

December 10, 2012

Via Verde - The Green Way

Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence - 2013



Submitted to:

Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence
Bruner Foundation, Inc.
130 Prospect Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Submitted by:

Phipps Houses & Jonathan Rose Companies
551 Fifth Avenue, 23rd Floor
New York, NY 10176

SECTION 1: PROJECT DATA

2013 RUDY BRUNER AWARD PROJECT DATA



PROJECT DATA

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Project Name Via Verde - The Green Way Location 700-704 Brook Avenue, Bronx, NY
Owner Phipps Houses & Jonathan Rose Companies
Project Use(s) Residential Housing/Commercial/Community Space
Project Size 296,000 sf Total Development Cost \$98.8 million
Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate) _____
Date Initiated December 2009 Percent Completed by December 1, 2012 100%
Project Completion Date (if appropriate) April 2012
Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates _____

Application submitted by:

Name Helaine Tishberg Title Development Coordinator
Organization Jonathan Rose Companies & Phipps Houses
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Perspective Sheets:

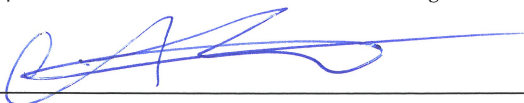
Organization	Name	Telephone/Email
Public Agencies <u>NYC Dept. of Housing Preservation</u> <u>and Development</u>	<u>Mathew Wambua</u>	<u>212 863-6100</u>
Architect/Designer <u>Dattner/Grimshaw</u>	<u>William Stein/Robert Garneau</u>	<u>212 293-3600</u>
Developer <u>Phipps Houses/Jonathan Rose Co.</u>	<u>Ari Goldstein/Michael Wadman</u>	<u>917 542- 3656</u>
Professional Consultant _____		
Community Group <u>Office of the Bronx Borough President</u>	<u>Wilhelm Ronda</u>	<u>718 590-8087</u>
Other <u>Lee Weintraub Landscape Arch.</u>	<u>Lee Weintraub</u>	<u>914 965-6540</u>

Please indicate how you learned of the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*. (Check all that apply).

- Direct Mail Email BrunerLoeb Forum Previous RBA entrant Previous RBA Selection Committee Member
 Professional Organization (please specify) _____
 Newsletter/Magazine - online or print (please specify) _____
 Other (please specify) colleague

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Date

12/6/12

SECTION 2: PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE

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PROJECT
AT-A-GLANCE



PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE

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NOTE: This sheet and a selected image will be sent to the Committee in advance.

Project Name Via Verde - The Green Way

Address 700-704 Brook Avenue

City/State/ZIP Bronx, NY 10455

1. Give a brief overview of the project.

Via Verde, co-developed by Phipps Houses and Jonathan Rose Companies, provides much-needed healthy, affordable, urban housing for residents of the South Bronx, and is an important component in the revitalization of this low-income neighborhood. It was the winning entry in the international New Housing New York Legacy Competition, sponsored by AIA New York, the NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development, NYS Energy Research and Development Authority and Enterprise Community Partners. It reflects a commitment to create the next generation of social housing that addresses poverty, health and the environment.

Via Verde is built on a former Brownfield site. Collaboratively designed by Dattner Architects and Grimshaw, Via Verde is comprised of three building types—a 20-story tower, a 6- to 13-story mid-rise duplex apartment component, and 2- to 4-story townhouses. The 222 apartments include 71 work force housing cooperatives for residents earning 80-100% of the Area Median Income and 151 low-income rentals for residents earning 60% or less of AMI. The building also includes ground floor community facility and retail space for a 5,500 sf Montefiore Medical Center and pharmacy. The LEED Gold designed development features over 40,000 sf of green roofs and is projected to be 30% more energy efficient than a baseline building. It also emphasizes resident health through improved indoor air quality, physical fitness, and healthy hyper-local produce. Intended as a new model for urban housing, Via Verde demonstrates advances made possible by collaborative partnerships, public agency support and a focus on excellence. The project has national resonance as a prototype that puts design first.

2. Why does the project merit the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*? (You may wish to consider such factors as: effect on the urban environment; innovative or unique approaches to any aspect of project development; new and creative approaches to urban issues; design quality.)

Via Verde merits the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence for its innovative and unique design, green features, green roofs, focus on healthy living, and mixed-income, mixed-tenure program. The building has also served as an example for regulatory reforms such as the New York City Green Zoning rules.

The building makes the most of a narrow triangular site by stepping up from 3 stories at the south to a 20 story tower at the north. At the heart of the development are a series of green spaces, a literal green way, that starts with a lower lawn and an upper courtyard with children's play equipment. It then spirals up the roofs, starting with a two-story amphitheater, evergreen trees on the 3rd floor roof, dwarf fruit trees on the 4th floor roof, resident gardening beds on the 5th floor roof, an extensive green roof and fitness center on the 7th floor. The building rises to a 20th floor penthouse community room and roof terrace.

The design promotes energy efficiency and sustainable living. Photovoltaic panels provide 66kw of energy to power lighting in common areas. The panels, mounted on south facing facades of the stepped roofs and on roof trellises, are highly visible and an integral part of the architectural expression. The building envelope features a prefabricated rain screen panel system, providing a well-insulated, "breathing" enclosure, with a contemporary aesthetic. Sunshades diffuse direct solar radiation. Large windows—typically on two exposures to promote cross-ventilation in apartments—provide abundant daylighting, while ceiling fans and operable windows reduce air conditioning needs. Via Verde is on track to achieve LEED NC Gold certification. The project participated in the Enterprise Green Communities Initiative and the NYSERDA Multi-Family Performance Program.

SECTION 3: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2013
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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1. Describe the underlying values and goals of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs were required to implement the project?

The underlying goal of Via Verde was to serve as a model for the next generation of green affordable housing development. The building is a capstone in the City's efforts to revitalize the South Bronx, and offers an innovative, high-quality, sustainable design, as well as affordable housing for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers, combined with ground floor community facility and retail space.

Via Verde goes beyond traditional green design by focusing on improving residents' health. Non-toxic low/no VOC paints, sealants, and adhesives, and natural cross ventilation and ceiling fans are in nearly all of the apartments. The LEED Gold designed building is estimated to be over 30% more energy efficient than a baseline building. Over 20% recycle materials were used in construction, over 20% were locally manufactured, over 80% of construction waste was recycled, green roofs provide amenity spaces while dissipating heat and absorbing rainwater, a storm water reclamation system recycles water for irrigation, motion sensors in stairways and corridors conserve electricity, PV panels on the south facing facades produce 66 kW of energy, enough to power all common areas, green cleaning materials are used throughout the building, and the apartments feature EnergyStar appliances, energy efficient lighting, high-performance windows, cross ventilation, super-sealed insulation and water-conserving fixtures.

Via Verde was designed and developed as a model of innovation for other communities, architects, and developers to learn from. The design utilized prefabricated rainscreen panels. Via Verde was one of the first housing developments to use this type of panelized system at scale which allows for a range of material choices including fiber-cement, metal, and resin-coated wood panels. The system also includes 3" of continuous insulation, large windows, sunshades, and balconies. The prefabrication aided in quality control and construction timing since the superstructure and off-site façade panels were able to be constructed simultaneously.

2. Briefly describe the project's urban context. How has the project impacted the local community? Who does the project serve? How many people are served by the project?

The Melrose section of the South Bronx has undergone a resurgence over the past 10 years. As stated by the Bronx Borough President at the Via Verde groundbreaking: "Where once the Bronx was burning now we are building gardens in the sky." This statement highlights the efforts of City's housing department to revitalize the South Bronx through investments in affordable housing and retail, and by leveraging the numerous properties where the City became the owner of last resort through in-rem property tax foreclosure in the 1970s and 80s. Via Verde is the jewel in the crown of these City-sponsored efforts, in its design, green features, and ability to include both 151 rental and 71 home-ownership units for low and moderate-income New Yorkers, respectively.

The low-income rental units are designated to be affordable to households earning 40% to 60% of AMI. The rents range from \$461 to \$1,087 and the eligible household income ranges from \$18,000 to \$57,000 as adjusted by unit and household size. The middle income coops are designated to be affordable to households earning 70%-100% of AMI with the maximum eligible income ranging from 80%-175% of AMI. The purchase prices range from \$79,000 to \$193,000 and the eligible household income ranges from \$36,850 to \$160,825 as adjusted by unit and household size. Over 7,000 applications were received for the 151 low-income rental units. All of the units are marketed through a lottery process overseen by the City with a 50% preference for the local community.

Via Verde is one block away from 3rd Avenue, a major retail corridor, and only 3 blocks from the #2 and #5 trains at 3rd Avenue and 149th Street with express access to Manhattan. There are also numerous and heavily utilized bus lines that run along 3rd Avenue to Boriqua College and the Bronx Botanical Garden and along 149th Street to Lincoln Hospital. The site is also only a few blocks from the Bronx Courthouse and Yankee Stadium. The site is well served by amenities on 3rd Avenue and there are three public schools within the immediate vicinity. The ground floor of the building will also include a 5,500 sf Montefiore Medical Center which will offer doctor's offices and health services for building residents and the wider community.

3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate.

The development process for Via Verde began with the New Housing New York Legacy Competition, sponsored by the NYC Dept. of Housing Preservation and Development and the NYC Chapter of the AIA. The proposal submitted by Phipps Houses, Jonathan Rose Companies, Dattner Architects, and Grimshaw was selected as the winning response by a high-profile jury. The project is the result of a public-private partnership between the development team and the City, with many City agencies playing an instrumental role in the project's approvals and financing, including DOB, DCP, HPD, HDC, etc. The development team is also comprised of a unique partnership between two developers, Phipps Houses, a non-profit, and Jonathan Rose Companies, a mission-driven for-profit company, as well as between two architects, Dattner Architects and Grimshaw. After the competition, the City created a special task-force with high-level representatives from the key City agencies to help shepherd the project through the approvals process. This was especially important to allow the project to retain its innovative design features. The development team also met with the community board before, during, and after the rezoning process. The community board gave input into the desire for an affordable development with an affordable for-sale component and was very interested in the project's green design features, especially those surrounding healthy. The South Bronx has some of the highest asthma rates in the country and Via Verde helps to improve resident health through low/no VOC materials and natural ventilation that help improve indoor air quality, combined with an abundance of green roof space, opportunities for physical fitness through Active Design Guidelines, and roof gardens where residents can grow their own vegetables. +

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable.

The public-private partnership continued in the financing, whereby the project utilized a wide array of public financing sources. The goal of the \$98.8M project was to provide a mix of rental and home-ownership opportunities for a range of income levels to create a truly mixed income community. This was achieved through a range of mechanisms, including land sold by the City of New York for \$1.

The project was financed in two pieces:

(1) 71 middle income, workforce, for-sale coops financed through taxable bonds from NYC HDC, along with subsidies from the NYC HDC, NYC HPD, Bronx Borough President, City Council, NYS AHC, and NYSERDA, and (2) 151 low-income rentals financed through taxable bonds from NYC HDC, 9% LIHTCs and SLIHTCs from both NYS HCR and NYC HPD, and subsidies from NYC HDC, NYC HPD, FHLBNY AHP, and NYSERDA.

