

PS&S Providing Architecture and Engineering Services for Wellness Plaza, A Mixed Use Development in Downtown New Brunswick, NJ

Urban Revitalization Project Will Feature Supermarket, Fitness/Wellness Center, Public Parking

WARREN, NJ, (September 15, 2011) PS&S, an award-winning design and engineering firm, is providing full architecture and engineering services for a mixed-use redevelopment project on an underutilized site in downtown New Brunswick, New Jersey. Once completed, the project will provide the City of New Brunswick with a full-service supermarket, a fitness and wellness center and nearly 1,300 additional parking spaces.

Centrally located in the heart of downtown New Brunswick, the project site until recently was comprised of surface parking lots, a vacant furniture warehouse, a four-story office building and a number of dilapidated multi-family residences. The city redesignated the site as the Jelin Street Redevelopment Area calling for the development of community-wide uses focusing on health and wellness along with better accessibility to downtown transit facilities. The oblong two-acre site is bordered by city streets and a NJ Transit right-of-way. In order to attract tenants, the project requirements included:

- 70,000 square feet for a fitness center with 6-lane, Olympic-size swimming pool;
- 50,000 square feet for a supermarket with a loading dock to accommodate tractor trailer deliveries and turning movements;
- At least 1,275 parking spaces; and
- The ability to connect to the nearby train station via future elevated pedestrian bridge.

“From a design and engineering perspective, the greatest challenge facing the design team was to meet the development’s functional requirements while designing a structure that would complement the character of the city’s existing environment,” explained Dr. Anthony Sartor, CEO of PS&S. “We also wanted to make each use convenient for the largest possible number of people, not only residents and the local working community but also to commuters. The design approved by the New Brunswick Development Corporation (Devco) accomplishes those goals.”

To enhance the project’s overall appeal, PS&S designed a pedestrian-friendly and visually stimulating two-story entrance lobby where the project site interacts with the city’s downtown and the train station. The lobby welcomes users to the ground-level supermarket and second story fitness center and comfortably transitions them to the garage parking. While the lobby design was perhaps the most challenging element, an equally novel solution was the location of the fitness center’s Olympic-size swimming and spa therapy pools: under the garage access/egress helix. Diagonal loading dock bays allow supermarket delivery truck movements onto city streets with limited disruption of traffic and exterior building equipment is hidden in a service alley. The project will revitalize this area of the city and achieve the goal of the city’s redevelopment plans.