

## **Parking Maneuvers**

[byline]

*Who says you have to pave paradise to put up a parking lot?*

Southern Management Corporation's redevelopment of 18 West Saratoga features a state-of-the-art, high-density garage that maximizes parking spaces while minimizing environmental impact.

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Project at a glance:

Project Name: 18 West Saratoga  
Project Loc: Baltimore, MD  
Owner: Southern Management Corporation  
Owner's Rep: Richard Hillman  
Project Architect: Peter Fillat Architects

Construction Costs: Estimated between 10-15 million  
Site Area: 14,000 SF (.3 acres)  
Footprint: 10,250 SF  
Total Building Area: 39,000 SF  
Number of Stories: 9  
Programming: 387-space fully automated parking garage, 22 studio and one bedroom apartments with balconies, garden terraces, and a community roof terrace  
Timeline: Construction projected to begin Summer 2008

### *Something About Parking*

When Southern Management Corporation decided to redevelop 18 West Saratoga, they knew they had to do something about parking.

Their new building is, after all, smack dab in the middle of Baltimore City's Charles Plaza, a depressed West Side retail area identified as a priority for urban redevelopment by local business leaders and politicians alike. After years of negotiation, plans for this well-publicized and heavily-supported "superblock" are finally coming to fruition, which means existing buildings are being converted into apartments and condos and more businesses are taking a serious look at moving into the area. But as additional residents and employers move into this downtown environment, the logical question arises: Where will all these people park?

The answer, it turns out, lies in a combination of 21<sup>st</sup> century technology and sustainable design.

*"Space Age Technology"*

Currently, there is very little parking available in this superblock area. Unlike neighboring cities to the north and south, Baltimore does not have a stellar public transportation system, so parking is an absolute necessity.

Luckily for the project owner, Southern Management Corporation, Baltimore-based architect Peter Fillat knew just the solution: a revolutionary, automated parking garage able to house far more cars in the same—or even slightly smaller—footprint as an existing parking lot on the site.

The planned Saratoga Garage will employ systems invented by Van Stokes, Sr., a former NASA aerospace engineer and NATO consultant, or what Peter Fillat project manager Basil Rousos likes to call “space age technology.” With this system, a rotation device called a turntable turns cars 180 degrees, then vertical lifts called transporters move them from the ground floor to their position in the rack storage system on the upper levels. (For safety, no people including staff or general public are allowed on these upper levels.)

Because the lowest possible height is used on each parking tier, parking density is maximized. In the case of the new Saratoga Garage, 387 cars will fit on a smaller footprint than the existing lot, which can only accommodate 50 vehicles.

In addition to the parking mechanism, the new garage features other state-of-the-art technology including Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (AAC) exterior walls, which minimize the size of the structure, provide a sound barrier, reduce sound transmission and offer insulation for the building.

Another notable design feature is the building’s custom ceramic sunshade, similar to that of the *New York Times* building designed by Renzo Piano. On the apartment building side, closely-spaced aluminum tubes act as a sunshade that recedes heat gain and thermal load on the building; from the garage, the tubes appear as a screen that reflect shadows from the moving sun.

#### *A Greener Garage*

The Saratoga Garage is also notable for a number of sustainable features. First and foremost, thanks to its maximum parking density, it reduces the need for additional parking structures in the area.

Additionally, the building employs green systems including a vegetated roof and planter, which partially offset site disturbance; a highly-reflective white roof membrane; and day lighting for more than 90% of space. The end results of these efforts include reduction of the building’s “heat island” effect, increased shading for thermal comfort of interior conditioned spaces, and overall improved energy efficiency.

Finally, the project is inherently sustainable in nature as it is in support of urban redevelopment and brownfield development.

#### *A Good Neighbor*

Because the site neighbors the historic St. Paul's Rectory, the location and shape of the new apartment building and automatic garage were designed to allow many of the current sight lines and views to remain. Additionally, the building's set back and vegetated green space serves as a virtual extension of the front yard of the Rectory, integrating the new structure in a way that is respectful of its neighbor's heritage.

When complete, residents of 18 West Saratoga and patrons of new superbloc establishments alike are certain to enjoy the technological marvel of the new garage, and can take even greater pleasure in knowing that in 2008, you don't have to pave over paradise to put up a parking lot.