The co-ops also benefit from a 25-year tax 421a tax abatement and the rentals have a full 420c abatement from the City of New York. The hard costs were \$236 psf. The total development costs were \$333 psf or \$445K per unit.

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings?

Via Verde is innovative in its unique design, green features, green roofs, focus on healthy living, and mixed-income, mixed-tenure program. The building has also served as an example for regulatory reforms such as the New York City Green Zoning rules.

Via Verde was one of the first housing developments to use pre-fabricated rainscreen panels, which allowed for a range of material choices, including fiber-cement, metal, and resin-coated wood panels. The system also includes 3" of continuous insulation, large windows, sunshades, and balconies. The prefabrication aided in quality control and construction timing since the superstructure and off-site façade panels were able to be constructed simultaneously. Numerous other architects and developers have visited Via Verde with plans to emulate the unique façade system. Via Verde's design also takes green-roofs to another level. One can literally walk from the courtyard, up the amphitheater, to a series of green roofs as the building steps up from the south to the north. The programmed roof spaces include evergreen trees on the 3rd floor, dwarf fruit trees on the 4th floor, vegetable gardening beds on the 5th floor, an extensive green roof and fitness center on the 7th floor, and a series of extensive green roofs as the building continues to step up to the 20th floor community room and terrace. This is all combined with a focus on health which is being paired with an HPD study on the benefits of the building on resident health, school performance, and a wide range of other factors - when compared to residents who don't move in.

SECTION 4: PERSPECTIVE SHEETS

PERSPECTIVE SHEETS

1. Developer - Phipps Houses & Jonathan Rose Companies
2. Architects - Dattner Architects and Grimshaw
3. Design - Lee Weintraub Landscape Architects, LLC
4. Community - Office of Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.
5. Public Agency - New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development

2013
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
DEVELOPER
PERSPECTIVE




DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by the person who took primary responsibility for project financing or is a representative of the group which did.

Name	Ari Goldstein/Michael Wadman	Title	Senior Project Manager/Vice President
Organization	Phipps Houses & Jonathan Rose Companies	Telephone	(917) 542 3656
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Signature		Date	12/6/12
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1. What role did you or your company play in the development of this project? Describe the scope of involvement.

Phipps Houses and Jonathan Rose Companies were the co-developers of Via Verde. Together, we oversaw the project through the following phases:

-Competition: Led response to the New Housing New York Legacy Competition with Dattner and Grimshaw.

-Pre-development: Oversaw the design and consultant team, worked with the City to rezone the site; including special waivers for height and setback; green design features, and mayoral override of parking requirement; managed other approvals including building permits with DOB and remediation under NYS DEC oversight. Also worked closely with the NYC HPD, NYC HDC, and other public and private financing sources to secure and close on the project's construction and permanent financing.

-Construction: Oversaw GC and design team during construction, managed timing, quality control, change orders, etc.

-Sales/Lease-up: Managed co-op sales and rental lease-up process and transition of property from development to property management.

2. What trade-offs or compromises were required during the development of the project?

There were a number of trade-offs during the development process. Firstly, the site was narrow and triangular so we couldn't fit a typical double loaded corridor building. Instead we kept the building low at the south to allow natural light and air to enter the courtyard, and stepped the building up from 3 story townhouses at the south to a mid-rise buildings in the middle, and a 20 story tower at the north of the site.

We mitigated the challenging circulation by having a combined point of entry and keeping the project as one building with connected rooftops and shared amenities. We also wanted to build as much as possible on the site given the unique site challenges. To help compensate for the loss of open space at grade we made all of the rooftops an accessible green walkway including an amphitheater, evergreen trees, fruit tree orchard, resident gardening beds, and a series of extensive green roofs. As the building stepped-up from the south to the north we wanted to use photovoltaic panels as the building material. However, we realized that the panels needed to be angled to maximize efficiency so a racking system was developed at each setback that optimized the panel angles.

In developing an innovative, high-design, green affordable housing development we were also challenged by budget constraints. We solved this by cobbling together an unprecedented number of different sources from public and private sources. We also value engineered the project carefully to stay true to our vision for the project - for example we eliminated an expensive below-grade parking structure given that there is a large private garage across the street.

3. How was the project financed? What, if any, innovative means of financing were used?

The goal of the \$98.8M project was to provide a mix of rental and homeownership opportunities for a range of income levels to create a truly mixed income community. This was achieved by financing the building in two pieces: (1) 71 middle income, workforce, for-sale coops financed through taxable bonds from NYC HDC, along with subsidies from the NYC HDC, NYC HPD, Bronx Borough President, City Council, NYS AHC, and NYSERDA, and (2) 151 low-income rentals financed through taxable bonds from NYC HDC, 9% LIHTCs and SLIHTCs from both NYS HCR and NYC HPD, and subsidies from NYC HDC, NYC HPD, FHLBNY AHP, and NYSERDA.

The hard costs were \$236 psf. The total development costs were \$333 psf or \$445K per unit. The site, which is narrow and triangular, was a former gas station and railyard and had substantial brownfield remediation under NYS DEC oversight. The site also required 30' piles due to deep bedrock. The superstructure consists of block and plank for the low and midrise portions of the building, and cast in place concrete for the 20 story tower. The design also features pre-fabricated rainscreen panels with integrated windows, sunshades and balconies. In total the 222-unit project includes over 40,000 sf of open space and green roofs.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of the project?

The most successful aspects of Via Verde are that the building demonstrates to the residents, neighborhood, New York City, and the world that you can, as the NY Times Architecture Critic put it, "do good while looking good." The final building stayed true to the goals of the initial competition in its innovative, high-quality green design objectives and the commitment to creating affordable housing for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers. The series of green roofs prove that high-density development can be amenity and open-space rich, by making the most of the roof space. The innovative facade demonstrates that affordable housing can benefit from new material palettes and high-performance systems that produce real energy savings and construction timing advantages. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, Via Verde is part of an HPD and MacArthur Foundation funded study that evaluates the benefits for low-income families moving into buildings like Via Verde on not only the affordability of their housing, but also their health, student educational performance, economic mobility, and a range of other social and economic indicators. We have already heard from buildings residents that they feel healthier at Via Verde. Residents are breathing cleaner air in their apartments, have access to 40,000 sf of green roofs and open space, hyper-local produce, a fitness center, naturally lit and ventilated stairwells, and ground floor doctors offices provided by Montefiore Medical Center. The design was a demonstration project as part of the NYC Active Design Guidelines, focused on smart design moves that promote physical activity while helping fight obesity, heart disease, asthma, and a range of other health conditions.

One of the least successful aspects could have been the management of the roof gardens. We had not fully figured out who would manage the gardening beds until midway through construction. At that time we decided to bring-on an organization called GrowNYC who runs a series of farmers markets and community gardens throughout New York City. We hired GrowNYC to manage the initial planting of the roofs with a series of vegetables including kale, garlic, watermelon, lettuce, tomatoes, etc. and to be in charge of managing the gardens for the first two years. They will offer horticulture classes to the residents and simultaneously help to form a resident gardening committee so that the residents can self manage the roof garden after the first two years. We see the importance of pairing design features (hardware) with resident engagement and management programs (software) to ensure that the spaces are used to their full potential and to build a strong sense of community among the residents.



2013
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
ARCHITECT
OR DESIGNER
PERSPECTIVE





ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by a design professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, or other services.

Name	Robert Garneau / Willaim Stein	Title	Associate / Principal
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Signature   Date 12/5/12

1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc.

Via Verde's design and layout reflects the unique long and narrow triangular configuration of this brownfield site. The building wraps around a central, landscaped courtyard, gradually rising from low-rise to townhouses to a 20-story tower. Along the Brook Avenue streetscape, the building mass is modulated via live-work units, a generous entry portal, a medical clinic and a retail storefront. At the street intersection the building steps back to provide a landscaped plaza.

The multifunctional terraced gardens, beginning at grade, create varied opportunities for active gardening, fruit and vegetable cultivation, recreation and social gathering, while providing the benefits of storm water control and enhanced insulation.

The project provides both affordable rental and ownership housing. Innovative duplex apartments at the mid-rise section of Via Verde respond to the narrow dimensions of the site and provides interesting living spaces.

A prefabricated rain screen panel system with a varied material palette combine with the green roofing system and photovoltaics to provide a high performance envelope to provide energy savings and create a distinct appearance.

During both the competition and the design phase, the team engaged the community through outreach sessions, responding to goals and aspirations that include a strong focus on sustainability, security, farming beds, open space and natural ventilation.

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design.

Via Verde was designed and developed as a model to apply social and sustainability measures for affordable housing in New York City and around the nation. Many of the innovations featured in Via Verde are applicable across different sites and scales. These strategies are focused on embedding environmental responsibility within notions of community and the role residents play in the maintenance of health and urban environments.

The terraced roof gardens and various public spaces were designed in response to community input sessions which advocated for communal activity spaces. Growing food on site also reinforces healthy living, principles that are further encouraged through the availability of an attractive exercise room and a continuous walking path through many of the garden terraces. Large windows allow natural light into traditionally dark stairwells, making them safe and usable for residents and encouraging physical activity through stair use.

Via Verde also addresses urban and social functions from a sustainability perspective, integrating its architecture into the surrounding community and promoting a safe, active street life. The project earned a LEED "Innovation in Design" credit for promoting physical activity.

Social sustainability is key as well, offering residents opportunities for interaction, exercise, and play that reinforce a sense of community and vitality aligning with New York City's Active Design Guidelines which encourages residents towards healthy exercise and activity. When moving in, a 'Living Green Guide' is given to each resident with information on how to promote energy optimization and healthy living, engaging residents in ways that will further improve the project's performance while simultaneously enhancing urban life.

3. Describe the major challenges of designing this project and any design trade-offs or compromises required to complete the project.

In order to address the major challenges of designing Via Verde an integrated approach incorporated innovative architecture, landscape, engineering, and construction solutions to creatively complete the project successfully.

The shallow depth of the site prevented the use of a typical double-loaded corridor configuration in the mid-rise portion of the project which would have been more cost effective and straightforward to implement. Instead, interlocking duplex units with internal stairs were developed, eliminating the need for corridors on every other floor. A benefit is that the bedroom area spans the width of the structure, allowing residents to open windows and use cross breezes for ventilation and natural cooling.

For example, at concept design we relied on balconies to shade windows and articulate the facade. As the design progressed the team replaced these with sunshades as a cost saving measure and to reduce maintenance. Some balconies remained along the interior courtyard duplexes where they made the most sense. As an alternative solution, we introduced metal grated external sunshades. Except for the north facing facades, every window has a sunshade to mitigate heat gains (and interiors are fitted with roll down solar shades to further mitigate heat loss or gain). The overall building retained its strong articulation and shadows with the sunshades.

Another example of a project challenge occurred during construction, where the concrete connection of the prefabricated rainscreen panels to the concrete necessitated strong teamwork, with the general contractor, prefabricated panel contractor, concrete plank contractor and masonry contractor working with the architects and structural engineer. Mock ups were created and tested off site, before production and installation began. The team coordinated design and installation of the balconies where unique load conditions needed to be resolved as part of the performance based contract.

4. Describe the ways in which the design relates to its urban context.

In the 1970s years of neglect and crime had taken their toll on the Melrose neighborhood where Via Verde is located. The Bronx, the New York City borough north of Manhattan, went through a period of decline and disinvestment that not only saw a serious dip in living conditions, but a flight of residents as well. Neglect manifested itself in widespread fires that created further urban blight, leaving entire blocks vacant or in near ruin.

