



NATASHA FILLION/THE GAZETTE

Machinerie Lofts are being developed in two phases in the Southwest borough. Phase 1 will have 49 units ranging in size from 750 to 1,500 square feet.

A new life for an old factory

UNUSUAL BUILDING features Second Empire architecture and is part of the city's industrial heritage

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SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

Be it cobblestone streets, old storefront signs or well-preserved buildings, glimpses of Montreal's past can still be found in certain pockets of the city. Aside from Old Montreal, the Southwest borough has a handful of exceptional buildings marking the city's heritage. The few remaining old factory buildings in that area are reminiscent of what was the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution in Canada. Constructed in 1879, the Williams Manufacturing Co. building is a beautiful representation of the style of architecture popular at that time.

So when it came to converting it into high-end lofts, Emile Fattal was able to draw on years of experience restoring heritage buildings in Old Montreal to preserve as much of the structure's unique history as possible.

The Gazette sat down with Fattal, president of Bourget Capital, the developer behind the La Machinerie project, to learn more about its conversion into authentic lofts.

The building

"It's the most unusual building in terms of design; it's called Second Empire architecture. Its history in the context of Montreal's development is really interesting because, coupled with other elements such as the construction of the Grand Trunk Railway, the factories in that area had such an important role in growing the City of Montreal and beyond.

"This type of architecture just isn't built anymore. These buildings are so rare and extraordinary. The market is beginning to appreciate and even pay a premium for them, but it wasn't always like this; that's why Montreal lost so much of its beautiful architecture. A lot of these grand buildings were torn down for completely new constructions during development booms in Montreal; it's really a shame."

The project

"La Machinerie is located at 3601 St. Jacques St. W. and spans a whole city block from Bourget to Rose-de-Lima Sts. Construction on the project began in spring 2012 and delivery is expected this summer. The project will be done in two phases. The second



PHOTOS: NATASHA FILLION / THE GAZETTE

The Williams Manufacturing Co. building, constructed in 1879, is being completely restored and renovated into Machinerie Lofts condos.



Emile Fattal, president of Bourget Capital which is developing La Machinerie, says the building is "rare and extraordinary."

phase will be a new construction, on which ground will be broken later this year. Phase 1 will contain 49 units ranging in size from 750 to 1,500

square feet. The lofts will be priced from \$200,000 to \$520,000, excluding taxes. The project is currently 75 per cent sold."

The units

"The units were designed to be sleek and modern, while incorporating elements of the building's past. Most of

the units will be one-bedroom lofts with high ceilings, exposed brick walls and large windows to maximize natural light. The lofts will have air conditioning, quartz countertops in the kitchens, hardwood floors and some of the units will have balconies. The penthouses will have private terraces of up to 200 square feet with panoramic views of the city. The building was restored so that the timeless look of the brick walls really stands out as a signature feature of the project. For example, surrounding the entrance of every unit is an enormous brick structure on either side of the door."

Amenities

"Rather than creating one large common rooftop terrace, as is the trend for condo developments, La Machinerie will have several smaller common areas allowing easier access and varied use. In order to meet the lifestyle needs of its residents, the development will have a fully

equipped gym. There will also be recreation rooms with access to the outdoor terraces, which will feature a spa and barbecue facilities.

"The internal courtyard of the project will consist of green space and will be landscaped with a garden and relaxation area. Parking will be available on site and each loft comes with adequate storage space in the unit or in the lower level of the building."

The neighbourhood

"The community around La Machinerie is so vibrant, having been completely revived in recent years. The area is largely residential, with several condo developments nearby; and residents consist largely of young professionals and families. This demographic is no surprise, as the location is very convenient, between two metro stations for easy access to public transit. The project is also very close to the Atwater Market, several restaurants, grocery stores and other essentials."