

## Attic Renovations Planned

# Two New Lawyers Move Into Historic Ayr Building

The village of Ayr is on its way to being a bit of legal centre for condominium and subdivision development in Ontario.

A new legal firm - with partners Michael Clifton and Mark Kok - are moving from Kitchener to set up their practice in Ayr's former Canadian Bank of Commerce at 10 Northumberland Street.

The development is part of Craig Robson's efforts to renovate and restore the historic bank building back to its glory days in the early 20th century, as well as providing business office space in the core area.

Robson and his partner Greg Carpenter - both legal condominium and subdivision specialists - have begun extensive renovations to the 800-square-foot attic, an area that has served only as storage space since the structure was built between 1903 and 1904 (some accounts say 1905).

Robson said one of the new lawyers

- Michael Clifton - also does condominium and subdivision legal work and he will be helping out the team of Robson-Carpenter. The other new lawyer, Mark Kok - specializes in commercial and corporate legal services. However, the two legal firms will be separate.

In the past 18 months Robson and Carpenter have done extensive work on the building including gutting the main floor, pointing brickwork, restoring the original high-ceiling in the banking area, repairing a small portion of the roof, making major structural re-enforcements to the basement and installation of a new geo-thermal heating/air condition system.

Not a lot of structural changes had been made to the building over the past 100 years, with the exception of the add-on second-storey sun-room and kitchen. Robson said two metal beams will be added in the attic for structural support.

Robson, who is a big proponent of

natural light, is building a dormer into the back of the attic to provide for more ambient light in the new office area. He said the back part of the building's roof is not part of the historical designation.

He also said renovation plans call for a cathedral ceiling in the attic which will end up leaving part of the original wood structure and brickwork in the attic exposed. Although, it's hard to believe, the cathedral ceiling will leave a space of 17 feet between the floor and the top of the peak.

Robson said the attic renovations will include lots of dark wood and glass, improved ventilation - much in keeping with what has been done with the rest of the building.

Gary Adam of Pioneer Craftsmen in Kitchener, who did the original restoration and renovations, is working on the attic project. Jo Redman, of Collingwood, is once again doing the interior/furniture design and shelving.

The old bank building is representative of the Edwardian Classicism architectural style, which was popular in Ontario during the first two decades of the 20th century.

Robson said he hopes the attic project will be completed in April. Both lawyers will be working at the building by the beginning of March.