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»1C



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Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire

THE DENVER POST

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GABF TURNING 40



Good friends, from left, Sarah Murray, Benjamin Hightower, Austin Colter, Sasha Black and Mandy Karako enjoy conversation and beer at RiNo's Ratio Beerworks on Sept. 17. It is one of 10 essential Denver-area breweries to hit during the Great American Beer Festival, which celebrates its 40th anniversary next month in the Mile High City. »STORY, 1C *Andy Cross, The Denver Post*

FEDERAL COMPLAINT

Sexism, racism alleged at DPD

Officer: "I wanted to demand justice for this open secret"

By **Elise Schmelzer**
The Denver Post

A year ago, a group of female Denver Police Department employees met to discuss sexual harassment and discrimination in the force.

The women, both sworn and civilian staffers, listed a series of regularly occurring abuses: a former lieutenant who frequently called drunk at night, the use of gender-based slurs, frequent and unwanted comments about women's bodies. Others spoke of specific incidents of harassment: open discussion of female employees' sex lives, a sergeant who touched his employee's neck and grabbed her leg, being told it would be disloyal to report harassment to human resources.

After listening to her co-workers' experiences — and reflecting on her own — Sgt. Carla Havard spoke out during the Sept. 27, 2021, meeting and called for an investigation into the allegations.

"I wanted to see justice for them, and I wanted to demand justice for this open secret that we've known all along — that this institution is still a problem for female officers." »6A

UNITED NATIONS

U.S. urges world to tell Russia to stop nuke threats

By **Jennifer Peltz**
and **Matthew Lee**
The Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS» The United States urged other nations to tell Russia to stop making nuclear threats and end "the horror" of its war in Ukraine as all three countries' top diplomats spoke — but didn't quite meet — at a high-profile U.N. Security Council meeting Thursday.

Held alongside the annual U.N. General Assembly gathering of world leaders, the session followed a striking development in the war this week: Russia called up a portion of its reserves for the first time since World War II. At the same time, President Vladimir Putin said his nuclear-armed country would "use all means available to us" to defend itself if its territory is threatened.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony U.N. »8A

PLANNED \$1 BILLION REDEVELOPMENT



Cherry Creek West — a 12.5-acre development near University Boulevard and East First Avenue — would transform the west end of the Cherry Creek Shopping Center into a mixed-use community. *Andy Cross, The Denver Post*

Cherry Creek's star on the rise

By **Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton**
The Denver Post

Cherry Creek is slated to transform into an even hotter spot to live, work and play in the coming years, with more than a dozen real estate projects — including a \$1 billion mixed-use development — in the works that aim to attract more attention to the neighborhood.

Denver's well-to-do neighborhood, which lines Cherry Creek itself, already attracts travelers with its hotels, such as Hotel Clio and Halcyon, and foodies with its fine dining options — Hillstone, Elway's and 801 Chophouse among them. It's also a destination for retail therapy, with the Cherry Creek Shopping Center and blocks of stores throughout Cherry Creek. »8A

COLORADO

2ND REFUND CHECK MAY BE IN FUTURE

Coloradans could get another round of tax refund checks if a cautiously optimistic forecast from state economists holds true. »2A

BUSINESS

WINE INDUSTRY SEES BETTER DAYS

After back-to-back crops marred by bad weather, Colorado's vineyards and wineries are expecting a more bountiful year in 2022. »9A

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STAR

◀FROM 1A

ry Creek North.

But Blueprint Denver, the land use and transportation plan that projects the future of Colorado's capital city, forecasts Cherry Creek will become a "regional center" by 2040, with new housing and job growth.

Developers appear eager to stake their claims in the neighborhood, most notably with the planned Cherry Creek West — a 12.5-acre development that would raze the largely vacant west end of the Cherry Creek mall and transform its western parking lot into a mixed-use community.

Overseen by East West Partners, a real estate developer in Denver for more than two decades, the Cherry Creek West development would extend from University Boulevard to Clayton Lane, and First Avenue to the creek itself.

East West Partners is aiming to include new office, retail and residential space in the development, said Amy Cara, managing partner. The project is expected to cost about \$1 billion.

City Councilman Chris Hinds, who represents District 10, said Cherry Creek West is one of about 15 new projects — mostly office developments — underway in the neighborhood.

Even COVID-19 didn't dim Cherry Creek's growth in popularity. The neighborhood "seemed like it got even more vibrant and fun to be in" throughout the pandemic, said Charley Will of commercial real estate and investment firm CBRE, adding that sales records, leasing demand and development activity all attest to it.

Cherry Creek is considered a Denver neighborhood with more access to opportunity and less vulnerability to involuntary displacement, according to Blueprint Denver. It's labeled a highly dense employment area, alongside downtown and the Tech Center.

"Cherry Creek has become the No. 1 leasing market, investment market for commercial space in the whole Rocky Mountain region," Will said. He foresees that trend continuing into the future.