Today new housing, green grass playing fields, and a vibrant retail corridor characterize a revitalized neighborhood in the Bronx. Via Verde, New York City's newest model for sustainable affordable housing, is an engaged participant in the emerging revitalization of the neighborhood. While it might seem counter intuitive for a affordable housing project to be a beacon in a neighborhood's recovery, Via Verde is no ordinary housing project.

Via Verde is also a part of New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's 'New Housing Marketplace Plan' aimed at financing affordable housing across the city. At the project's ribbon cutting, Mayor Bloomberg extolled the virtues of the project, and acknowledged the area's difficult past. "Twenty years ago, it was inconceivable that the future of this neighborhood would look as bright as it does today," said Mayor Bloomberg. "No one would have predicted that today there would one day be one of the most innovative, exciting, environmentally sustainable affordable housing developments in the nation - if not the world."

In addition, opportunities for members of the community to either buy or rent apartments at Via Verde, the project has been welcomed by the community and is expected to spark further revitalization of the South Bronx. Via Verde sets a positive, replicable example for sustainable urban redevelopment.

Specific design features such as walk-up townhouses respond to a prominent housing typology in the Bronx, while the tower sets a dialogue with the neighboring New York City Housing Authority tower to the east. In terms of materials, the neighborhood housing stock primarily uses brick cladding; the lowest two floors of Via Verde are clad in brick. The bricks are laid in a stack bond and have a ribbon cut texture with a metallic iron oxide shimmer to them. On the upper floors a blend of wood, cement and metal panels in a unique composition distinguishes the building while being engaging and responsive to the community.

2013
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ARCHITECT
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This sheet is to be filled out by a design professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, or other services.

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Signature  Date 12-5-12

1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc.

Via Verde is a complete and seamless collaboration of client, design and engineering disciplines, housing delivery disciplines and political context, all aligned to make a different project and a difference in the delivery of affordable and market rate housing in the Melrose community in middle of the Bronx.

On a narrow and long site, traditional perimeter block housing types are stacked and arranged in a pinwheel fashion, stepping up from ground level plazas and residential open spaces on the ground level to the eight floor. Resulting from the density and site configuration, Via Verde's open space opportunity lies on its ascending roof landscape. The arrangement and sequence of these spaces are fully accessible from the ground to the sky and form the cultural center and identity of Via Verde. Each space has its own programmatic construct, and each is envisioned as a subset of a whole that will ultimately over time, inform the relationships that residents have with each other. The vision of Via Verde is that the roof gardens (as well as the full array distinctive architecture) provide residents with food and nourishment and through their relationships with each other in the garden, involve them as civic participants in the larger drama that is the constant un-building and building of New York City. Via Verde's design requires their participation for its success, and that success occurs through an exchange of ideas that the culture of the garden fosters.

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design.

Along with the urban design and architectural achievement of Via Verde, the social and programmatic considerations integral to the execution of the landscape architecture program are the ascending roof gardens and how they are seamed into the fibre of the building design.

Each garden has a specific programmatic construct that underpins the design, binds the gardens to each other, and provides an important link between outdoor and residential spaces.

The ground levels include a children's play area and a residential quad accessible from the street/sidewalk beyond. The rising pinwheel gardens begin with a stepped amphitheater where parents and caregivers can sit and talk to each other while keeping an eye on their kids.

The amphitheater rises to a formal planting of "Christmas Trees" which will allow for residents to engage in spirited holiday decoration in the days leading up to the holidays, and/or as the trees mature to be harvested for the less fortunate residents and community neighbors.

The Christmas tree terrace rises to meet the 4th floor, which holds an orchard of fruit bearing trees.

Apple pie-making contests for the best recipe, apple sauce eating and, combined with the dunking of apples at Halloween, involve all segments of Via Verde's residents in the cycle of growth and consumption. Fourth floor rises to level five. This is the largest of the terraces and its south facing exposure is where Via Verde's productive flower and vegetable landscape is located. Here are resident's garden's. They plant, cultivate and harvest, and in doing so nurture their relationship with the soil and with each other. Levels seven, eight and ten are green roofs where water is detained and harvested. The seventh floor terrace ends the accessible roofscape and here the garden is the contemplative focus of the residents "work-out" space. The twentieth floor contains a shared social and event space, and extraordinary views over the City.



ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. Describe the major challenges of designing this project and any design trade-offs or compromises required to complete the project.

There are always challenges when creating a living landscape on rooftops. But because the team was operating in the realm of new construction, we were able to address technical issues including appropriate structure, and mechanical systems to help support the planting communities. The most difficult challenge was meeting our own internal commitment that the designed and stepping roof landscape be fully accessible; either from one level to the next, or from an individual adjacent elevator serviced floor. We were able to accomplish this with a combination of fob operated lifts that move from roof to roof where elevator access was difficult to achieve. Therefore, Via Verde's roof landscapes are completely accessible to all of its residents.

The continuing commitment to the idea that the garden can be an engine of change in the Melrose community. Changes in eating habits in a neighborhood beset by health issues like obesity; change that helps to nurture it's residents; change that creates a place of surprise and delight and quiet; and one that creates a sense amongst the residents of Via Verde of common cause, and caring for each other through the simple acts of planting, growing, harvesting, and sharing... These will be the long term test and project challenge. And the measurement of it's continuing success of that commitment will be whether Via Verde informs and inspires other neighborhood housing development in the future.

4. Describe the ways in which the design relates to its urban context.

Via Verde is part of a long term community design effort called the "Bronx Center", which is part planning effort and part strategy to ensure a planning process that engages and empowers locally. The almost mile square Melrose neighborhood in which Via Verde is located was largely vacant and abandoned in 1990. Several private residences and locally owned business remained standing amongst New York City owned public housing projects. And there were a group of local residents who were determined to rebuild their neighborhood and resisted the City of New York's efforts to condemn their houses and relocate them . This group became "Nos Quedamos"....which generally translates to "we stay". Over a period of almost three years of intense and cooperative discussions of the possibilities, Nos Quedamos developed a block by block plan for Melrose. Today almost 20 years after that process began, many of the blocks are filled with a mixture of buildings, uses and neighbors that fit to each other and have and, slowly but surely created a neighborhood. Via Verde is part of that fit.

2013
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
COMMUNITY
REPRESENTATIVE
PERSPECTIVE



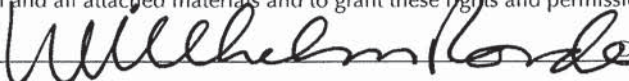
COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved or represents an organization that was involved in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Name Wilhelm Ronda Title Director of Planning and Development
Organization Office of Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. Telephone (718) 590-8087
Address 851 Grand Concourse City/State/ZIP The Bronx, New York 10451
Fax () E-mail wronda@bronxbp.nyc.gov

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Signature  Date 12-3-12

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play?

The Office of the Bronx Borough President has supported this project at different stages. Initially, the Office participated in the innovative New Housing New York Legacy Project design competition for the site launched by the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter and the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development. Our office was proud to serve on the juror selection team and fully endorsed the selection of this development team. In September 2008, The Office of the Bronx Borough President recommended approval of the project as part of the city's Uniform Land-Use Review Process (ULURP). We subsequently provided the project capital allocations over the course of two fiscal years (FY 10 & 11) totalling \$1.5 million.

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. attended both the ground breaking event in 2009 and the ribbon cutting ceremony officially opening the project in 2012.

2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project?

Among the major issues concerning the project were affordability to a broad range of incomes and sustainable design that promotes a healthy living environment. The project successfully addressed these providing a model replicable for future projects. The project integrates affordable rental housing with homeownership just as well as it does the high-rise dwellings and townhouses that accommodate this mixed-income development. Via Verde maximizes the use of solar power and natural light, thereby producing and saving energy as well as reducing carbon emissions. The project's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Gold rating serves as testimony to its sustainable achievement.

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. Has this project made the community a better place to live or work? If so, how?

Via Verde has successfully achieved the mixed-use, mixed-income and sustainable community design features sought by the community. The development offers incomparable community space such as the amphitheater for public gatherings and entertainment as well as passive and active green areas for introspection. The roof-top garden provides those with a green thumb the opportunity to partake in this wholesome art right upstairs from where they live and help remove rainwater from our combined sewer system. The live-work homeownership units facilitate entrepreneurship in the heart of the Bronx. Via Verde represents a holistic approach to community building rarely seen anywhere, where affordability, different uses, and healthy sustainability converge. Via Verde's tenants and homeowners may come from different economic backgrounds, but all come together smoothly as neighbors in space designed to facilitate a sense of community.

4. Would you change anything about this project or the development process you went through?

No, we should design more affordable housing projects in this manner.

2013
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
PUBLIC AGENCY
PERSPECTIVE



PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a staff representative of a public agency directly involved in financing, design or public approvals that affected this project.

Name **Mathew Wambua** Title **Commissioner**
Organization **NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development** Telephone (**212**) **863 6100**
Address **100 Gold Street** City/State/ZIP **New York, NY 10038**
Fax () E-mail **wambuam@hpd.nyc.gov**

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Signature

Date

12-05-12

1. What role did your agency play in the development of this project? Describe any requirements made of this project by your agency (e.g., zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statements).

The NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) was the lead public agency in the development of the Via Verde project. HPD sponsored the initial New Housing New York Legacy Competition, in partnership with the NYC Chapter of the AIA, and HPD was the lead applicant in the environmental impact analysis and rezoning process. HPD also sold the land to the developer for \$1 and provided financing for the affordable housing. For the rental portion of Via Verde, HPD provided \$2.52 million in federal HOME funds and \$9.77 million in City Capital funds. For the co-op portion of Via Verde, HPD provided \$712,630 in federal HOME funds and \$9.1 million in City Capital funds. HPD required that the project meet the initial criteria of the NHNY competition which was to design and develop the next generation of green affordable housing. In particular HPD worked with the developers and design team to ensure that the project provided a range of affordable housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income households in an innovative green building.

2. How was this project intended to benefit your city? What trade-offs and compromises were required to implement the project? How did your agency participate in making them?

Via Verde was developed as part of Mayor Bloomberg's New Housing Marketplace Plan - a multi-billion dollar initiative to finance 165,000 units of affordable housing for half a million New Yorkers by the close of Fiscal Year 2014. Via Verde was developed on one of the few last remaining parcels of property in the South Bronx that were taken through in-rem tax foreclosure in the 1970s and 80s when "the Bronx [was] burning." Via Verde is a potently symbolic of the City's comprehensive redevelopment efforts in the South Bronx since that time. As the lead public agency, HPD worked closely with Phipps Houses and Jonathan Rose Companies during the pre-development process to rezone the site from manufacturing to residential and to structure financing for the project in a way that was flexible and responded to the unique elements of the program while still satisfying HPD's underwriting and credit criteria.

We know that good quality and stable housing is essential to the well-being of communities and the tenants. Research currently underway demonstrates that moving to affordable housing can reduce asthma symptoms, anxiety and depression while increasing financial security. Via Verde provides 151 low-income rental units and 71 middle-income co-op units, along with 5,000 sf of space for Montefiore Medical Center and 2,000 sf of retail in a mixed-income, mixed-use, high-quality green community.

