

Exhibit I

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CRANES

Highland Park Mill is a development project finally doing it right



By **Jason Thomas** | December 1, 2015
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 e has such a long formed and illustrious habit of destroying and sanitizing history with its monuments. This is especially true when you look at South End. The light rail brought billions in investment, and while the end result is incredible in terms of growth, there's not much character.

 nd is trying to recover and right the wrongs of the past, but a lot of it is too little too late.

er, with the light rail extension currently under construction from Uptown to UNC Charlotte, a opportunity arises. It's a chance to learn from our mistakes and organically create a cohesive district along the extension. Optimist Park is set to see a tremendous amount of growth and really come into its own identity.

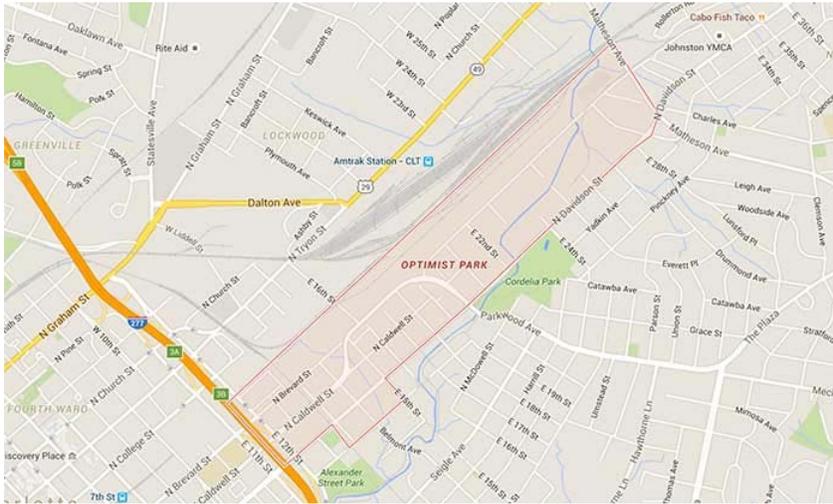


Photo via Google Maps

Birdsong's new brewery is in Optimist Park, as is the upcoming Joe's Doughs and Abari Game Bar. However, as great as these are, they pale in comparison to the massive redevelopment, planned by Whitepoint Partners and Paces Properties, of the Highland Park Mill.

Sitting where Brevard meets Parkwood (and Belmont and 16th) and just steps from what will be a light rail station (Parkwood Station), this old mill is going to be torn down for a large apartment complex... Just kidding, folks, this is going to be a development project done right.

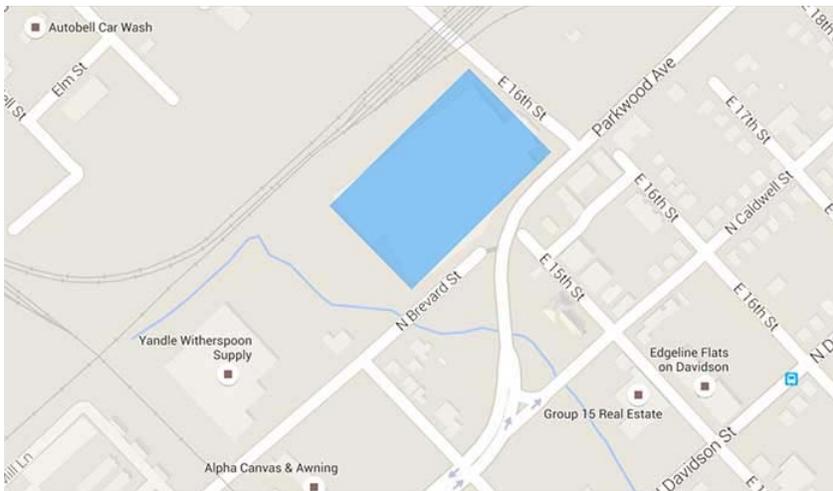


Photo via Google Maps

Rather than do it the cheap and easy way, Whitepoint and Paces have elected to save history, enhance character and create a space for the neighborhood and the city. So, let's dive into the concept and the plans to get a sense of what we are gaining.

Highland Park Mill will be redeveloped into a retail and loft style office space with approximately 65,000 square feet of retail and 100,000 square feet of office. But that is just the tip of the iceberg.

The folks behind this developed the [Krog Street Market](#) in Atlanta (among others) and it is such a cool concept. For starters, think 7th Street Market on steroids. But that is just to get you started – don't think this place is looking to put 7th Street out of business. It's not. There will be a mix of food

hall (*not* a food court) dining options as well as regular retail (clothing, etc). Both have similar goals: embrace local and enhance Charlotte's food scene.



