



Creative Living

Marie McGee Phone 504-2301

Thursday, September 18, 1986 OAF

1/15

Developing major metro projects

This is part of a series on the commercial development of real estate in metropolitan Detroit.

By Dale Northup
special writer

Kirco Realty and Development Ltd. of Bloomfield Hills is fast becoming one of the largest developers in metro Detroit. The company has more than a million square feet of office space under construction — Wilshire Plaza West, Wilshire Plaza North, 1111 Long Lake Road and Long Lake Crossing, all in Troy, Oak Hollow Corporate Campus in Southfield, One Kennedy Square, formerly the Commonwealth Bank Building, in Detroit, and Brewery Park, the site of the former Stroh Brewery Plant, Detroit.

Wilshire Plaza West, currently being completed and 65 percent leased, was designed by the architectural firm Yamasaki and Associates. It has two wings joined to a central building, which contains a three-story lobby.

The wings are staggered creating an asymmetrical arrangement with a face-to-face relationship facing each other across a central landscaped space.

In addition, the building has bay windows affording the 16 corner offices multiple views. They are a welcome deviation from many of metro Detroit's boring commercial facades, yet a design motif popular in Chicago.

WILSHIRE PLAZA NORTH has a similar formal arrangement. A central building is flanked by two pavilion-like structures at 45-degree angles. The central structure contains a three-story atrium, lobby, which projects outward to become a porte-cochere flanked by double columns.

The horizontal treatment of the windows is interspersed with vertical exponents of double windows that create a visual evidence.

In contrast, 1111 Long Lake Road is a rectangular, three-story building with lofty columns that are connected on the third floor by arches.

This is an important development to us, because it was one of the last projects Minoru Yamasaki worked on personally before his death earlier this year," said Alan Kirco, president of Kirco.

Long Lake Crossing, with 375,000 square feet of office space, is still in the design stage and will also be by

Yamasaki and Associates.

A question to ponder, regarding these premier office buildings in Troy, is why Yamasaki was chosen as the design firm?

Douglas Winkworth, vice president in charge of development, said, "They are a tremendously well-respected firm. They thoroughly study a building in terms of construction and detailing. We have a very good working relationship with them. As well, they are experts in pre-cast material."

OAK HOLLOW Corporate Campus in Southfield, by Nathan Levine and Associates, will contain buildings with 425,000 square feet of office space on 29 acres of wooded land. Ten acres of trees will remain intact. Phase one already has major tenants.

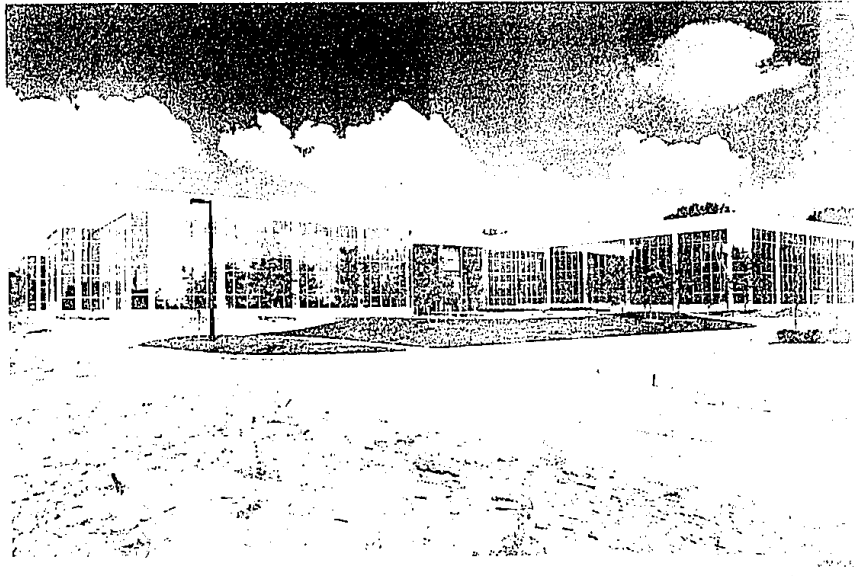
Meanwhile, Kirco is committed to downtown Detroit property management. Realizing the potential of diversification, the company purchased a pre-existing structure, the historic 23-story One Kennedy Square built in 1912, which will afford the tenant a lower per-square-foot rental than found in new buildings.

