



Globe Mills Project Set to Finish

By Jocelyn Munroe

The Globe Mills redevelopment project in Sacramento's Alkali Flat neighborhood is nearing completion. The old grain silos and factory buildings at 12th and C streets are being developed into industrial lofts and affordable senior housing. The new development includes both renovated factory space and new buildings.

Globe Mills was last operated as a cereal mill in 1960.

The 31 market-rate lofts will be geared to young renters, while two new buildings flanking the mills will house 141 low-income senior apartments.

Construction started in September of 2005 and will continue through the summer of 2008. Demolition alone took eight months.

The immense silos will contain spacious stairwells, a soaring mailroom and elevator shafts. Dozens of old grain chutes and spouts have been turned into light fixtures in the main building's lobby.

Architect Michael Malinowski pointed out the difficulties inherent in renovating a building with concrete shafts with walls 6 to 8 inches thick. Workers were dropped into the silos in cages with hydraulic-driven saws.

Another challenge, said Malinowski: adding a sewer system to a "site so old and developed so long ago that it didn't have a normal infrastructure." Each building has its own entrance and parking underneath, but residents will connect in an airy penthouse community room and social spaces, get the different populations to intermingle in a kind of social experiment. Another population overlap will occur in the laundry areas.

The project will have a small amount of commercial space on the ground floor of one of the new buildings. "Maybe a hair salon, a small market or a medical facility," said Malinowski. "It's an important project for Alkali Flat, to stabilize this corridor."

For more information and photos, go to www.globemill.com.