail space is being headed by Barclay Street Real Estate, which is looking for a retailer that complements the fitness component of the hotel.

“We have been in discussions with several large format retailers who realize the value of being associated with such a prestigious project,” said Jeff Robson, vice-president of Barclay Street Real Estate. “Calgary is a hot market for retailers coming from the U.S. so there is lots of potential to bring something different to Calgarians.”

David Low, executive director of the Victoria Park Business Revitalization Zone, said other developers may now be more inclined to look at projects in the old Victoria Park neighbourhood now that this new hotel has been announced.

“Everyone has been kind of mulling around the starting line and Dan has finally put his foot in the blocks and is racing,” said Low. “I think other people are going to go ‘wait, who’s that guy way out there’.

“That neck of the woods is challenging ... but I think when people realize that that concept can work, it will be the catalyst for future developments of a similar nature. In a way, it’s almost a proof of concept.”

The Calgary Stampede continues to be in discussions with a partner to build another major hotel in the area on Stampede Park’s northwest corner at 12th Avenue S.E. and Macleod Trail.

“We’re still dealing with the hotelier,” said Warren Connell, vice-president of park development for the Calgary Stampede. “Still has an interest in the site. Our hotel would be a surface lease deal.

“I would hope that our deal is done by the end of the year and then I would hope that the (development permit) is done by sometime this (upcoming) summer or fall. That’s my hope. But certainly I would say we’re close enough that we either know in the next month or so whether there is a deal or not a deal. It’s really down to the fine tuning.”

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