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Luxury condo plan faces opposition Size of project worries foes

By Bartley Kives

The owner of an apartment building next door to Restaurant Dubrovnik has filed an appeal against a plan to build a 16-storey luxury condominium and boutique hotel on the site of the upscale eatery.

In December, the City of Winnipeg's property department granted a pair of permits for a glass-enclosed condominium and hotel complex on Assiniboine Avenue that would also contain a restaurant, retail stores and cosmetic-surgery clinics.

The first round of permits is opposed by Glendower Investments, which owns the Bessborough Apartments, a 45-suite building that sits immediately east of Restaurant Dubrovnik.

Officially, Glendower is appealing the project on the grounds a hotel is not conducive to the residential nature of the Broadway-Assiniboine neighbourhood and there may not be enough parking to handle the clientele.

But the apartment owner is also concerned with the sheer size of the project planned for the Dubrovnik site.

"There are small, 3.5-storey buildings going all around that block, and all of a sudden you have something 16 storeys high? We'd like to find out more about it," Glendower co-owner Ian Plant said Monday. "We don't really know what they have planned. We have no real idea, so we're looking for more information."

Officially known as MSH Assiniboine, the project planned for 390 Assiniboine Ave. calls for 40 condominium suites, 40 boutique hotel suites, a spa, restaurant, drinking establishment, plastic-surgery clinics and retail stores inside an energy-efficient, geothermally-heated structure designed by architect **Ernie Walter**. The new building would require the demolition of Restaurant Dubrovnik.

Project spokesman Dave Spiers, an agent with Royal LePage Dynamic Real Estate, said the MSH Assiniboine plan accommodates public access to the Assiniboine River.

He said neighbouring residents need not worry about the size of the building.

"The actual shade that would be drawn on the Bessborough will not be a lot different from what's already there, with Dubrovnik as it stands," Spiers said. "If anything, the building is going to enhance the value of (Plant's) property,

but I can understand his concern. It's only right he has the opportunity to have more information."

No date has been set for Glendower's appeal, but it will likely go before city council's downtown development committee on Jan. 15.

Fort Rouge Coun. Jenny Gerbasi, whose ward contains the Broadway-Assiniboine neighbourhood, and property committee chairman Justin Swandel, both sit on the downtown committee and thus could not comment on the pending appeal.

Other sources at City Hall said MSH Assiniboine could face a rough regulatory ride.

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