3. Describe the project's impact on your city. Please be as specific as possible.

Via Verde's impact on New York City is best summarized by the remarks delivered at the Via Verde ribbon cutting in June 2012:

Mayor Bloomberg: "Twenty years ago, it was inconceivable that the future of this neighborhood would look as bright as it does today. No one would have predicted that today there would one day be one of the most innovative, exciting, environmentally sustainable affordable housing developments in the nation – if not the world. The change that has swept through the South Bronx in the last decade challenges the very notions of what is and isn't possible in urban revival. And investment in high-quality affordable housing – made possible by partnerships like the one behind Via Verde – has been the catalyst."

HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan: "Via Verde is a model for what affordable housing ought to be – a platform for opportunity, a source of stability, a building block with which we forge neighborhoods, put down roots, and build the communities that are the engines of our nation's economic growth."

HDC President Marc Jahr: "Via Verde is the epitome of green development. For us, "green" is much more than a convenient catchphrase or socially acceptable set of nebulous standards... It is the way we approach the job that we do, and the standard to which we hold our partners. ..Together with our partners in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, we are making a difference; taking ambitious strides toward establishing a legacy of a more affordable, environmentally conscious and healthier New York City."

4. Did this project result in new models of public/private partnerships? Are there aspects of this project that would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?

One of the many unique aspects of the project is that a special task force was established as part of the New Housing New York Legacy Competition that helped shepherd the winning proposal, Via Verde, through the approvals, design, rezoning, and financing process. The task force, which included high-level staff from the NYC Dept. of Housing Preservation and Development, Dept. of Buildings, and Dept. of City Planning, played an instrumental role in allowing the innovative project to proceed with regular feedback from the key approval agencies.

This special task force gave the design and development team the knowledge, feedback and confidence required to execute on a project as innovative and complex as Via Verde. The project was a true public/private partnership between HPD and the development team, Phipps Houses and Jonathan Rose Companies, as well as numerous other City and State agencies. The building has raised the bar for design on the City's subsequent requests for proposals and continues to be a model for public-private partnership.

The creation of Via Verde from vacant lot to spectacular reality was aided by the vision and input from Secretary Donovan, the New York AIA, Enterprise, NYSEDA and others who saw the possibilities here.

5. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The most successful aspects of Via Verde are that the project lives up to the goals established in the original New Housing New York Legacy Competition: to design and develop a model for the next generation of green affordable housing. Moreover, the Via Verde stayed true to the design and affordability goals presented in the initial competition response and has been widely praised across the country for its high-quality design, green construction and features.

From the green roofs with gardening beds to the light filled-apartments and innovative façade, Via Verde demonstrates that new developments can provide high-quality affordable housing for low and moderate income households while contributing to the health of the building residents and the natural environment. HPD and HDC officials have personally given many tours of Via Verde to interested housing officials visiting New York City from other cities around the world, including delegations from France, Brazil, China, Russia, Vietnam, and a variety of cities across the United States. The competition was meant to serve as the impetus for a replicable model and we are happy that it is inspiring architects, developers, and public officials from around the world. At the same time, the project cost somewhat more than newly constructed developments of comparable size, and thus, while it is a paradigm of what is possible, it is one of a kind.

SECTION 5: PHOTOGRAPHS/DRAWINGS/MAP

PHOTOGRAPHS/DRAWINGS/MAP

Photographs

Exterior Photos (© David Sundberg/Esto)

1. Brook Avenue Facade
2. Brook Avenue Facade at Night
3. Entrance
4. View from Ballfield Looking North
5. View of Building with Integrated Solar Panels
6. Courtyard Facade Looking South
7. Fourth Floor Fruit Trees
8. Fifth Floor Garden Roof Looking North
9. Green Roofs
10. Fifth Floor Garden Roof Looking North/Vegetation
11. Children's Play Area

Interior Model Unit Photos (© Ruggero Vanni)

12. Open Living/Dining Room Panoramic
13. Kitchen
14. Living Room and Interior Stair
15. Master Bedroom
16. Second Bedroom
17. Half Bath
18. Full Bath
19. Washer/Dryer

