

# Brick Yard Station Revives Rail History

BY JEAN SORENSEN



**C**loverdale's heritage rail theme is coming alive with development of Anthem Properties' community shopping centre located in this historic hub of Surrey. The retail centre, sited on just over six of 10.4 acres at the northwest corner of Highways 10 and 15, is also only a block away from the newly-built railway historic museum opening fall 2011.

Anthem project development manager Kate Sunderland says the heritage rail concept will be evident throughout the retail complex which houses five structures (a main building, two smaller retail buildings, a CIBC drive-thru, and a Rexall Pharmacy outlet). In total the retail mall will offer 67,760 square feet of community retail space in the form of food outlets and services. Other major tenants include Staples Business Depot, Original Joe's Restaurant, Starbucks, Clancy's Meat Co. and Vera's Burgers. Construction on this community shopping centre has started with site rehabilitation completed and the foundation work underway.

Lee-Anne Pitcairn, the City of Surrey planner who has handled the Anthem project from concept to approval, says Cloverdale residents strongly

support the heritage aspect of new construction.

"Whether it is people doing a retrofit or a new development," she says, "It is one of the things that we look at."

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Cloverdale, an area that traces its development back to the mid-1800s when European immigrants arrived, had the distinction of having its own brickyard, which supplied building materials in Cloverdale's now historic structures. Clover Valley (which became Cloverdale) also

served as a rail hub. Both themes are being realized in the Anthem Brick Yard Station development, which will serve one of the Fraser Valley's fastest growing communities.

Sunderland says that the design calls for aged, red brick to be used on the building faces with large steel canopies covering decks.

"We have taken a variety of ideas from (Vancouver's) Yaletown — although it will not have a warehouse feel but rather a heritage quality that reflects the theme of Cloverdale," says Sunderland.

She has been working with the Cloverdale archive staff to locate historic railway photos that can be enlarged and mounted on the side of buildings.

"We want black and white photos that are images of heritage railways and historic Cloverdale mounted at various elevations of the buildings," she says.

Completing the rustic charm of the development are window frames done in black, roll-up garage doors, paving stones used throughout with sidewalks that are 10-15 feet wide, heritage lamp posts and exposed bolt detailing on buildings.



The buildings are concrete and structural steel in a steel stud in-fill design, says Michael Vernon, project manager for Ventana Construction, which is serving as the general contractor on the project.

“It’s a pretty straight forward job,” he says. The project is expected to finish spring 2012. There will be approximately 50-100 tradesmen and workers on site during the construction.

“As we get closer to finishing there will probably be about 100 on site,” says Vernon.

The project design is by Kasian Architecture, while structural engineering is being undertaken by John Bryson & Partners. Other major trades working on the project include: B&B Contracting (site prep), Raven Roofing (metal roofing and cladding), Robertson Drywall Service (steel studs and drywall), Nightengale Electrical Ltd. (electrical), Russell Mechanical Systems (mechanical) and Broadway Refrigeration Co. (refrigeration).

The site did not come without restrictions as it is not deemed suitable for housing. As Pitcairn points out, the area is in a flood plain and clay soils. It also needed soil remediation as it was previously used to store road maintenance materials such as salt and equipment. The site also has two nearby streams. They are not fish bearing, but tributaries to fish-bearing rivers and contribute food in various forms into those fish-bearing rivers.

An environmental assessment was carried out by ECL Envirowest Consultants and through a commitment to enhance the



streams, Anthem was able to gain easements on setbacks. Sunderland says that areas around these streams are being planted with natural vegetations (near the Class A stream asphalt now in place is being ripped up and replaced with natural landscaping) while the second, Class B stream will also have riparian planting to serve as a bio-swale, which will cleanse water that might reach that stream.

“As well, we will have pavers throughout the development (which allow water to percolate into the ground rather than run off) and that makes a huge difference to water quality,” she says.

The mall will have a rail theme, reflecting the history of Cloverdale.

The rail theme of the mall will have two historic links to the community. It is only a block from where the Interurban rail line (a commuter train) and the U.S. Southern Railway tracks once crossed when Cloverdale was taking shape. And, it is only a block and a half away from where the City of Surrey has provided a site for the Fraser Valley Heritage Rail Society (FVHRS) museum. The City has acquired land just south of Highway 10 along



176 St for the building of a new car barn to accommodate two refurbished rail cars. The site with the car barn is located at the corner of 64th Ave and 152nd St. The area is also home to the Sullivan Station, a replicated railway station that also has a rail car barn that housed the refurbished rail cars.

Paul Oraziotti of the Cloverdale Business Improvement Association says the area's businesses are very much in favour of preserving a heritage theme and marketing around that theme as seen with Brick Yard Station. But, the development also "puts more mass into the town centre," he says, adding that current commercial development in the area needs to undergo more densification to better serve area residents, especially those who want to walk to a shopping area or look for a short commute.

"It will make the city centre more sustainable and offer larger diversity in retailing," he says.

Phase II of the development will cater to light industrial and industrial park users. Although still in the conceptual stage, Oraziotti says the second portion of the development will offer a good opportunity for light industrial as cities such as Vancouver have reduced their available land in favour of housing.

"This has given areas such as ours an opportunity to offer industrial land," he says, adding that the land comes with a lower cost than in larger more populated areas. "There is a shortage of industrial land today, yet there's a major need." **CB**

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