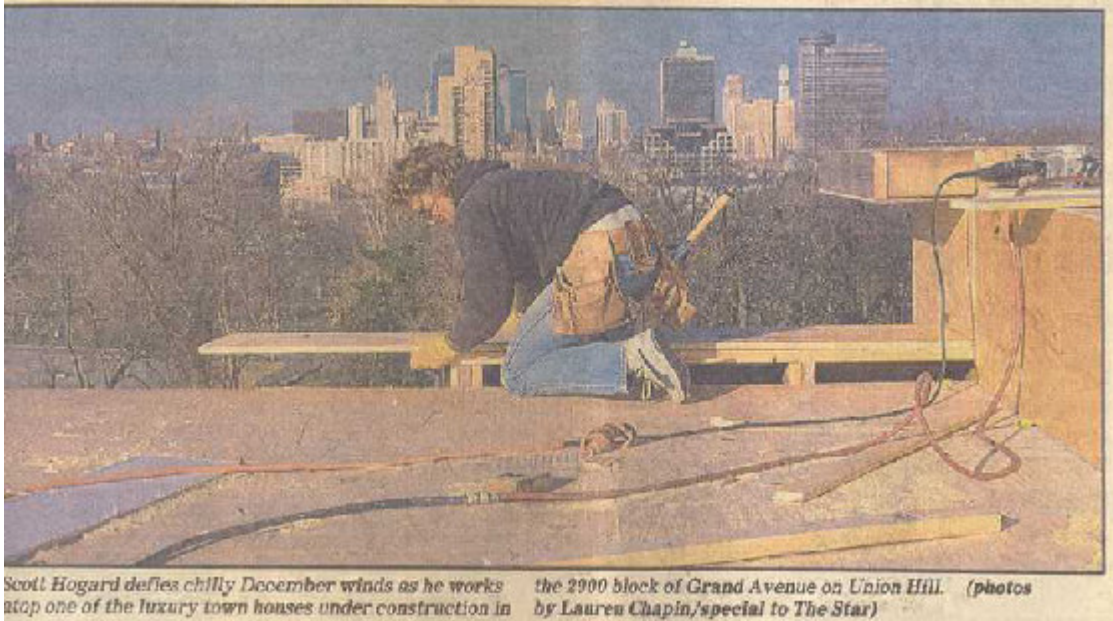


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Union Hill Building Resumes

By Sam Nicholas – Star business & Financial writer



Pickup trucks and construction crews are returning to Union Hill as building and rehabilitation work in the neighborhood south of Crown Center perks up.

This fall the new owners of the companies in charge of redevelopment of the neighborhood received city approval for modifications in the plan for the area. With the paper work out of the way, they now can concentrate on construction, said architect Robert Frye, president of R. L. Frye Co; and one of the officers in the ownership group.

Among recent developments:

- Work is under way on five luxury town houses as part of the Grand Court Rowhomes in the 2900

block of Grand Avenue. One will be a model home, but only the shells for the others will be built, allowing buyers to custom-design the interiors.

- Renovation of the former Kansas City Rug Co. building at 3030 Gillham Road is nearly finished. The building will be the new location of Medical Marketing Inc., which is moving from smaller quarters on the West Side.
- A new roof and exterior renovations have been completed on the building housing Marcone Appliance Parts at 3113 main St. In the spring, further work will be done on an

adjacent parking lot an on the building, once an A&P grocery.

- In March, the Metropolitan Medical Society of Greater Kansas City plans to renovate the exterior of its building on the northwest corner of 31st and Gillham. The \$90,000 project will include a new brick exterior with cast-stone details, including sunbursts over entrances, said Ron Cosens, executive director of the 1,500 member association of area physicians.

“We’ve been here since 1952 and wanted to dress up the front of the building and the parking lot,” he said.

It has been about six years since construction started on the Union Hill redevelopment project. More than 60 town houses costing up to \$400,000 have been built and at least 80 single-family homes and apartments have been renovated. Several commercial buildings have also been rehabilitated.

About two years ago the project lost momentum when Jim Young, the original developer, ran into financial and legal problems.

Early this year Frye and his partners in Union Hill Acquisition Inc. and its subsidiary, Phoenix Redevelopment Corp., bough the redevelopment rights and some land and buildings from companies controlled by Young.

Other officers are James Bowers, a director of the law firm Polsinelli, White, Vardeman & Shalton, and Stephen Block, senior vice president of Block & Co. Inc., a commercial real estate firm.

Oppenheimer Industries Inc. also invested in the project last spring.

The three-level Grand Court Rowhomes will have garages and 1,550 to 2,000 square feet. Prices will range from \$145,000 to \$185,000, which includes architectural services.

Building the five shells at one time saves on building costs, and architecture can be kept compatible, Frye said.

He will use a computer-assisted design system to work with the buyers to custom-design the interiors.

Medical Marketing Inc. will start moving into the former rug company location next week. The firm, which now occupies about 5,000 square feet in two buildings at 25th and Jefferson streets, will more than triple its pace at its new location.

President Les Matthews said a priority in his search for new quarters was a location in the Midtown-Downtown area that was convenient to his employees and to many of the hospitals, nursing homes and home-care companies the firm serves.

Union Hill Acquisitions renovated the building to his specifications under an agreement in which his firm would buy the completed project. The \$600,000 project involves restoration of terra cotta exterior, construction of a loading dock and a new interior.

Goforth Construction Inc. is the general contractor. Financing is through Missouri Bank and Trust Co. and the

Economic Development Corporation of

Kansas City.



Rob Morrison applies a second coat of paint in the two-story atrium of the new offices of Medical Marketing Inc. at 3030 Gilham Road.