Drawings

1. Ground Floor Plan
2. Typical Floor Plan
3. Cross Section
4. Longitudinal Section
5. Landscape Roof Plan

Map

1. Transit Map
2. Aerial Map
3. Neighborhood Retail Map



1. Brook Avenue Facade



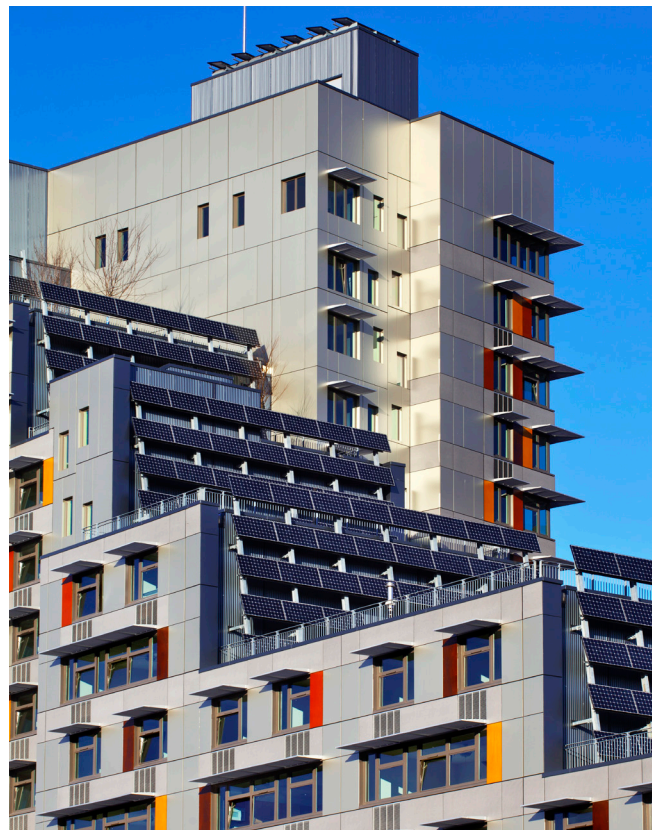
2. Brook Avenue Facade at Night



3. Entrance



4. View from Ballfield Looking North



5. Integrated Solar Panels



6. Courtyard Facade Looking South



7. Fourth Floor Fruit Trees



8. Fifth Floor Garden Roof Looking North



9. Green Roofs



10. Fifth Floor Garden Roof Looking North/Vegetation



11. Children's Play Area



12. Open Living/Dining Room/Panoramic



13. Kitchen



14. Living Room and Interior Stair



15. Master Bedroom



16. Second Bedroom



17. Half Bath

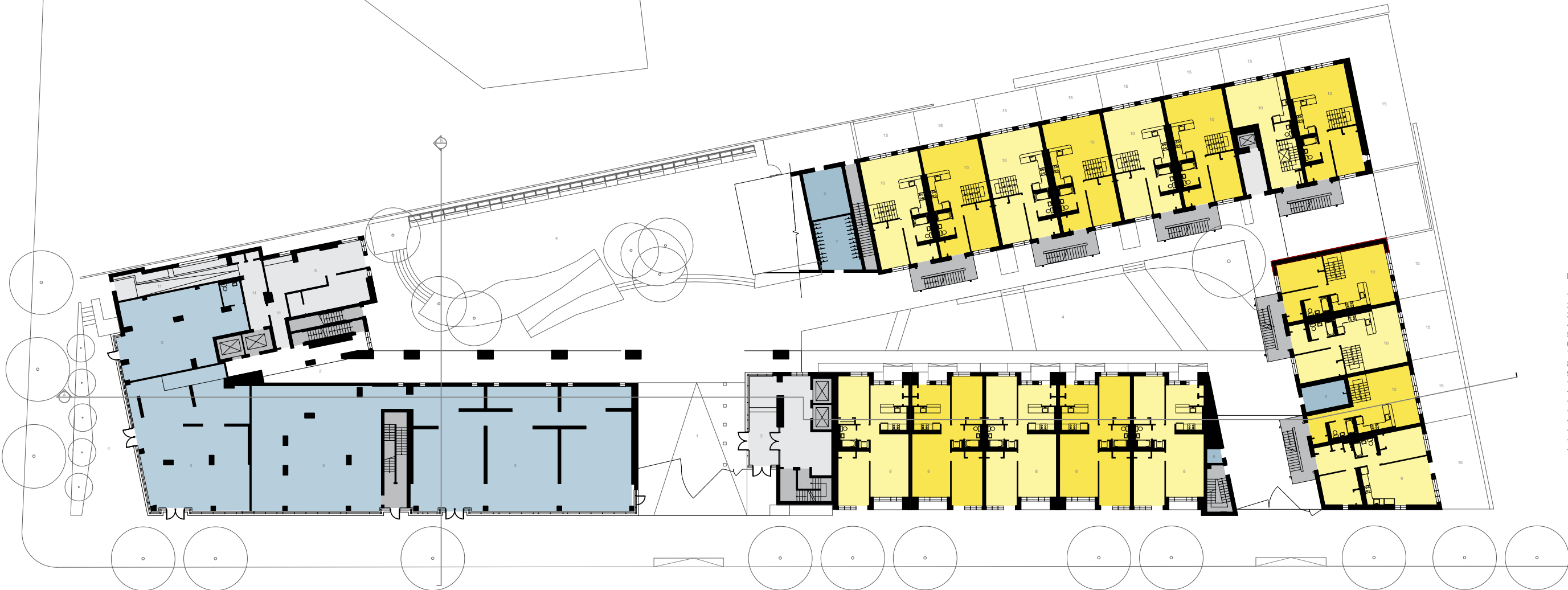


18. Full Bath



19. Washer/Dryer in Unit

E 156TH ST

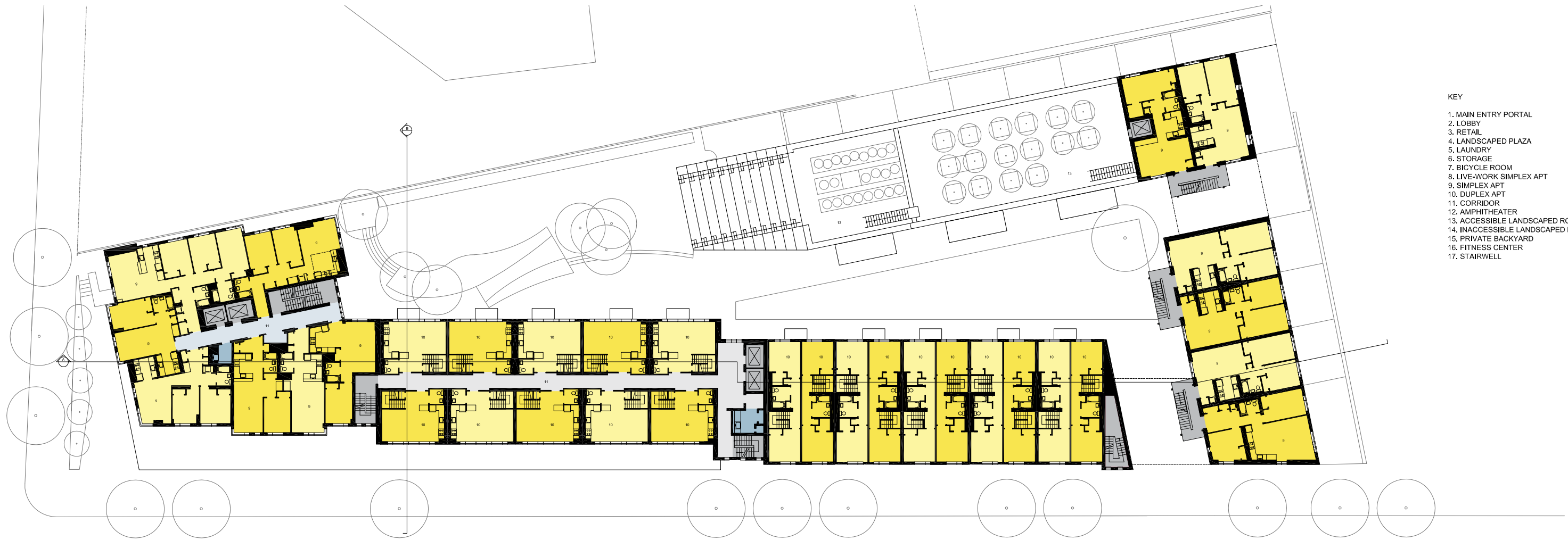


- KEY
- 1. MAIN ENTRY PORTAL
 - 2. LOBBY
 - 3. RETAIL
 - 4. LANDSCAPED PLAZA
 - 5. LAUNDRY
 - 6. STORAGE
 - 7. BICYCLE ROOM
 - 8. LIVE-WORK SIMPLEX APT
 - 9. SIMPLEX APT
 - 10. DUPLEX APT
 - 11. CORRIDOR
 - 12. AMPHITHEATER
 - 13. ACCESSIBLE LANDSCAPED ROOF
 - 14. INACCESSIBLE LANDSCAPED ROOF
 - 15. PRIVATE BACKYARD
 - 16. FITNESS CENTER
 - 17. STAIRWELL

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
 0' 5' 10' N

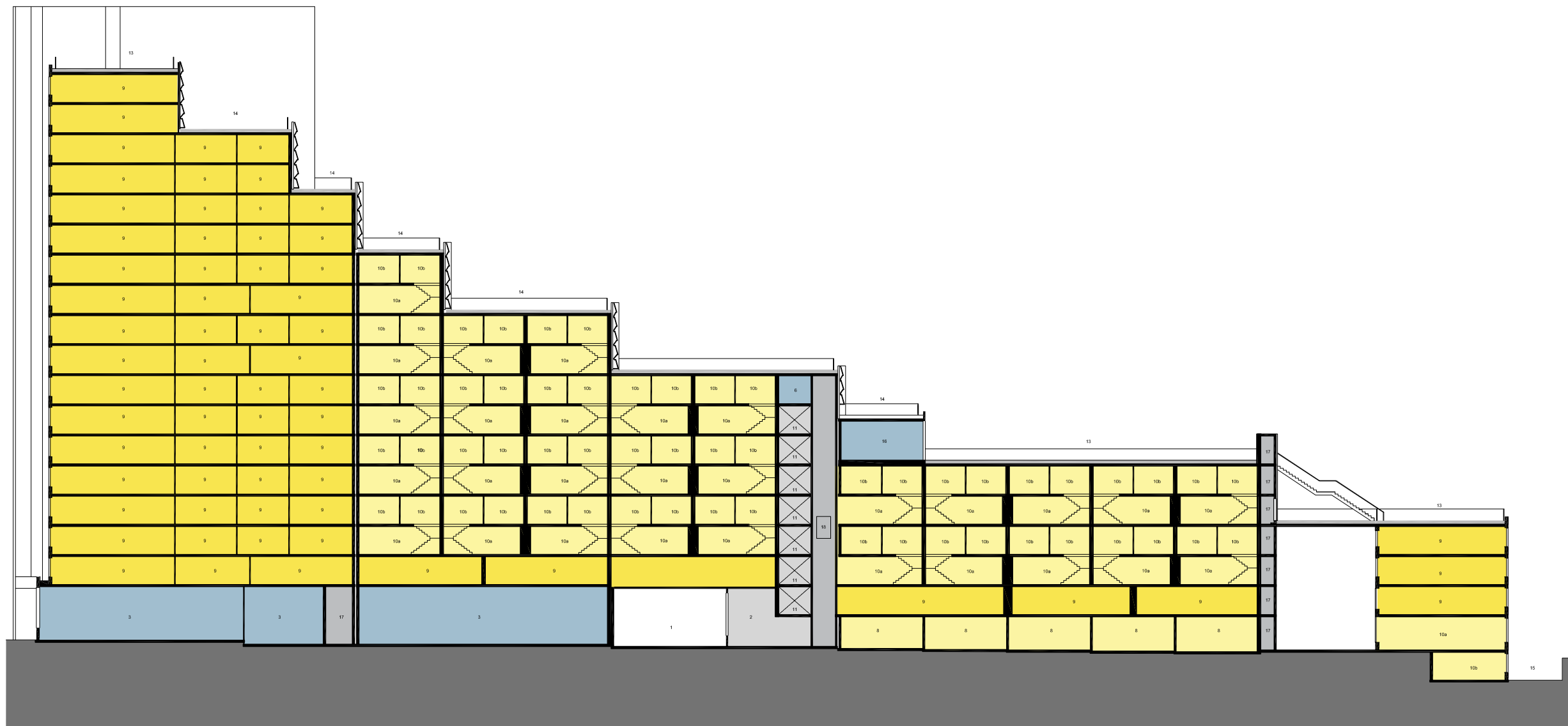
BROOK AVE

BERGEN AVE



- KEY
- 1. MAIN ENTRY PORTAL
 - 2. LOBBY
 - 3. RETAIL
 - 4. LANDSCAPED PLAZA
 - 5. LAUNDRY
 - 6. STORAGE
 - 7. BICYCLE ROOM
 - 8. LIVE-WORK SIMPLEX APT
 - 9. SIMPLEX APT
 - 10. DUPLEX APT
 - 11. CORRIDOR
 - 12. AMPHITHEATER
 - 13. ACCESSIBLE LANDSCAPED ROOF
 - 14. INACCESSIBLE LANDSCAPED ROOF
 - 15. PRIVATE BACKYARD
 - 16. FITNESS CENTER
 - 17. STAIRWELL

FOURTH FLOOR PLAN
 0' 5' 10' 16' N



KEY

- 1. MAIN ENTRY PORTAL
- 2. LOBBY
- 3. RETAIL
- 4. LANDSCAPED PLAZA
- 5. LAUNDRY
- 6. STORAGE
- 7. BICYCLE ROOM
- 8. LIVE-WORK SIMPLEX APT
- 9. SIMPLEX APT
- 10. DUPLEX APT
- 10a. DUPLEX APT - LIVING ROOM LEVEL
- 10b. DUPLEX APT - BEDROOM LEVEL
- 11. CORRIDOR
- 12. AMPHITHEATER
- 13. ACCESSIBLE LANDSCAPED ROOF
- 14. INACCESSIBLE LANDSCAPED ROOF
- 15. PRIVATE BACKYARD
- 16. FITNESS CENTER
- 17. STAIRWELL
- 18. ELEVATOR

BUILDING SECTION "A"
 0' 8' 16'



KEY

- 1. MAIN ENTRY PORTAL
- 2. LOBBY
- 3. RETAIL
- 4. LANDSCAPED PLAZA
- 5. LAUNDRY
- 6. STORAGE
- 7. BICYCLE ROOM
- 8. LIVE-WORK SIMPLEX APT
- 9. SIMPLEX APT
- 10. DUPLEX APT
- 10a. DUPLEX APT - LIVING ROOM LEVEL
- 10b. DUPLEX APT - BEDROOM LEVEL
- 11. CORRIDOR
- 12. AMPHITHEATER
- 13. ACCESSIBLE LANDSCAPED ROOF
- 14. INACCESSIBLE LANDSCAPED ROOF
- 15. PRIVATE BACKYARD
- 16. FITNESS CENTER
- 17. STAIRWELL

BUILDING SECTION "B"
 0' 8' 16'

