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Fairmont Hamilton Princess

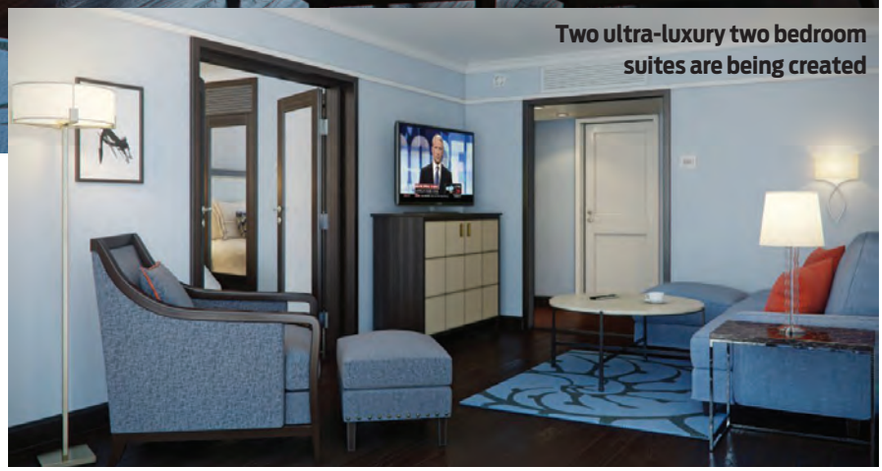
$70 million renovation breathes new life into historic hotel

It's easy to understand the cynicism Bermudians show towards news of hotel developments. After all, the former PLP Government announced more than once a date for groundbreaking at the former Club Med site in St. George's. Then there's the long saga surrounding the Southlands/Morgan's Point land swap; the seemingly constant stream of reports from City Hall, and other sources, of a new hotel to be built on the site of Par la Ville car park; and the rumors and hearsay that surround several other proposed new hotels.

But the cynics were quieted by the news that a Bermudian family, the Green's, had acquired the historic Fairmont Hamilton Princess and subsequent announcement of major renovations. After all, this is a very wealthy family with a history of successful long-term investments and extensive knowledge of the Island. The speed with which they developed the $100 million Waterloo House on Pitts Bay Road hinted that they meant business with the neighbouring hotel. And so it has been, with construction work commencing in Sep-

The Poinciana wing is being renovated from floor to ceiling

The new pool area has a lap pool, hot tub and splash area for children



Two ultra-luxury two bedroom suites are being created

Modern artwork by Bermudians will be hung in the rooms

tember 2013, just twelve months since the property was purchased.

Originally announced as a $50 million capital investment plan to enhance the property, expenditure was increased to $70 million as detailed plans were finalised and submitted for Government planning approval.

Family member Andrew Green commented, "While the hotel has traditionally attracted business visitors, we believe that there is great potential to increase the leisure side of the business through enhancements to the hotel's leisure facilities. We have business people Mondays to Fridays and could have families on the weekend."

The renovation is being conducted in yearly phases to minimise disruption to hotel guests, with the first phase taking place during the winter 2013/14 'off-season'. The historic character of the property is being maintained, while adding luxurious contemporary features