One Kennedy was designed by Chicago architect Daniel H. Burnham whose contribution to American architecture was the tall commercial office building later to be called the skyscraper.

The Detroit building is one of four designed by Burnham here. It personifies the clarity of commercial construction expressed in the steel frame and the sharpness of line in the terra-cotta facing.

Recognizing a new project, which recalls the past, the building's original design is being brought to life by Nathan Levine. This involves the matter of upgrading the street presence as well as the interior.

The sidewalk surface will be enhanced by a variegated motif. Canopies will mark the entryways. The pilasters will be recast in a rich stone veneer restoring them to their original likeness. Awnings will be placed over the display windows resurrecting their retail identity. The original marble, wood and brass of the building's interior lobbies will be restored.



Wilshire Plaza West of Troy is just now being completed. There are two wings off the central building which has a three-story lobby.

There is an interesting statement to the effect that "Nothing that is shall perish only to revive again in other forms."

Unfortunately the old Stroh Brewery in Detroit did perish, but its demolition marks a new beginning with the joint venture of Riverplace Properties, the real estate arm of the Stroh family, and Kirco. With the design expertise of Gensler and Associates, Detroit, the site will be developed in three phases.

PHASE ONE will be 108,000

square feet of office/showroom space to be completed in the spring of 1987. The entire complex will be fully landscaped with a tree-lined boulevard off Gratiot. Eventually there will be a total of 500,000 square feet in Brewery Park.

One of the remarkable features of this project, similar to One Kennedy's recalling the past, is the architectural design by Gensler and Associates. Whether they were cognizant or not, the design of the facade recalls Albert Kahn's Highland Park

offices of the Ford Motor Co. (1909) with pilaster-like treatment complemented by horizontal layers of limestone. The occasional use of ornamental detail also recalls Kahn.

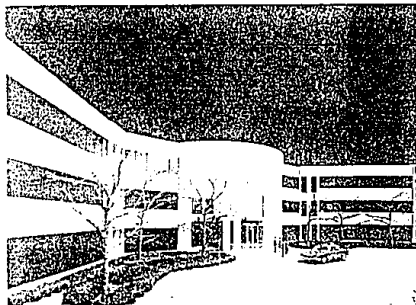
Detroit's architectural identity will be coming back in Brewery Park. Even the brick color will match that of the former brewery.

Now comes the beginnings of Kirco's second million square feet in another project just announced. Also in Troy, it will be a complex containing 575,000 square feet adjacent to the

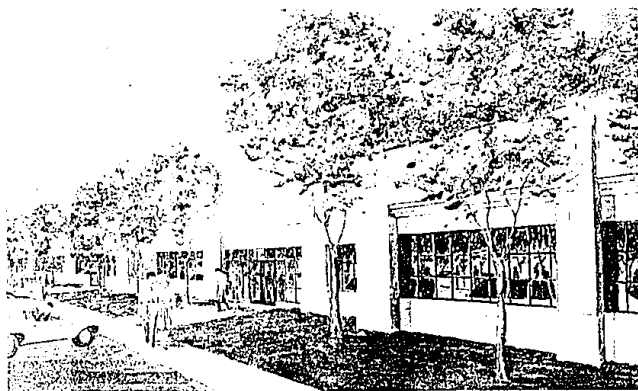
"Golden Corridor" and across the street from Prevost, Treacy and Partners and Yamasaki and Associates.

If either firm is chosen as the architects for this project, they will be able to use it as a full-scale example for a potential client.

Important as well, such a project, with the entrepreneurial acumen and imagination of a Kirco, definitely will place metro Detroit on the map of American architecture.



Architect's model of Wilshire Plaza North of Troy again features the central building with the three-story atrium/lobby, but the sides seem closely linked to the center because they are at 45 degree angles.



Artist's rendering of Phase One of Brewery Park on the Riverfront is slated to be completed next year. It will consist of 108,000 square feet of office/showroom space.



One Kennedy Square is one of four buildings in the metro area designed by Daniel H. Burnham, Chicago architect. To give it a stronger

identity, the area around it outside is being improved and the lobbies are being restored.