The neighborhood has "always" sat among the top three commercial real estate markets in the state, if not the entire Rocky Mountain region, alongside Denver's Lower Downtown/Union Station and Boulder, Will added.

But values continue to rise in Cherry Creek. Ten years ago, the record price per square foot was \$393 with CBRE's sale of the 100% leased Janus Capital Group World Headquarters building at 151 Detroit St., compared with \$842 per square foot for a recent sale of the property at 270 St. Paul St., which is 67% leased, Will said.

He described Cherry Creek as a very small market with an "imbalance of demand versus supply."

Historically, the majority of the area's office tenants were of financial advisers and hedge funds. However, during the past two years, that tenant base has broadened noticeably to the energy, real estate, insurance, health care and technology sectors, he said.

Plenty of new projects will build out in the area over the next decade, but the approach will be "much more measured" because of land constraints and zoning requirements, Will said.



A rendering of the future Cherry Creek West development. Provided by East West Partners



A bicyclist makes his way up the Cherry Creek bike path underneath University Boulevard this month across from the soon-to-be developed Cherry Creek West. Andy Cross, The Denver Post

Cherry Creek's "new front yard"

One of the most visible developments will be Cherry Creek West. Its north end is planned to include a public plaza and market. The south side would feature a green space that lends itself to live performances and another public plaza. A dedicated two-way bicycle track is also in the plans.

An underground parking structure would be nestled beneath the site, which would host seven buildings ranging from eight to 13 floors in height. But "we have not made a final determination as to how any of the individual buildings will be built," Cara said.

They would construct luxury residential space and affordable housing on site — the latter of which Cara described as "a really nice addition to Cherry Creek" that hopefully helps the area's workers live in the neighborhood.

East West Partners' mission for the project is "to create a vibrant, people-centric neighborhood that embraces the creek," serving as Cherry Creek's "new front yard," according to a presentation shown at a community information meeting last month.

"Cherry Creek doesn't have a gateway," Cara said in an interview. "You're greeted as you're coming from downtown by two parking lots: one for Whole Foods and one here for the shopping center."

She called it a "missed opportunity," as "we don't have quite the same car and outdoor parking lot culture" anymore. Cara also pointed to the current lack of publicly accessible green space in Cherry Creek.

Discussions about Cherry Creek West started in 2015, she said. The Buell Foundation owns the site and is providing a 99-year ground lease to East West Partners.

If all goes as planned, construction will start in the third quarter of 2024, with the first buildings likely available for occupation in 2027. East West Partners also developed the residential neighborhood Riverfront Park and served as co-master developers of Denver's Union Station.

Evolving market demands

But Cherry Creek West isn't the only development in progress.

Nick LeMasters, president and CEO of the Cherry Creek North Business Improvement District, pointed to several projects in the works within his district's boundaries, which extend 16 blocks from First Avenue to Third Avenue, and from University Boulevard to Steele Street.

One aims to build a new mixed-use office building at 235 N. Fillmore St. Another redevelopment at 300 N. Fillmore St. would result in a four-story mixed-use office, restaurant and retail building, according to public records.

A prospective new five-story, multi-unit residential building

would be constructed at 165 N. Madison St. A project at 299 Fillmore St. is converting a retail gallery space into a restaurant.

"For the first time, really, in many, many years, we're starting to see development on the north side of Third Avenue," LeMasters said. "Some of those buildings have probably outlived their useful life, and development companies have come to the table and are paying, from what we understand, premium pricing for the ground."

Right now, two projects are under construction in that area, with the potential for two or three more over the next few years, he added.

It's not a single developer calling the shots in Cherry Creek North's real estate ventures, either. LeMasters listed Elevation Development Group, the Broe Group, Stillwater Capital, BMC Investments and Midwest Property Group Ltd. as companies that are working to secure their slices of the neighborhood.

Today's rush of retail and office development in Cherry Creek follows a trend largely sparked by earlier changes in the neighborhood's residential market, said Craig Ferraro, adjunct professor in real estate at the University of Colorado.

Cherry Creek North used to consist of bungalows built in the 1930s and 1940s, but homes underwent significant upgrades around the 1990s, he said. Houses were scrapped and replaced with smaller mansions, spurred in part by the neighborhood's proximity to downtown Denver and the Cherry Creek Shopping Center.

Cherry Creek benefited from more than \$170 million in private investment in the 2000s, resulting in new housing stock, streetscape improvements and more, according to the 2012 Cherry Creek Area Plan.

Ferraro noted the development of multifamily condominiums and apartments around the last decade.

To secure an apartment in Denver, renters spend an average of \$1,994 a month for their spaces, reports RentCafe, a nationwide apartment listing service. The site ranks Cherry Creek as one of the

city's three most expensive neighborhoods, with an average monthly rent of \$2,518.

"You had folks moving into that area, upgrading their residences, and then that led to people wanting to be close to some unique retail," Ferraro said. "That has led now to the development of the office space there."

