

# Lofts with an eco edge

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SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Who would have thought living next to an Esso gas station in the High Park area could hold such promise?

But Mario and Frank Ribeiro, who own a site near Roncesvalles Ave. and operate their business, Triumph Aluminum and Sheet Metal Inc. there, plan a new 37-unit loft project that could prove to be one of the most innovative condos around.

Called Roncesvalles Lofts and priced at about \$370 a square foot, it will have some unusual features. A courtyard garden has been designed with a pond system to retain and absorb storm-water runoff. And, uncharacteristically for a cold climate, most residents will reach their front doors along corridors open to the air. Heating elements embedded in the concrete floors will disburse snow and ice.

The brains behind this unabashedly modern design, to be clad in zinc and accented with light green stucco, is David Peterson, a 34-year-old intern architect.

"Part of what I really enjoy is defining the problem, then finding a creative solution that has multiple benefits," says Peterson, who studied architecture at the University of Toronto and in Holland after earning a degree in art and architectural history.

Peterson had no shortage of problems for this particular project, not the least of which is the site on Ritchie Ave., close to where Howard Park and Roncesvalles Aves. intersect.

Originally, the Ribeiro brothers considered townhouses, but "as land values and construction

Unique green design includes courtyard garden with pond system to deal with storm-water runoff  
Zinc-clad Roncesvalles Lofts will include sheltered areas; providing microclimates for outdoor living



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From left, Frank Ribeiro, intern architect David Peterson and Mario Ribeiro. The Ribeiros are developers of Roncesvalles Lofts, which has several eco-friendly features.

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