



The roof of Buckingham Commons offers a singular view. The owners are building a rooftop garden for residents.

Great views at Buckingham Commons

An abandoned building is transformed into loft apartments with charm and amenities.

by **Joy Underhill**
Contributing writer

Imagine coming home from work, grabbing a cold one and heading to the roof to settle in for a relaxing evening watching the Red Wings. That's what apartment-dwellers at Buckingham Commons can enjoy when these newly renovated loft apartments open in September.

"We've taken an eyesore and turned it into affordable, well-appointed apartments and office space," says Larry Glazer, CEO at Buckingham Properties. "By exposing the beams and red brick framework, we offer



a charm that's hard to find and the amenities people need."

Buckingham Commons occupies the old ArtCraft Optical Building located at 85 Allen St. (where the Interstate 490 off-

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ramp meets Plymouth Avenue). Originally built by the Pullman Company in 1900, the building housed several manufacturing firms over the years until it was abandoned about seven years ago. Renovations began in 2005, and a new brick entrance was added along with gated, secure parking.

Each unit comes with cherry cabinetry, state-of-the-art appliances and a center kitchen island. Add 12-foot ceilings, massive curved windows and a fitness center and you have a recipe for success in drawing people to downtown living.

To expose all the brick and wood, the meticulous renovation was done with an eye to what modern tenants would require. Although the floors couldn’t be salvaged, they were replaced with ceramic tile and durable hardwood-like materials that keep with the style of airy, loft dwelling.

Signs of a 1930-era fire were discovered, which required sanding down beams and sealing them with lacquer. Many internal surfaces required sand-blasting to restore the beauty of the brick, and two-tone gold paint was used to finish the exterior.

“While we were pulling up old linoleum,” claims Glazer, “we found *D&C* newspapers dating from the 1920s. Everyone had a good time checking out the comics from that time.”

A highlight of the property is the view. Its solitary location provides excellent views in all directions. Look to the south toward Hochstein, to the north at Kodak tower, and to the east and west along the Inner Loop and I-490, with choice viewing of trains passing by Frontier Field. Best of all, the close proximity to the downtown area means you won’t be caught in any of those traffic jams you might witness.

“We’re building bleachers and a container garden on the roof for our residents,” adds Glazer. “Where else in Rochester can



Gleaming floors and exposed brick are part of the charm of this vintage building.



Buckingham Properties has worked for more than a year to restore the building. In April 2005 (left), the interior was still rough. By November, the restoration work had meticulously exposed original brick and wood.

you enjoy a rooftop garden?”

Residents can also look right down into the stadium and check out the scoreboard. The facility is within easy walking distance of downtown shopping, business and entertainment districts.

The 36 apartments range from 730 to 1,010 square feet and include amenities such as Corian countertops, Kohler faucets and Jenn-Aire stoves. The building is

fully air-conditioned and offers an on-site tenant services assistant. Modern conveniences include secure building and elevator access, laundry facilities and high-speed communications availability.

All apartments are one bedroom. Rents range from \$800 to \$1200 per month.

For more information, call Carol Pospula at 295-9500 or visit www.buckprop.com.