

CONDO LIVING

Saturday, May 5, 2001 Section P thestar.com

Tuning in to Radio City

Included are condo towers, townhouses and ballet school

BY ELVIRA CORDILEONE
REALESTATE REPORTER

When Context Development launches its Radio City project next Saturday, don't expect a lineup of long-legged dancers to welcome you.

The condo development takes its name not from New York's Radio City

music hall but from the CBC, former owners of the property bounded by Carlton, Jarvis, Maitland and Mutual streets. Still, there are dancers involved, since Context will share the site with an expanded National Ballet School.

In an agreement reached with the city, the ballet school gets the CBC gothic-style building and the historic Mowat House, home of Ontario's first premier, and a portion of the CBC lands. Context will build two slender condo towers mid-lot and a row of 12 townhouses along Mutual St. at the

eastern edge of the site.

Howard Cohen, president of Context Developments, said the city has a plan to rejuvenate the whole Jarvis St. area. The former city planner likes to talk about neighbourhoods and about sensitivity to surroundings when his company puts up buildings.

"We are living up to our name - Context," said Cohen.

Designed by architect Peter Clewes of Architects Alliance, the two Radio City condo towers and townhouses

➤ Please see Historical, P8



MAKING A POINTE:

The National Ballet School will be inhabiting part of the site of the new Radio City condos on Jarvis St.

Historical facades extended on Jarvis

➤ Continued from P1

will be connected by courtyards to form a natural link with the ballet school property.

The 25-storey north tower with 150 units and half the townhouses are about to come on the market. A 300-unit, 30-storey tower and remaining townhouses will follow.

"When you look at the immediate area, there are two forms of housing: townhouses and high-rises. Radio City does both. We are extending the townhouses along Mutual St. and adding two elegant towers mid-block. And we are continuing the historical facades along Jarvis," said Cohen.

Cohen said he expects the development to attract a cross section of people with a "downtown mentality" — a state of mind that has less to do with a person's age than it does with wanting to walk to theatres, sports events and enjoy street festivals. He predicts the area will have a sort of Upper East Side New York feel with a "wonderful" mix of people at all levels of income.

Context spends a lot of time with people who buy condos to find out what features they are looking for, said Cohen. They want a view, lots of light, modern clean lines, nine-foot ceilings, wood floors and custom features.

Radio City's two towers have a small footprint that makes them unique, said Cohen. There are only eight units per floor so half of them are corner suites with double the amount of glass.

"But every suite has floor to ceiling glass windows with a marvellous view and full of light. Every suite has a balcony or terrace," said Cohen.

Tower units are a mix of one and two-bedrooms. A 535-square-foot one-bedroom unit costs \$129,000. A two-bedroom penthouse is 1,300 square feet, priced at \$350,000.

"It's a real one-bedroom. Yet at \$129,000 it makes it possible for people who now rent to buy," said Cohen.

The three-bedroom townhouses face Mutual St. and cost \$350,000. They will have their own roof gardens and will connect to the underground parking, garage that serves the entire project.

Amenities include health spa, sauna, fitness, meeting a billiard room and 24-hour concierge. Six appliances and high-speed Internet connection are part of the standard package.

Construction is set to begin early next year.

During the last few years Context has built a number of inner city projects including Twenty Niagara, Upper East Side Riverdale and Ideal Condominiums at Markham and College. But two Context projects currently in the works have generated vigorous public debate: a condominium overlooking High Park (approved by the Ontario Municipal Board but being appealed by residents and city council) and a proposed high-rise on a parking lot near St. James Cathedral.

"I understand there are people who don't like what we do," said Cohen. "But if you look at our track record, it speaks for itself."

Referring to Context's award-winning Kensington Market Lofts conversion, Cohen said somebody did try to take it to court. But it's been finished for a year and Cohen said people love it. He predicts the High Park project, now called Home, whose opening is imminent, will ultimately follow the same course.

Radio City's grand opening is next Saturday. The sales office is located at 380 Jarvis St., south of Wellesley. For information call 416-963-0220 or visit www.context.ca.



NO STATIC: Radio City towers.