



Talking ZIGG Condos with Kirkor's Clifford Korman

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Founded in 1990, [Kirkor Architects + Planners](#) has designed numerous large-scale residential and mixed-use developments in the Greater Toronto Area including North York's [Hullmark Centre](#), Mississauga's [One Park Tower](#) and downtown Toronto's [Cinema Tower](#). Now, Kirkor has set their sights on Forest Hill. Partnering with developers [Madison Homes](#) and [Fieldgate Homes](#), [ZIGG Condos](#) will stand 11 storeys on a mostly residential stretch of St. Clair just west of Avenue Road.



The south-facing terraces provide views of the downtown skyline, image courtesy of Madison/Fieldgate

ZIGG takes its name from the architectural term ziggurat, which refers to the terraced step pyramids of Mesopotamia. The condominium's southern face includes a stepped terrace which overlooks the neighbouring low-rise residences and the city skyline beyond. It increases in height as it approaches St. Clair Avenue, a street that has been busy with new developments in the past several years.

Clifford Korman, founding partner of Kirkor Architects + Planners, talked with UrbanToronto about the project's location, amenities and units. "St. Clair will be an *Avenue*, meaning you'll have mid-rise buildings," said Korman. "You have a midtown location and an intensified transit-oriented site. The streetcar has enhanced the street and set it apart for intensification of a larger scale."



Looking east along St. Clair Avenue, image courtesy of Madison/Fieldgate

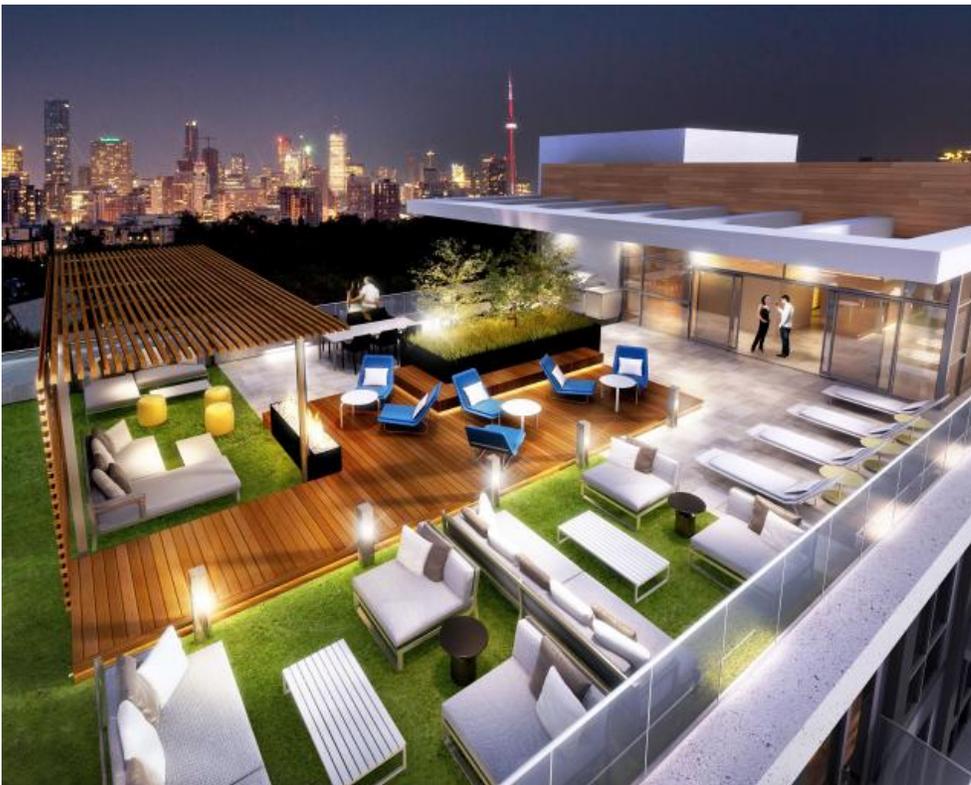
On the challenges of designing the condominium, Korman said, "As a mid-rise building with a very long city block to work in, they're the toughest design problems to do today. When we get to these point towers, everyone understands them." He continued, "We have the tall building guidelines, we use a lot of glass, we use a lot of materials on the bases and podiums, they're pretty easy to do in comparison to a mid-rise building on a long street. So the key to developing these types of sites is really how to make and articulate the façade of a building that runs 200-300 feet long. It can't be imposing."

