

1950s warehouse in Montclair is transformed into lofts

By Jill Jamieson-Nichols

A 1950s cold-storage warehouse is being reinvented as “finish-yourself” lofts in an established residential neighborhood near Lowry and Stapleton.

The Oneida Lofts is being created out of the former Foster’s Frosty Foods warehouse, a 16,500-square-foot modernist-style building at 1421 Oneida St. Oneida LLC, headed by Pioneer Capital Development principal Joseph Payton, purchased the building on the site of the original Montclair City Hall from The Broker Restaurants, which used it as a headquarters and warehouse for several years.

The 15 lofts are scheduled for completion in late summer. They are priced at \$189,000 to \$299,000, or \$229 per sf. That’s approximately \$100 per sf less than comparable downtown properties, Payton said, and about \$47,000 below the cost of a typical home in the Montclair neighborhood.

Oneida Lofts will be unique in that interiors will include things like upgraded cabinetry, stainless-steel appliances and 36-inch bathtubs with stone tile surrounds and double shower heads, but the remaining finishes will be minimal. The open floor plans will feature concrete floors and exposed joists, giving homeowners the option of finishing the floors, dry-walling and decorating to their tastes.

The only doors in the 933-to-1,246-square-foot lofts—which will feature skylights and ceilings that are a minimum of 10 feet in the main living area—will be for the bathroom, closets and furnace room. They will be made of slab birch with brushed-nickel hardware.

All of Oneida’s lofts are two bedroom floor plans, and several have second-story mezzanines. Several also have private patios.

The property will offer secure parking, with 12 garage spaces and 15 surface parking spaces, and “lush” landscaping.



Built as a cold-storage warehouse, the building at 1412 Oneida St. is being transformed into 15 lofts

The exterior of the Oneida Lofts’ building, which was redesigned in 1976, will feature natural aluminum window frames and green glass glazing, with inverted metal-clad columns supporting awnings. All of the units have rollup, glass-panel garage doors. SHoP Architects, a Denver firm, is the architect.

A horizontal-plank wood fence will create private space for owners, who will enter an interior courtyard via a Japanese keyhole gate on the north, or, to the south, a latticed gate. The courtyard will include a 5-by-7-foot “swing bed,” with a canopy, for lounging and a fire pit around which residents can gather.

The zoning allows for home-based businesses, and Payton said he wrote the condominium documents for Oneida Lofts to balance community living with the ability of owners to tailor their homes to their needs. For example, an owner is allowed, through an outlined process, to have rooftop deck without having to seek special approval from the homeowners association.

Payton chose the location in the Montclair neighborhood because it is in the path of development, which is expanding from the city center.

It’s also close to Stapleton and Lowry, which was a huge factor in his

decision. “I’m much more comfortable taking this project on knowing the Lowry/Stapleton culture is at my door.”

Located off of East Colfax Avenue between Monaco Parkway and Quebec Street, the lofts are surrounded by 1930s brick bungalows, schools and parks, and also are close to Fitzsimons.

“The neighborhood is just great,” Payton commented.

According to Payton, single-family homes in Montclair appreciated 8.6 percent last year, more than three times their 2003 level and twice the appreciation in the metro area as a whole.

Oneida Lofts is Payton’s largest project in the Denver area, where he has been buying and renovating residential properties since the mid-1990s. In Texas, he developed Vista West, a residential development that fills a city block in Bastrop.

Payton said the Oneida Lofts is a chance to take a building that “nobody knows what to do with” and turn it into one of the nicest properties in the area.

“It’s really exciting to be a part of the change of a neighborhood,” he said.

Castle Pines Construction is the contractor for the development. John Ludwig of Kentwood City Properties is handling sales.