

Spallacci, Valeri breathe new life into downtown Hamilton

There are high, high hopes right now for downtown Hamilton.

A major new multi-use development that residents of Hamilton hope will do nothing less than spark a complete renaissance of the city's downtown was launched in June. Standing in the spotlight at the June 4 launch gala were two developers who expect the venture to represent a major legacy project in their careers.

The project is billed as The Residences of Royal Connaught. Just like the downtown itself, the Royal Connaught hotel was once a grand destination but structure had been left fallow for 10 years. Developers Rudi Spallacci, president of the Spallacci Group, and Ted Valeri, president of Valery Homes, aim to eventually build three new condo towers adjacent to the renovated 13-storey Royal Connaught, with the final total of some 700 homes complemented by shops and cafes.

Phase I will offer 122 condominium suites housed in the original Royal Connaught building, which was built by entrepreneur Harry Louis Frost to open in 1916.

Old friends, Spallacci and Valeri commented on the legacy aspect of the project in a conversation with FYI.

"What every builder and developer tries to achieve is something that you can leave for many, many generations to come," said Spallacci. "Frost built this building originally and hopefully we are the ones giving it its second life."



Anita and Ted Valeri of Valery Homes radiated elegance at the June 4 opening.

"We've been around a long time," said Spallacci. "We are the second generation, our fathers were the first one, they started around the same day, 1957 or '58, so it was a good fit. We've both built projects of similar size in the past, and we are always looking for different things to do, so this was the kind of project we wanted to work together on."

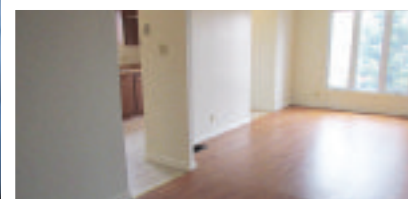
Valeri originally got going on the project five years ago and then brought Spallacci in. Valeri said he expects The Residences to appeal to a broad range of buyers. "We discussed this, Rudy and I, it is almost equal across the whole spectrum. We have younger professionals, we have middle-aged people, we have older people. The attraction to the older people and the middle-aged is

the attachment they have to the Royal Connaught."

"Hamilton's moment as a destination city has arrived," said Glen Norton, manager of urban renewal for the City of Hamilton. "Its incredible transformation is capped by the rebirth of the Royal Connaught. The time for Hamilton is now, it's truly a great moment to live in the city." — Don Wall

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