Artful project emerges

Yonkers’ Glenwood development to have a very modern design

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The Journal News

YONKERS — It's no secret that this city is undergoing a building boom as more developers try to capitalize on available space on the Hudson River waterfront. But a project to redevelop the old Glenwood Power Station is setting itself apart from the pack.

REMI Cos., of Hoboken, N.J., is planning to convert the mammoth old station into a 350-unit rental and condominium property and contemporary art museum. In an unusual move, developer Erik Kaiser has brought on a world-renowned architect who will add his signature modernist style, which could make the building an architectural destination in itself.

The building will also produce its own energy with a rooftop wind turbine and solar panels.

"Yonkers is an extraordinary location with all of the ingredients for a successful future," said Kaiser, principal of REMI, talking about his plans to bring the unique project to the city. "The power plant site, as far as I'm concerned, is one of the most beautiful pieces of property on the Hudson River."

Kaiser has put together a star team to make his vision a reality. That includes London-based architect Will Alsop, whose curvy and colorful buildings have sparked worldwide interest and garnered key honors and awards. This will be Alsop's first project in the United States.

Another well-known member of the team is Guy Battle, an engineer who specializes in sustainable technology and whose resume includes work on New York City's Freedom Tower. In addition to producing its own energy, the building will also have a rainwater-collection system, and the ecology surrounding the site will be restored to its natural state, according to REMI.

These industry stars are bringing their progressive and modern ideas to a city with historic buildings but little in the way of modern architecture and art. Though the renderings have not been released for publication yet, an early drawing shows a tall, colorful and modern-looking building hoisted on stilts on top of the current structure at the old power station. That design, of course, subject to change.

At a meeting to be held tonight at the Hudson River Museum, Yonkers residents will get a first look at the renderings and will be invited to share their opinions and input.

Some elements of the project were developed after an open forum with residents of the nearby Glenwood Gardens apartment complex in December.

Alsop, who has done urban regeneration work in Europe and Canada, typically meets with the community throughout the creative process of his projects. In fact, he has been known to distribute wine and crayons, asking participants to draw what they would like to see.

Kaiser, too, makes it a point to meet with the public while planning his projects, which have included residential developments in New Jersey. He is also developing Velocity at Greystone, a 79-unit rental apartment building at 1077 Warburton Ave.

Information and ideas from the public will ultimately help shape the direction of the Glenwood project, according to Kaiser.

"The location is incredible," Kaiser said, "and it can adaptively be reused to change the landscape for the better of the community and the waterfront."

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If you go

The public is invited to a meeting about the redevelopment of the old Glenwood Power Station on the Yonkers waterfront.

Developer Erik Kaiser, principal of REMI Cos. of Hoboken, N.J., and architect Will Alsop will lead the presentation.

When: 6:30 tonight
Information: 377-6311