Korman also noted that the north face of the building incorporates a ziggurat design through the use of stepbacks and an alternating black and white design that helps break down the façade into something less imposing and more pedestrian-friendly. "The pedestrian realm is a really important component of these mid-rise buildings," said Korman. "With townhouses and livability at grade, two storeys in height, a wood grain vernacular with stones and materials that pedestrians can relate to at a human scale; balancing these elements gives you the opportunity to create a great design." The townhouses themselves will be setback from the street to allow for a wider sidewalk. Korman also stated that the building will not shadow the sidewalk to the north or any single-family homes to the south. In addition, the trees around the perimeter of the site will be protected.



ZIGG's north face, image courtesy of Madison/Fieldgate

With 166 suites in total, including three townhouses on the ground floor, there are several amenities residents will be able to take advantage of. A gym, party room, games room and a guest suite are all housed within the development, though the building's most visible feature is located on the roof. A rooftop terrace will be accessible to all residents within the building and will include a barbecue, gazebo, lounging area and fireplace. "Looking south, you really have an unrestricted view of Toronto because all you have is single-family homes in the valley," said Korman. "Having everyone in the building have that vista is really a feature we put into a number of our buildings. No matter where you buy in the building, you will have access to that vista line of Toronto on a rooftop garden which has some beautiful amenities on it."



The rooftop terrace is accessible to all residents, image courtesy of Madison/Fieldgate

An apartment building currently stands just south of the ZIGG site, which will block some views from residents' units. "To overcome this, we've taken the southeast corner units and made them wide and shallow.

So they will have both an easterly view and a southerly view," said Korman. "We put two modest sized units, again wide and shallow, directly opposite the ten storey building and then we get to our elevators and stairwell, so we don't need a view. By that time we've turned the corner to all the views facing south. From the second to the eighth floor, we have two units per floor that face directly towards that building, about 16 units in total. After that we'll actually be above that building in height."

On the ground floor, pet lovers will be able to utilize a pet washing station, a service sure to come in handy all months of the year. "Many people in the community have dogs, so we decided to have a dog washing station coming into the building. It's the first one I've actually done," said Korman. "You want to keep the building clean and elegant but at the same time you want to service them."

With interiors by [The Design Agency](#), units will include plank laminate flooring and natural stone countertops. "We worked with our client to bring on a team of people who understand our intentions," said Korman. "We took them through the look, the style, the direction of our architecture, we're looking for an interior component team to pick up on that. I think they did a great job." Starting from the low \$300,000's, units will range in size from 500 to 1,776 square feet.



The site as it looked in October, image courtesy of Forum member Roundabout

Korman purchased one of the units inside ZIGG, noting that it was the first time he had bought within a building designed by his team. "We will move to downsize in the future and I want to stay midtown. I like to be urban, I like to be near all these facilities that I belong to and enjoy," said Korman. "If I were to pick a specific area, St. Clair near Spadina or Avenue Road would be an ideal location for me. If I love this location and I've been recommending this location to my friends and family, why wouldn't I look at having a suite there for myself and my wife? Why wouldn't I commit to a unit in a building that I designed myself?"

On the relationship between Madison, Fieldgate and Kirkor, Korman said, "This is my third or fourth project with Madison and Fieldgate and I respect them as clients. They build what we draw, that's one of the reasons I really like working with them. Their goal is quality. Madison and Fieldgate actually push us to do high-end design to create the price, create the value, to keep their reputation strong and then they go and build it as we draw it."

ZIGG will add its name to the long list of projects on St. Clair Avenue when completed in Spring 2018. On the

significance of the development to Kirkor, Korman said, "We're doing some of the best work of our career and this is one of our best projects."

For more information about ZIGG, visit the dataBase file linked below. Want to get involved in the discussion? Check out the associated Forum thread or a leave a comment at the bottom of this page in the field provided.

To request more info directly from ZIGG Condos click [here](#)



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