Photo via Whitepoint Partners and Paces Properties

Highland Park will be truly mixed use (with no apartments, yay!) in the sense it will provide people a place to eat, shop, drink and work. The goal is to create a place with an inviting and cool atmosphere. Massive outdoor courtyards, rooftop terraces and a large dining and shopping area will allow this place to be used year round.

What I like most about it is that it will create a stand-out location in Charlotte. Charlotte is generally lacking places (aside from breweries) to take out-of-town friends to grab a relaxing drink or bite to eat. Generally, if you're Uptown, it's bar or upscale restaurant, and there's no happy medium. Jay Levell of Whitepoint and Merritt Lancaster of Paces are looking to create a place where you can have a variety of experiences in one visit, or a variety over multiple visits.



Photo via Whitepoint Partners and Paces Properties

I imagine a place where I can go get food and hang out for hours, taking in all the sights, sounds and vendors.

Aesthetically, the mill is going to be saved and restored. What that means is hardwood, columns, beams and brick all dating back to 1891, aka true character that is lacking throughout the city. There will also be great people-watching with big open halls, massive courtyards and public areas. Merritt told me about the space, "We share a goal, ... to go and to find something that has its own character ... and figure out how to embrace it."





Photo via Whitepoint Partners and Paces Properties

It's the vendors that I think will really differentiate Highland Park Mill from 7th Street Market. I love 7th Street Market and I'm there all the time. But I see it as more of a "stop in" kind of place. I am stopping in for coffee, groceries, lunch, a beer, etc., but I am not really spending a day there.

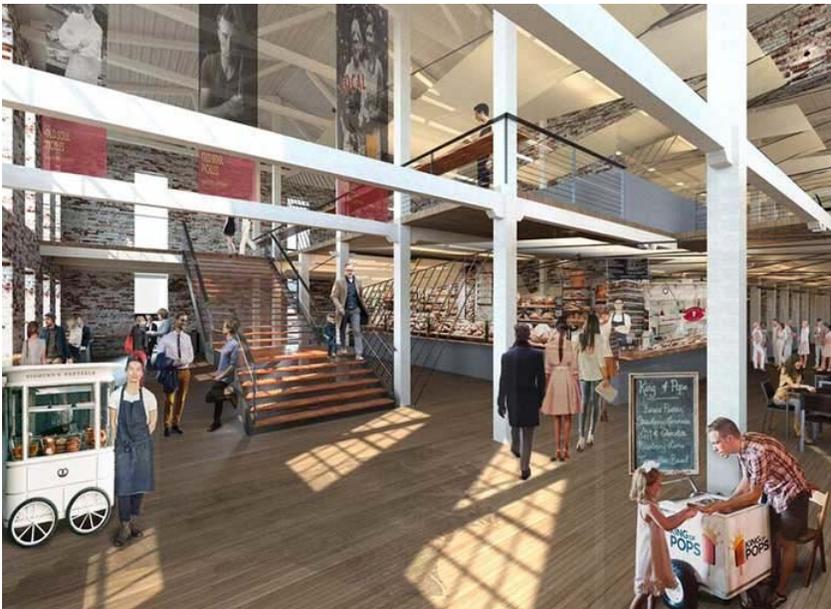


Photo via Whitepoint Partners and Paces Properties

With the Highland Park Mill you will be able to grab a drink and just hang out (think brewery), have a nice sit-down dinner that you can save or splurge on or just enjoy some time outside.

For the food and retail, the developers want to keep it local as much as possible. They want to provide an avenue for chefs to get their feet on the ground and provide up-and-comers (and established chefs, too) a space to showcase their food.

The last component of this project that is really great for the area is connectivity. Nothing is set in stone yet, but there are ongoing talks to improve the connectivity of Brevard to Parkwood and 15th, improve walkability on Parkwood (it might as well be a highway now) and most importantly, extend the rail trail from 12th Street to the Parkwood Station.

Jay Levell of Whitepoint said that they “want as many people riding, walking or taking the light rail here as possible.” I love this statement. Charlotte has an obnoxious attachment to its cars. We have very forward thinking public transit projects in the works and people still just care about where they can park their cars. It drives me nuts. Anyways, the bicycle, light rail and pedestrian access to this project will make all the difference.

I can't express enough how important this project is to the future of development along the light rail. It is doing everything right: preserving history, using its space creatively, creating a place for the community and adapting to its surroundings.

I will be covering this project as it continues to take shape, but they hope to have it ready for the opening of the light rail extension in 2017.

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Development expert since 2015.

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CO is now open at Park Road Shopping Center. Preview the menu (14 photos)

by **KATIE LEVANS**