



# MacQuesten buys Mount Vernon train station

By Bill Heltzel

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The Mount Vernon West train station is “horrible looking and not well maintained,” according to Joe Apicella, “and that’s why we saw the potential.”

On July 14, MacQuesten Development of Pelham, where Apicella is managing director of development, bought the building from Davenis Realty Inc. for \$3 million.

Not only is the station at 1 Mount Vernon Ave. in bad shape, the neighborhood is dilapidated and depressed.

“I know people who go out of their way to avoid using that station,” he said. “They go to Fleetwood instead.”

But MacQuesten sees potential. The station is 26 to 37 minutes from Grand Central Station by Metro North Railroad. It is near Yonkers Raceway, the Bronx River Road corridor and the center of Mount Vernon.

“It’s an untapped market for commuters,” he said. And we’re going to take that hidden gem and shine it and make it work.”

The city is creating a transit-oriented district with new zoning that will allow mixed-use developments on 46 acres by the station.

MacQuesten has invested deeply in the neighborhood. It is nearing completion of The Modern, 81-unit workforce housing apartments in an 11-story building at 13 Mount Vernon Ave. It has plans on the drawing board for 22 S. West Street Tower, a \$71-million, 20-story mixed use building next to the station.

“This is a key acquisition,” Apicella said about the train station. “It’s about controlling the factors in the corridor and bringing them into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”

The company has no specific plans or budget yet but is exploring a range of possibilities.

The station could be renovated, expanded or razed. Retail uses could include a café or food market and other “quality retail” for commuters. Apartments could be built.

The 15,000-square-foot station currently has a bank, a karate studio and other small, local businesses as tenants.

Apicella said the company will study the building’s architecture and history in the next few months, identify possible uses and, maybe by spring 2017, begin major work.

“First things first,” he said. “We have to find out what we have here. Who the patient is. Decide how to treat the patient. And make the patient better.”