Community eyes new projects

Hinds, the Denver councilman, said he sees "a lot of promise" with Cherry Creek West, particularly because its developers are considering the needs and wants of "people over cars," as in the case of the underground parking garage.

As Denver densifies and builds higher, the development's proximity to the creek — he called it a "treasure" for residents — will help promote "connections to the planet," Hinds said.

One community concern is the prospect of traffic worsening. That perspective plays into a broader problem in Denver, which the city can address by offering viable alternatives to cars and better protecting bike lanes, Hinds said.

Lou Raders, president of the Cherry Creek North Neighborhood Association and leader of the Cherry Creek Steering Committee, said they're following the progress of Cherry Creek West closely, as it will not only potentially affect transportation but also "impact all of Cherry Creek and surrounding neighborhoods."

The group doesn't immediately disapprove of a specific project at this time, with Raders adding that developments being built in the business district have been presented to the neighborhood and are in line with Cherry Creek North zoning.

Raders warns that projects that either don't align with zoning or the 2012 Cherry Creek Area Plan "will likely receive substantial resistance." And "many in the neighborhood are weary from all of the construction," she added.

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U.N.

◀FROM 1A

Blinken saw Putin's remark as particularly menacing given plans for referendums in Russian-controlled parts of eastern and southern Ukraine on whether to become part of Russia.

Western nations have condemned those votes as illegitimate and nonbinding. But, in their wake, Moscow might see any Ukrainian attempt to retake those areas as an attack on "Russian territory," Blinken warned.

"Every council member should send a clear message that these reckless nuclear threats must stop immediately," he said.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov didn't mention his country's nuclear capacity or the new troop mobilization during his own remarks at the council meeting, which France called to discuss accountability for alleged abuses and atrocities during the nearly seven-month-long war.

Instead, Lavrov repeated his country's frequent claims that

Kyiv has long oppressed Russian speakers in Ukraine's east — one of the explanations Moscow has offered for the invasion — and that Western support for Ukraine is a menace to Russia.

"What's particularly cynical is the position of states that are pumping Ukraine full of weapons and training their soldiers," he said, maintaining that their goal is to prolong fighting "to wear down and weaken Russia."

"That policy means the direct involvement of the West in the conflict," said Lavrov. He added that Ukraine had become "an anti-Russia staging ground to create threats against Russian security" and his country wouldn't accept it.

The Security Council has held dozens of contentious meetings on Ukraine since the war began in February, but Thursday's session had special stature.

"That President Putin picked this week, as most of the world gathers at the United Nations, to add fuel to the fire he started shows his utter contempt and disdain for the U.N. Charter, the U.N. General Assembly and this council," Blinken told foreign ministers

around the group's famous horseshoe-shaped table. "Tell President Putin to stop the horror he started. Tell him to stop putting his interests above the interests of the rest of the world, including his own people," Blinken added.

Regardless, no one expects the council to act against Russia, because Moscow has veto power as a permanent member.

But the meeting was still a rare moment for top diplomats from Ukraine and Russia to appear in the same room — made all the more extraordinary for the fact that Lavrov is under U.S. sanctions.

In a sign of the charged atmosphere, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba apparently objected as council staffers prepared to put a placard marking Ukraine's seat next to Russia's. The placard ultimately was moved to another spot.

Before the meeting, Kuleba wryly told reporters that he planned to keep a "social distance" from Lavrov. But it turned out he didn't have to: The Russian appeared only just before speaking and left right after, prompting

Kuleba to quip later in his own speech that "Russian diplomats flee almost as quickly as Russian soldiers."

Blinken argued that Russia should face further censure and isolation for its invasion, pressing other countries to join in Washington's forceful condemnations of the conflict. He cited the discovery of mass graves in Ukraine and repeated allegations from Ukrainians that they were tortured by Russian soldiers.

The International Criminal Court opened an investigation in March into possible crimes amid the war and sent teams to gather evidence. Prosecutor Karim Khan told the council Thursday that he's dispatching more ICC staffers next week to look into allegations emerging from eastern Ukraine.

Khan hasn't yet announced any charges linked to the conflict, but he reiterated that he believes there are reasonable grounds to think that crimes have been committed.

"The picture that I've seen so far is troubling indeed," he said.

The meeting came less than a

week after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced the discovery of a mass burial site near a northeastern city, Iziium, that had recently been recaptured from Russian forces. Zelenskyy said investigators found evidence that some of the dead were tortured.

French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna told the council that the discovery prompted her country to send more investigators to join others who have been in Ukraine since hundreds of civilians were found dead in another city, Bucha, after a Russian withdrawal in late March.

There are "so many violations of the laws of war and so many actions for which Russia must be held accountable," she said.

Other council members also called for accountability, but in varying tones. "Investigations into violations of international humanitarian law should be objective and fair, based on fair facts, rather than an assumption of guilt, and without being politicized," said Foreign Minister Wang Yi of China, which has maintained strong ties with Russia.