96 apartments in store for Callowhill’s Heid building

The old hat factory is getting a makeover

by Melissa Romero Sep 21, 2017, 9:00am EDT

The Heid Building, an old hat-making factory in Callowhill, will be converted into apartments. Photos by Melissa Romero

An old hat-making warehouse located just past the Vine Street Expressway in Callowhill is about to become an amenity-driven, mixed-use apartment building.

The Heid Building at 323 N. 13th Street used to be the home of Frank P. Heid & Company, which once held the title of being the largest hat- and cap-making company in Philly. But like many other warehouses all throughout the city, this one has been vacant for the past 11 years.

That’s all set to change with the announcement that local developer PRDC Properties will be bringing 96 market-rate one- and two-bedroom apartments to the site, with rents ranging from $1,100 to $2,200 a month.

It will also be home to a ground-floor restaurant and a roof top amenity level with swinging hammocks, fire pits, a dog park, and an indoor-outdoor kitchen.

“We want it so that everyone can live outside of the apartment,” said PRDC Properties president Jon Thomas at Wednesday’s announcement on the fourth floor of the Heid Building. “This building will give you the opportunity to do that.”
The roof terrace will feature swings, fire pits, and a dog park. Renderings by Atrium Design Group

The project and the apartments will be designed by Shimi Zakin of the local architecture firm Atrium Design Group. But for the building’s actual build out, PRDC Properties will be helped by 20 high school students from Ben Franklin High School’s Career & Technical Education Vocational Center.

The partnership, encouraged by City Councilman and real estate magnate Allan Domb, will train students on the job, allowing them to be a part of the construction process at the Heid Building from start to finish.

“We think this public-private partnership has the ability to be life-altering,” said PRDC Properties chief operating officer Brandon Morrison to a crowd of students at the announcement. Morrison worked with Domb to put the internship program together.
Twenty students from Ben Franklin High School will be selected as interns to help convert the Heid Building into apartments.
The Heid building adaptive reuse effort is the latest redevelopment project to come to Callowhill, a neighborhood that’s been experiencing a recent renaissance. Its location, within steps of the future Rail Park and a 10-minute walk to Center City, has made the area attractive to developers in recent years.

The move made sense for PRDC Properties, which is known for its luxury home developments (it recently broke ground on a 44-townhome community in Northern Liberties with starting prices at $699,000.). It also led the restoration of the historic Lincoln apartment building in Washington Square West.
Mayor Jim Kenney was on hand at the announcement. Keeping his remarks short, he encouraged the students to “be on time” and thanked the developer for preserving the building.

Councilman Domb added, “You can’t live in history in any other city like you can in Philly. This is living history.”

Construction is expected to begin in November and take 15 months.
The south-facing view of the Heid Building, looking toward Center City.
The exterior of the Heid Building will be restored. *Rendering by Atrium Design Group*

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