

From the Baltimore Business Journal

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Harborplace owner Ashkenazy wants redesigned pavilions to attract locals

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[Stephanie Mineo](#) was a sophomore in high school when Harborplace opened in downtown Baltimore.

Now Mineo, the senior vice president of **Ashkenazy Acquisition** Corp., wants to see the iconic pair pavilions restored to they way she remembers them — a gathering place for local residents, not just a hotbed for tourists.

"I have really, really fond memories of Harborplace," said Mineo, an Annapolis native. "What Harborplace was once was a place where Baltimoreans would come and gather just from a purely sense-of-place aspect, and that doesn't happen anymore."

Ashkenazy Acquisition Corp., which owns Harborplace, is preparing to overhaul the outdated Light and Pratt street pavilions. Designers for the project [presented their plans](#) to the city's Urban Design and Architecture Review Panel last week.

The panel largely approved of the proposed new design, but encouraged the design team to go a step further if they hope to redefine the buildings' future. Some of the changes panelists suggested included rethinking the materials proposed for the exterior of the buildings — timbered wood and terra cotta — to make the pavilions feel more like they belong in Baltimore.

Mineo expects the design to be finalized within the next month, with part of the Pratt Street Pavilion renovation on track to be completed by fall 2016. Some new tenants will begin opening in the Light Street Pavilion in 2017.

Merchandising will be key to attracting the mix of local and visiting patrons she hopes the revamped Harborplace draws, Mineo said. Retailers moving into redesigned spaces at the pavilions will include national, regional and local players. Some of the existing tenants will remain, too.

The Pratt Street Pavilion will also include a marketplace area on the second floor. Ashkenazy and lead designers at MG2 looked to examples of successful markets in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, but Mineo said they aren't looking to replicate those concepts.

"We have to make it indigenous to Baltimore," she said. "We want it to be a go-to place and not just a tourist, six-months-a year, nice-day attraction."

Mineo declined to disclose the budget for the project, adding it would be finalized with the completed design.

Sarah covers hospitality/tourism, sportswear and casinos.