

Kitchener's Walper Hotel redevelopment to start next year

Changing the lobby "a no-brainer" says developer

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 06, 2013 9:39 AM ET Last Updated: Sep 06, 2013 2:32 PM ET

Physical changes to the Walper Terrace Hotel, including a redesigned lobby, are on the horizon as part of a new ownership group's redevelopment plans for the iconic brick building in downtown Kitchener.

The \$4.6 million purchase of the Walper was [announced earlier this week](#) by a group including Perimeter Development Corporation, Zehr Group, David Strucke and CK Atlantis Ltd, a hotel management company.

'It's going to be a vision that incorporates physical changes to the hotel. The lobby is going to be a no-brainer'—*Craig Beattie, Perimeter Development Corporation*

Craig Beattie, a partner with Perimeter Development, and Don Zehr of Zehr Group appeared on *The Morning Edition* with Craig Norris on Friday.

While in the short term, Beattie said the plan is to get hotel operator CK Atlantis into the Walper to begin running day-to-day operations, there are big plans ahead in the long term.

"It's going to be a vision that incorporates physical changes to the hotel. The lobby is going to be a no-brainer," Beattie said, "Different marketing focus as well, branding and just a different approach to things. It's going to be all-encompassing when the plan is finalized."

The consortium will gather a design team over the next 6 to 8 months with redevelopment plans to begin next year, Beattie said.

That team will "start to master-plan the building going forward, and then start to prioritize what improvements we want to do starting sometime next year," Beattie said.

Place to be seen

Zehr recounted a conversation that he had with Perimeter Development's David Gibson about the Walper.

"It was the place to be seen, the place to eat," Zehr recounted Gibson saying. "It was a different time, different place -- but it would be very cool if you could bring back that history where people gather there."

"There is lots of opportunity to create an interesting bar-type environment as well," said Zehr, adding that the Barrister's Lounge upstairs could be in for a rehaul.

Zehr said that an increased focus on the development of Kitchener's core, including the Region of Waterloo's new courthouse and a growing number of technology workers at various downtown firms, makes the Walper a great choice for a rehaul.