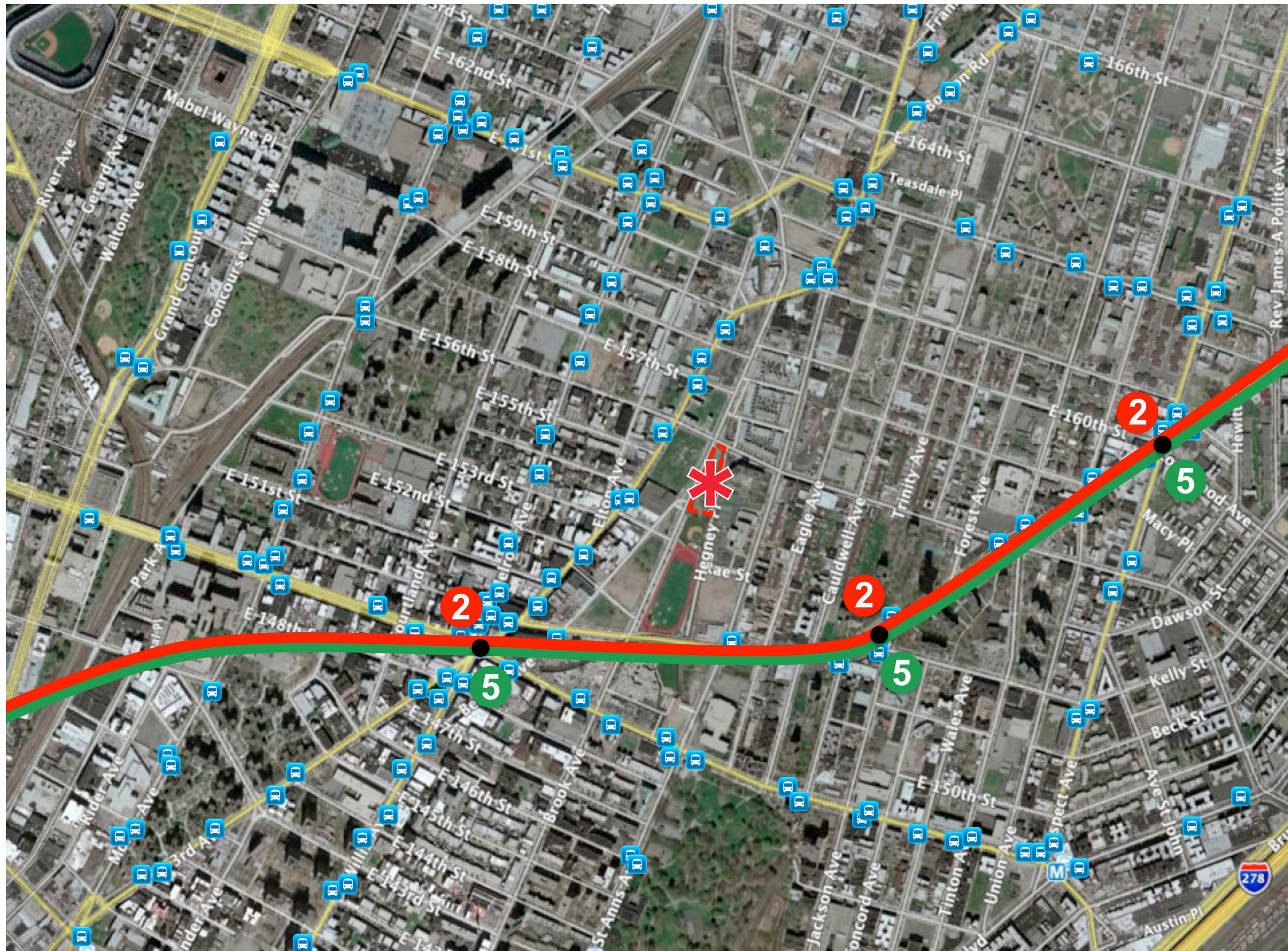


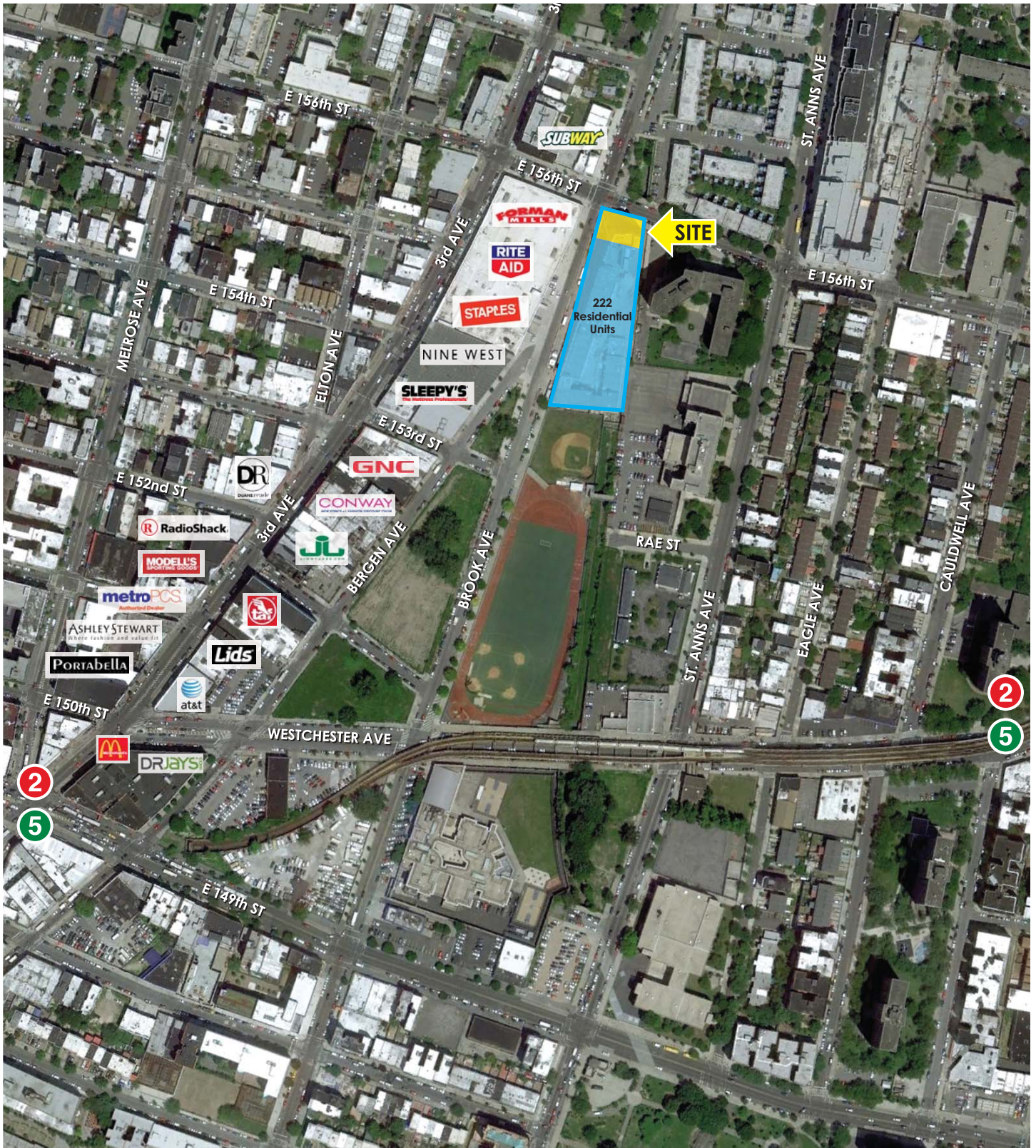
- KEY**
- 1. PLAY AREA
 - 2. AMPHITHEATRE
 - 3. CONIFER GARDEN -- FL 3
 - 4. ORCHARD GARDEN-- FL4
 - 5. COMMUNITY GARDEN -- FL5
 - 6. FITNESS GARDEN -- FL7
 - 7. WAVE GARDEN -- FL8.5
 - 8. WAVE GARDEN -- FL10
 - 9. WAVE GARDEN -- FL12
 - 10. WAVE GARDEN -- FL14
 - 11. WAVE GARDEN -- FL16
 - 12. WAVE GARDEN -- FL18
 - 13. DINING TERRACE -- FL20

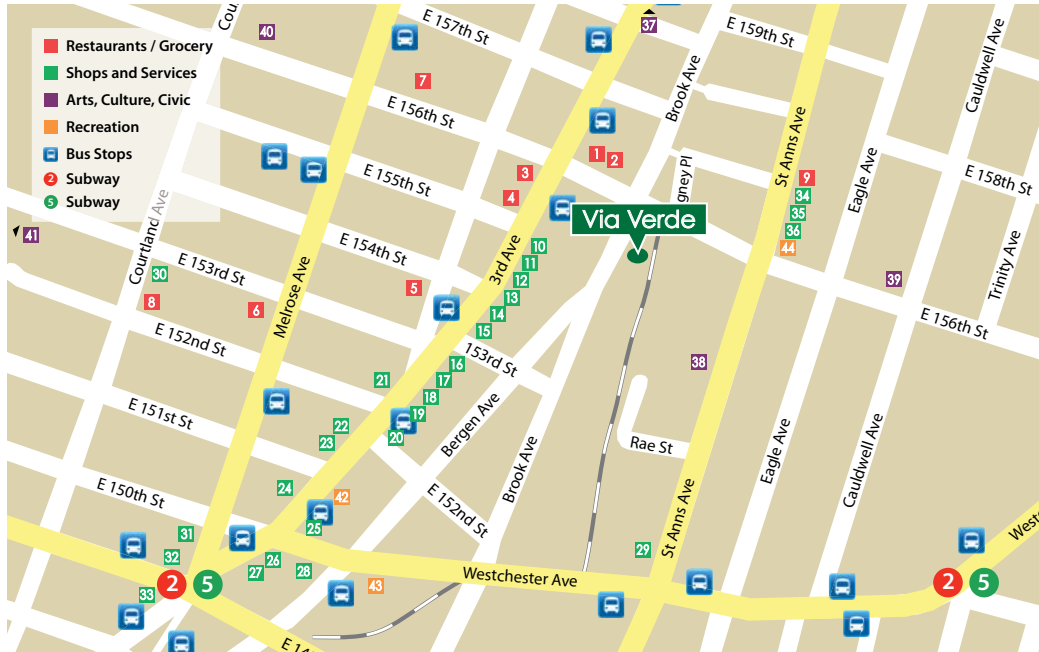


BROOK AVE

BERGEN AVE







Restaurants

- 1. 3rd Gourmet Deli
- 2. Subway
- 3. New China Restaurant
- 4. Dominos Pizza
- 5. Fine Style Jamaican Buffet
- 6. Xochimilco Restaurant

Grocery Stores

- 7. Meffood Grocery Store
- 8. Pioneer Supermarket
- 9. Associated Supermarket

Shops and Services

- 10. Forman Mills
- 11. Rite Aid Pharmacy
- 12. Staples
- 13. NY Baby

- 14. Nine West
- 15. Sleepy's
- 16. Rainbow Clothing
- 17. GNC
- 18. Conway
- 19. Jimmy Jazz
- 20. T-Mobile
- 21. Duane Reade
- 22. Radio Shack
- 23. Modells Sporting Goods
- 24. Foot Locker
- 25. AT&T
- 26. Verizon
- 27. Dr. Jay's
- 28. Jay Fish Market
- 29. U.S. Post Office
- 30. Walgreens
- 31. Capital One

- 32. Bank of America
- 33. Chase
- 34. Family Dollar
- 35. Brightside Daycare Academy
- 36. Dry Cleaners

Arts, Culture, Civic

- 37. Boriqua College
- 38. New Explorers High School
- 39. PS 157
- 40. Bronx Elementary #29
- 41. Yankee Stadium

Recreation

- 42. Planet Fitness
- 43. John's Boxing Gym
- 44. Blink Fitness

SECTION 6: PUBLICATIONS

PUBLICATIONS

Publications

1. “Grand Opening of Via Verde Affordable Housing Development,” [NYC.GOV Website](#), June 18, 2012
2. “Mayor Bloomberg, HUD Secretary Donovan, HPD Commissioner Wambua, Rose Companies and Phipps Houses Announce Grand Opening of Via Verde Affordable Housing Development,” [New York City Press Release](#), June 18, 2012
3. “In a Bronx Complex, Doing Good Mixes With Looking Good,” [New York Times](#), September 26, 2011
4. “Healthier Eating Starts on the Roof,” [New York Times](#), April 5, 2012
5. “Best Places to Live in NY,” [New York Daily News](#), March 23, 2012
6. “Road to Green: Dattner Grimshaw Bronx Partnership Yields Model Sustainable Housing,” [The Architects Newspaper](#), September 26, 2011
7. “New South Bronx Housing Complex Is Not “Green” To Environmentally Friendly Ideas,” [NY1](#), February 26, 2012
8. “Building a Healthier and Greener New York,” [BBC](#), September 22, 2010
9. NYC.gov Groundbreaking Press Release, January 17, 2007
10. “Working-Class Housing Complex Will Rise as Part of the Greenery,” [New York Times](#), January 17, 2007

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Grand Opening of Via Verde Affordable Housing Development



1 2

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Mayor Bloomberg and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Donovan cut the ribbon to mark the official opening of the Via Verde affordable housing development located at 700 Brook Avenue and East 156th Street in the South Bronx. June 18, 2012 (Photo Credit: Edward Reed)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, June 18, 2012

Eric Bederman (HPD) (212) 863-5176

Stu Loeser / Julie Wood (212) 788-2958

MAYOR BLOOMBERG, HUD SECRETARY DONOVAN, HPD COMMISSIONER WAMBUA, ROSE COMPANIES AND PHIPPS HOUSES ANNOUNCE GRAND OPENING OF VIA VERDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

From First-Of-Its-Kind Design Competition to Reality, Unique Project Achieves High Standard for Sustainable, Affordable Urban Development

Via Verde Is City's Latest Achievement in Ongoing Effort to Rebuild and Revitalize Once Blighted South Bronx Neighborhood

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan, Department of Housing Preservation and Development Commissioner Mathew M. Wambua, Housing Development Corporation President Marc Jahr, New York State Homes and Community Renewal Commissioner/CEO Darryl C. Towns, were joined by to cut the ribbon to mark the official opening of the Via Verde affordable housing development located at 700 Brook Avenue and East 156th Street in the South Bronx. Via Verde, a largely City-financed project that blends 151 rental units and 71 co-op units with innovative and sustainable green design elements, was the winning proposal to New York City's first juried design competition for affordable and sustainable housing. The development is also the latest to be completed in the Administration's efforts to rebuild the blighted South Bronx. The Mayor was joined at the announcement by Jonathan Rose Companies President Jonathan F. P. Rose, Phipps Houses President Adam Weinstein, JPMorgan Chase Chief Administrative Officer and Mortgage Banking CEO Frank Bisignano, Congressman Jose E. Serrano, State Senator Ruben Diaz, Sr., Bronx Borough President Rubin Diaz, Jr., and Council Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo.