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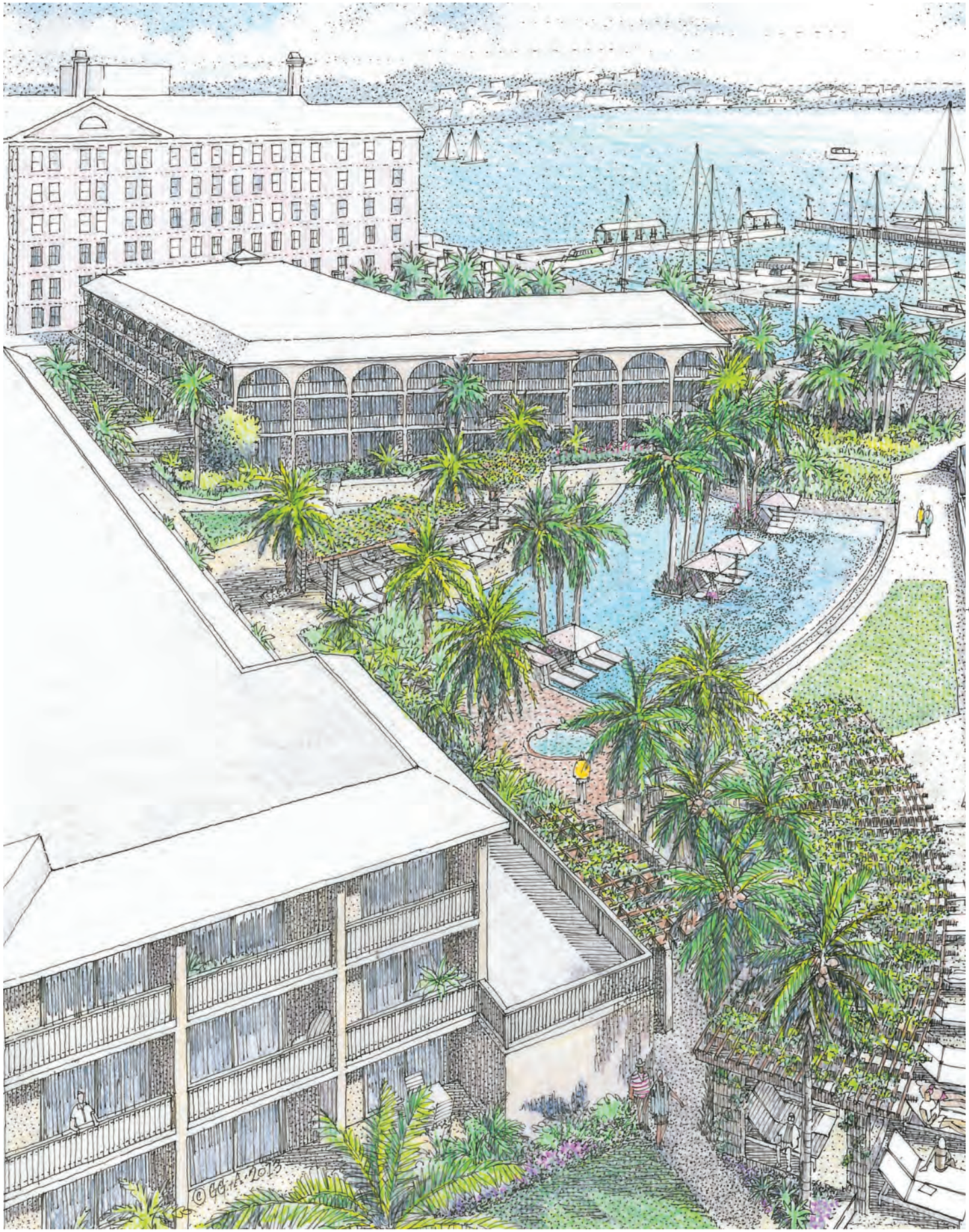

An artist rendering showing the new pool area and marina

Contemporary tile and stone will be used in the bathrooms

that today's traveler demands. Andrew Green describes it as "breathing new life into the historic property".

The first phase of the project, designed by Botelho Wood Architects, is transforming the west side pool into a contemporary resort infinity pool with luxurious private cabanas, a splash area for children, a family pool, a lap pool and a hot tub. The pool area, which will be almost three times the size of the current pool, will have uninterrupted views of Hinson's Island and Hamilton Harbour. D&J are the chosen contractors for these works, while Horsfield Landscaping and Design will complete the landscaping.

A renovation of 69 guestrooms and suites in the Poinciana wing of the hotel is also part of phase one.The floor to ceiling renovation will include new furniture, fixtures and equipment inside the rooms, as well as an extension of the dramatic balconies and terraces overlooking Hamilton Harbour. The wireless

The view over Hamilton Harbour from the infinity pool

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Internet and audio visual features will be upgraded and contemporary new tile and stone will be used in the luxury bathrooms. Modern artwork by Bermudian artists, which has been hand picked by the family, will also be hung. In addition, two ultra-luxury two bedroom suites will be created with extended balconies that will have 180-degree views over Hamilton Harbour. The two-bedroom suites will have a private dining and living room area, as well as two separate bedrooms and bathrooms and a powder room.

One of the most significant elements of the renovation includes the development of a new state-of-the-art marina at the property. When complete, the marina will provide 66 berths and additional docking space for up to 30 vessels, accommodating everything from small pleasure craft up to mega yachts. A separate pier will allow tour boats, glass bottom boats and water taxis to come alongside the property.

Next to the marina, a 50 feet x 50 feet new Gazebo-style bar and grill will be created for spectacular dining right at the water's edge.

The hotel expects to employ 150 construction workers during phase one of the renovations

Additional development plans, scheduled to commence in winter 2014, include a new landscape design to capitalise on the property's superb waterfront location, relocating the Koi Pond to the front of the hotel to create a dramatic entrance, additional guestroom upgrades in the Gazebo wing and the redesign of guest facilities such as the retail area.

Longer-term development plans include a new spa, gym and signature restaurant in the Gazebo Lounge.

Financing for the renovations has been provided by Butterfield Bank, while Government has provided a $14.2 million tax break on the $70 million facelift. A lease to allow the marina to be constructed was also granted by Government. The arrangement allows for almost 8 acres of foreshore to be leased for 120 years in 40-year increments. Government will receive an upfront payment of $500,000, followed by a rent of five percent of the marina's annual income for the first five years — and 7.5 percent for the remainder of the lease.