

ROMBRO

LOFTS

FINISHES | FLOOR PLANS | PRICE | COST ADVANTAGE | CONTACT US



[home](#) > [northstar](#)

Northstar

Northstar is a developer of luxury and cutting-edge residential properties in the Northeast. In existence for 3 years, Northstar has completed projects in Jersey City, New Jersey and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and is currently working on several others in Philadelphia, New York and Connecticut. These projects range from renovations of historic brownstones in the exclusive Rittenhouse Square area of Philadelphia to new luxury town homes in the high-end town of Greenwich, CT to loft condominiums in a historic warehouse in Center City Philadelphia similar to Baltimore's.

Our mission is to be a premier urban developer of mixed-use, infill and adaptive re-use properties. Our objective is to work with a neighborhood's existing fabric to create a vibrant community. We strive to develop the ideal product - socially, architecturally and environmentally - for our residents and commercial tenants, while maximizing returns for our investors.

Press

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED AUG 8, 2005 BALTIMORE SUN:

Rombro Building to be converted into condos

by Edward Gunts

One of Baltimore's rare cast-iron fronted buildings will soon be reborn as the city's newest loft condominiums.

The historic Rombro Building at 22 Howard St., a six-story former warehouse whose original owners included the niece of a U.S. president, is scheduled to reopen early next year as the Rombro Lofts, with 17 condominiums priced starting at \$215,000.

The \$6 million conversion is one of the first condominium projects to be launched on the west side of downtown Baltimore, where more than \$1 billion worth of redevelopment projects is under way or planned.

It's also the first project in Baltimore by Northstar Property Group, a New York-based firm that is building residences in Philadelphia, New York and Greenwich, Conn. Kann and Associates of Baltimore is the architect.

David Berger, a Baltimore native who is a partner of Northstar, said the west side has a variety of apartments for rent but little in the way of housing for sale.

He said he expects the Rombro Lofts to appeal to people working or studying at the University of Maryland's Baltimore campus, doctors and interns at the University of Maryland Medical System, people commuting to Washington by train and others who want to live downtown.

"We look for properties in infill locations - beautiful, historical buildings that aren't being properly used, that we can put back in use," Berger said. "When we came across this building, it was being marketed for lease or sale as an office building. We thought, hey, this is a great building for residences. We think there's a broad market."

Designed by Jackson Gott and constructed in 1881, the Rombro Building has a distinctive brick facade facing Howard Street, with cast-iron storefront frames at street level and stone columns and terra cotta ornamentation on the upper levels.

It was built as a companion to the Johnston Building, another loft structure that was torn down several years ago to make way for the Camden Court apartments, nearing completion at Howard and Lombard streets.

The original owners of both buildings were brothers Henry Elliott Johnston and Josiah Lee Johnston and Harriet Lane, Henry's wife. Lane was the orphaned niece of James Buchanan, a bachelor who became president in 1857 and brought her into the White House to be its official hostess.

The Rombro building was originally leased by Carroll Adams & Co. and Clark, Perry and Co., both makers and wholesalers of boots and shoes. Over the years it housed companies dealing in hats, shoes, clothing and furnishings, among other goods.

Morris Rombro, who ran a shirt-making company with his brother Jacob, acquired the building in 1919 and put his name on it. After Rombro left in 1958, it was converted to offices.

Northstar acquired the building in April and began construction in May. The sellers were David and Annie Abrams, who had owned it since the 1960s. Cam Construction of Timonium is the contractor.

Even though the Rombro Building is slightly shorter than the structures on either side, its exuberant front helps it stand out on the streetscape.

"It has a very ornate, very articulated facade," said Cass Gottlieb, project manager for Kann & Associates. "It was constructed at a time when people took a lot of pride in their buildings."

David Martz, the realtor handling sales for Long & Foster, said the lofts will feature high ceilings and large windows that offer views of neighboring structures such as the Bromo Seltzer Tower and the 1st Mariner Arena, with its rooftop chevrons.

Interiors will have bamboo flooring and upscale kitchens. In some cases, the ceilings are so high that the architects have inserted a mezzanine level to provide additional space.

Martz said there has been strong interest in the building, and three units have been sold sight unseen.

"It's a perfect use for this building," he said. "I get a dozen calls a week from people who want loft spaces and the only ones they can find are rentals. ... Some people want to own."

The Rombro Building had been part of a larger loft district, but some of the other lofts have gone the way of the Johnston Building.

With construction of Camden Court, the Rombro Lofts and the Centerpoint apartments all within a two-block stretch of Howard Street, Berger said, "you have a whole new neighborhood."

© The Baltimore Sun

22 Howard Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201 info@rombrolofts.com 410.522.6315





Powered by Big Medium