"Twenty years ago, it was inconceivable that the future of this neighborhood would look as bright as it does today," said Mayor Bloomberg. "No one would have predicted that today there would one day be one of the most innovative, exciting, environmentally sustainable affordable housing developments in the nation – if not the world. The change that has swept through the South Bronx in the last decade challenges the very notions of what is and isn't possible in urban revival. And investment in high-quality affordable housing – made possible by partnerships like the one behind Via Verde – has been the catalyst."

Via Verde was developed as part of Mayor Bloomberg's New Housing Marketplace Plan. The plan is a multi-billion dollar initiative to finance 165,000 units of affordable housing for half a million New Yorkers by the close of Fiscal Year 2014. For every dollar invested by the City, the plan has leveraged \$3.41 in private funding, amounting to a total commitment to date of more than \$19.4 billion to fund the creation or preservation of over 130,770 units of affordable housing across the five boroughs. Nearly 40,400 units have been financed in the Bronx, with 7,190 of those units in Bronx Community Board 1

where Via Verde is located.

“Via Verde is a model for what affordable housing ought to be – a platform for opportunity, a source of stability, a building block with which we forge neighborhoods, put down roots, and build the communities that are the engines of our nation’s economic growth,” said HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan. “The New Housing New York Legacy Project and Via Verde represents architects re-engaging in the design of affordable housing, the best practices for environmentally friendly design as well as the wider concept of sustainability through community meetings where stakeholder voices were heard and locally-driven planning efforts were used as a model. And of course, it is inspiring to see a range of funding sources - including HOME funds from HUD - contribute to building more affordable homes as part of Mayor Bloomberg’s historic 165,000 unit affordable housing plan.”

“Mayor Bloomberg’s New Housing Marketplace Plan is bringing investment and jobs to neighborhoods all throughout New York City,” Deputy Mayor for Economic Development Robert K. Steel said. “Via Verde is a new landmark in the South Bronx, demonstrating the power of new, sustainable affordable housing developments to revitalize and activate neighborhoods.”

“We know intrinsically that having good quality and stable housing is essential to well-being,” said HPD Commissioner Mathew M. Wambua. “Now, thanks to findings of research we have underway, we can say that we know for a fact that moving to affordable housing can reduce asthma symptoms, and anxiety and depression while increasing financial security. What is remarkable here is that such a short time ago, this site was a blighted, contaminated, rubbish-strewn mess. This transformation from vacant eyesore to spectacular vision became real thanks to Secretary Donovan, the New York AIA, Enterprise, NYSEDA and others who saw the possibilities here. We will keep working to develop and preserve affordable housing here in the South Bronx—the City of New York has a great deal at stake here and has invested and leveraged billions of dollars to make the community whole and worthy of being called home again.”

“Via Verde is the epitome of green development,” said HDC President Marc Jahr. “For us, “green” is much more than a convenient catchphrase or socially acceptable set of nebulous standards. It is the way we approach the job that we do, and the standard to which we hold our partners. In making green part of our ethos, we require energy efficiency, water conservation and healthy air quality indoors and outdoors. And just as important—we hold the bottom line steady—lower operating costs mean lower overhead which translates into more sustainable affordability. And wherever you go in this community, no matter where you look, you can see the results of our labors. Together with our partners in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, we are making a difference; taking ambitious strides toward establishing a legacy of a more affordable, environmentally conscious and healthier New York City.”

“Via Verde represents the next wave in affordable housing: cutting-edge design, innovative public and private sector financing, smart use of land, all at an affordable price. Many of the technologies used to construct Via Verde hold promise for changing the way we build affordable housing, providing better, more efficient, and more beautiful apartment buildings. Via Verde has definitely changed the way Phipps Houses – and all of us – think of affordable housing,” said Adam Weinstein, President and CEO, The

Phipps Houses Group.

“Via Verde is an intensively green, energy-efficient building, but it’s also a sustainable community that focuses on the quality of life and health of the families who will live here,” said Jonathan F.P. Rose, President of Jonathan Rose Companies. “To create vibrant, dense cities, we need models that integrate housing and health, food and family, security and sociability, reflection and restoration as integrated systems. Via Verde demonstrates that such integration is possible.”

“Under Governor Andrew Cuomo’s leadership, the State’s housing agencies have put a premium on green, sustainable affordable housing,” said New York State Homes and Community Renewal Commissioner/CEO Darryl C. Towns. “Via Verde was truly a collaborative effort with the City, State, Phipps Houses and Jonathan Rose Companies - creating an urban oasis of healthier housing in the South Bronx. The State’s more than \$13 million investment in this innovative project included grants from the Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC) to subsidize the co-ops, access to low-rate SONYMA mortgages for first-time homebuyers living here, and State Low Income Housing Tax Credits. This mixed-income project will help to strengthen and stabilize the community, neighborhood and the Bronx and creates a new paradigm - a green sanctuary that completely redefines an urban landscape.”

The approximately \$99 million complex includes three distinct building types: a 20-story tower at the north end of the site, six-to-12 story mid-rise buildings in the middle, and three-to-four story townhouses to the south. The development boasts 151 units of low-income rental housing and 71 moderate- and middle-income co-op units for a total of 222 mixed-income affordable units. The rental units are located in the tower and midrise building, with the cooperative units situated in the townhouses and also in the midrise building.

The low-income rental units are fully leased. Of the 151 rental units, 17 units are reserved for household earning 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or what is equivalent to \$23,040 for a family of four, 13 units are set at 40% AMI (\$30,720 for a family of four), 120 units are set at 60% AMI (\$46,080 for a family of four), with one of the units set aside for the superintendent. Fifty-six of the cooperative units have been sold to date. Of the 71 total cooperative units, five units are reserved for households earning 80% AMI (\$61,450 for a family of four), 39 units are set at 150% AMI (\$115,200 for a family of four), 26 units are set at 175% AMI (\$134,400 for a family of four). All of the units in Via Verde were offered to the public via a lottery: for the 151 rental apartments there were 7,000 applications.

At the heart of Via Verde are a series of gardens that begin in the courtyard then spiral up through a series of green roofs and south facing solar panels. The rooftop gardens dissipate heat and absorb rainwater runoff, using a reclamation system that recycles water for irrigation, while providing opportunities for active gardening, fruit and vegetable cultivation, relaxation and social gathering. The facade features aluminum, cement, and wood panels with panoramic windows, sunshades, and courtyard balconies. A landscaped courtyard, the green roofs, a fitness center, and day-lit stairs promote healthy lifestyles and provide opportunities for physical fitness.

“The Via Verde housing development is the cutting edge for affordable housing--and it is

fitting that it would be situated in the Bronx. Our community has embraced the 'green agenda' for change and empowerment and the results are being enjoyed every day – whether it's new parks and green spaces or community organizing or new jobs in the green sector. Now we see housing built for working people that is innovative and sustainable. I tip my cap to all those involved in this project from start to finish and look forward to talking with happy residents in the near future," said Congressman Jose E. Serrano.

"I am excited and glad to officially celebrate the completion of the Via Verde development on Brook Avenue. The Bronx is breaking the mold and setting the standard for a 21st century way of building affordable housing. The Via Verde project which was highlighted in the New York Times as a leading model of sustainable development, will help our Bronx residents live healthier through its state-of-the-art living space and roof top gardens," said Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.

"Via Verde was born from a collaboration of public and private forces – including the Bloomberg Administration, HPD, American Institute of Architects New York Chapter and the development community – and now serves a national model for sustainable affordable housing," said Rick Bell, executive director of AIANY. "Via Verde stunningly demonstrates that the creation of beautiful, healthy and affordable housing is possible if enough people say that it is a priority for our city, and for those empowered by voters, residents and designers to shape it. Design matters."

The Via Verde development was the winning response to the New Housing New York Legacy competition, sponsored by HPD, the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), and the Enterprise Foundation. It was New York City's first juried design competition for affordable and sustainable housing. The New Housing New York Legacy Competition's aim was to promote affordable, sustainable, and mixed-income housing by using innovative design on a site that had proved difficult to develop. A joint venture among the HPD, HDC, Jonathan Rose Companies and Phipps Housing Services, and designed by Dattner Architects and Grimshaw Architects, is green affordable housing that prioritizes sustainable, healthy urban living. It is designed to achieve LEED Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), including an innovation credit for integrating Active Living Guidelines, and to meet NYSERDA standards through the incorporation of a range of innovative environmentally responsible design features.

In keeping with Via Verde's mission as a model for healthy, sustainable living, Montefiore Medical Center will open a comprehensive family practice at Via Verde in the fall. Staffed with four full-time family medicine physicians, nurses, support staff and a social worker, the 5,000-sq. ft. practice is projected to deliver over 15,000 visits each year to approximately 6,000 patients. There is an additional 2,000-square-feet of retail space as well.

Via Verde's innovation in green design started at construction by using eco-friendly building practices. The project was constructed using 20% recycled materials with more than 20% of total building materials having been manufactured locally, minimizing transportation energy and supporting the local economy. In addition, more than 80% of the construction and demolition waste was recycled.

Energy saving and sustainable features designed into Via Verde include motion sensors in stairways and corridors to conserve electricity and building-integrated photovoltaic panels to produce electricity from solar energy. Individual apartments feature EnergyStar appliances, energy-efficient lighting, panoramic, high-efficiency windows, natural cross ventilation in all duplex apartments, Low VOC materials improve air quality, super-sealed insulation, and water-conserving fixtures.

“Via Verde realizes a vision for innovative, sustainable affordable housing in the South Bronx. Dattner Architects is honored to be part of the team with Phipps Houses, Jonathan Rose Companies, our colleagues at Grimshaw and the other participants, to create this community inspired by the integration of nature and city,” said William Stein FAIA, Principal, Dattner Architects.

“Via Verde’s mandate for healthy living in affordable housing inspires not only a place to live, but a way to think. Grimshaw is grateful for this inspiration, as well as the opportunity to collaborate on such a notable project with Phipps Houses, Jonathan Rose Companies, Dattner Architects, and the entire project team. We sincerely hope the efforts put forward will enrich the lives of its residents, the community, and the future of affordable housing,” said Virginia Little LEED AP, Architect, Grimshaw.

The vacant 1.5-acre site where Via Verde now stands was conveyed by HPD to the development team at a nominal cost to help subsidize the affordability the project. There were several unique challenges to developing the site including its unique triangular in shape and the fact that most of it was an abandoned railroad yard that lay below street-level. The corner of the development site at East 156 Street and Brook Avenue was previously used as a gas station, which, along with its former use as a rail yard, contributed to contamination severe enough to require extensive remediation. Via Verde is also participating in NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) and the developer provided \$2.68 million in upfront BCP equity.

“This project epitomizes New York State’s Brownfield Cleanup Program. This contaminated former industrial site, which was vacant for many years, was successfully cleaned up and put back into productive use. We congratulate Phipps Houses and Jonathan Rose Companies on the grand opening of Via Verde,” said NYSDEC Regional Director Venetia Lannon.

During construction HPD and HDC lent the project a combined \$80 million, a portion of which was paid down at completion via tax credit equity generated from the rental units and sales proceeds from the co-op units.

Permanent financing sources for the Via Verde affordable rental portion included an HDC first mortgage of \$4.37 million, as well as \$12.84 million in subsidy under its New Housing Opportunity Program (NewHOP). HPD provided \$2.52 million in federal HOME funds and \$9.77 million in City Capital funds. The Federal Home Loan Bank provided \$1.9 million in AHP funds, and NYSERDA provided \$380,000 in funding. HCR provided \$7 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) equity. HPD provided \$25 million in LIHTC equity. Phipps provided \$1 million in Brownfield Cleanup Program equity for site remediation. An additional \$2 million of developer equity was also contributed.

Permanent financing sources for the Via Verde cooperative portion included an HDC first

mortgage of \$5.83 million, and HPD provided \$9.1 million in City Capital funds along with \$712,630 in federal HOME funds. HCR provided \$2.12 million in grants, through the Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC), to subsidize the purchase of the 70 co-ops, and up to \$4.7 million in SONYMA first-time homebuyer, low-cost fixed-rate mortgage financing. The Bronx Borough President's office provided \$1 million in Reso A funds and Councilmember Arroyo provided \$500,000 in Reso A funds. NYSERDA contributed an additional \$187,331. Sales proceeds of \$7.73 million and additional developer equity of \$3.12 million will come in at permanent conversion. The developers provided \$1.7 million of Brownfield Cleanup Program equity for site remediation.

JPMorgan Chase was the only private lender and investor in this project, providing a total of \$76.5 million in construction loans and equity through the purchase of Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits and New York State credits. As the investor in the tax credits, Chase is committed to this project for the next 15 years.

For the Via Verde affordable rental portion, HDC provided \$33.69 million in taxable bond proceeds at construction and a first mortgage of \$4.37 million, as well as \$12.84 million in subsidy under the New Housing Opportunity Program (NewHOP). HPD provided \$2.52 million in federal HOME funds and \$9.77 million in City Capital funds. The Federal Home Loan Bank provided \$1.9 million in AHP funds; NYSERDA provided \$380,000 in funding; NYS Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) and HPD provided \$32 million in LIHC/SLIHC/LIHTC equity funds.

For the Via Verde cooperative portion, HDC provided \$7.44 million in taxable bonds proceeds, as well as a \$5.83 million first mortgage and \$4.62 million in subsidy. HPD provided \$712,630 in federal HOME funds and \$9.1 million in City Capital funds. The Bronx Borough President's office provided \$1 million in Reso A funds and Councilmember Arroyo provided \$500,000 in RESO A funds. The Calvert Foundation provided a \$2.5 million loan to the project. The Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC) provided \$2.12 million, and \$187,331 was contributed from NYSERDA. Sales proceeds of \$7.73 million and additional developer equity of \$3.12 million will come in at permanent conversion.

"As New York City's largest bank, we want to help build strong communities by investing in projects that provide affordable, high-quality housing," said Frank Bisignano, JPMorgan Chase Chief Administrative Officer and CEO of Mortgage Banking. "Via Verde will do that for the South Bronx, while improving the health of residents."

"Congratulations to all involved in the Via Verde project and its LEED Gold certification," said Francis J. Murray Jr., President and CEO of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. "Via Verde represents the successful culmination of a highly creative approach to green, healthy urban living. NYSERDA is proud of the project's partnership with the Multifamily Performance Program and its emphasis on the role of efficiency in controlling energy usage and costs while ensuring comfort for residents."

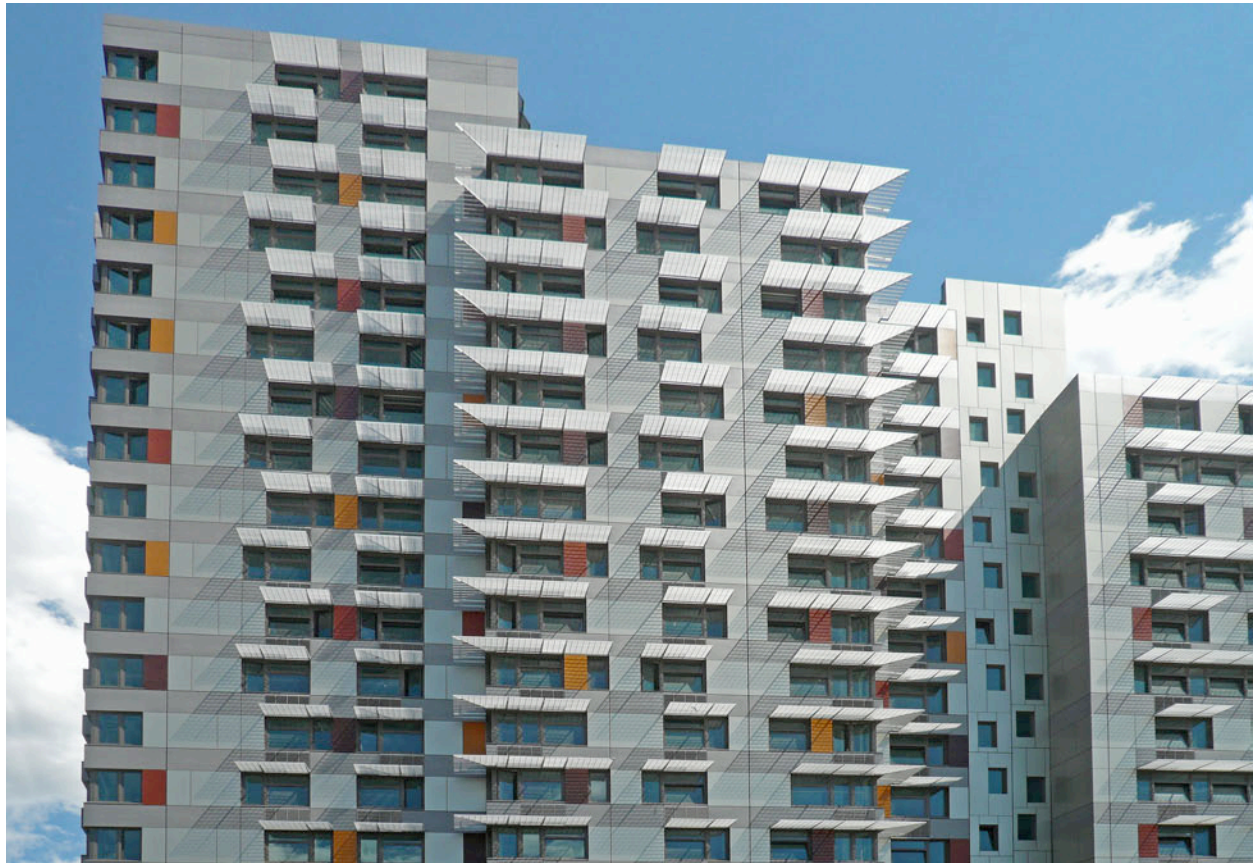
Situated just outside of the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area, Via Verde represents the City's latest achievement in its ongoing efforts to rebuild the South Bronx following the massive population loss, blight and abandonment of the 1970s and 1980s. The City adopted the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan (URP) in the early 1990s with 66 sites comprised of approximately 46 contiguous acres located in the center of the

South Bronx and shared by Community Districts 1 and 3, with the goal of creating a variety of housing types for an economically diverse population. Since construction began, 2,818 new residential units have been completed, including 2,412 units in 17 multifamily buildings and 406 units in seven small home developments. Currently an additional 217 units are under construction in one multi-family project. When all sites are completed it is expected that approximately 3,700 new residential units and approximately 300,000-square-feet of commercial space will have been created. This effort and partnership between the City and the community is largely credited with bringing the neighborhood back to life.

Understanding the health impacts of Via Verde's unique and innovative design will help to show the value of affordable housing investments and provide new knowledge of how housing can be leveraged to increase physical activity, which could lead to long-term reduction in the rate of diabetes and heart disease. HPD and Columbia University, along with other academic and municipal partners, are currently conducting a multi-million study funded by the National Institutes of Health and the MacArthur Foundation that will quantify the benefits of newly constructed housing financed under the New Housing Marketplace Plan, including Via Verde. This critical research is already demonstrating that moving to affordable housing can reduce asthma symptoms, reduce anxiety and depression, increase financial security, and improve housing quality and affordability. The study will evaluate whether buildings such as Via Verde produce measurable gains for adults and children, above and beyond those of other types of affordable housing.

ARCHITECTURE REVIEW

In a Bronx Complex, Doing Good Mixes with Looking Good



Phipps, Rose, Dattner, Grimshaw

September 26, 2011

By Michael Kimmelman

Sometime late this winter people will start moving into Via Verde, the subsidized housing development now rising on a long, narrow slice of formerly contaminated city property in what used to be one of the worst stretches of the South Bronx.

The co-ops and rentals for low- and moderate-income residents spiral around what will be a leafy, semi-enclosed court. Single-family town houses are taking shape alongside a 20-story apartment tower overlooking the sea of housing complexes that have transformed the neighborhood in recent years.

The rebirth of the South Bronx isn't news. But Via Verde is. And it makes as good an argument as any new building in the city for the cultural and civic value of architecture. The profession, or in any case much talk about it, has been fixated for too long on brand-name luxury objects and buildings as sculptures instead of attending to the richer, broader, more urgent vein of public policy and community engagement, in which aesthetics play a part.

Via Verde helps shift the conversation. Like all good architecture, it is handsome. Unlike too much, it goes out of its way to be healthy. It evolved out of a competition five years ago, organized by Shaun Donovan, then commissioner of the city's Department of Housing Preservation and Development, now President Obama's secretary of housing and urban development. The idea was to spur developers to team with architects in combining the latest green concepts with high-quality architecture for a public-housing project, a "beacon," as Mr. Donovan put it to me the other day, that would "re-engage design with the issue of affordable housing."

By this Mr. Donovan meant that the historic calamities of urban renewal, which compounded the despair after the burning of the Bronx years ago, had caused many architects to shy away from the community sphere. Timidity has combined with what Robert Ivy, chief executive of the American Institute of Architects, lamented recently as "the binge culture" of the last decade or so: advances in new digital technologies and materials coincided with unprecedented private wealth to cause architecture to join the conga line of fashion and art.

The competition for Via Verde, at Brook Avenue and East 156th Street, emerged from a different ethos. The winning team paired Jonathan Rose, a for-profit developer known for social engagement, and Phipps Houses Group, a nonprofit outfit with a long history in subsidized housing. They enlisted two architectural firms, the glamorous, high-profile London-based Grimshaw Architects, for whom this was an unusual project, and Dattner Architects, from New York, for whom it wasn't.

The four players began the right way, by asking people in the neighborhood what kind of building they wanted.

The answer: they wanted a healthy place to live.

Green design, when it hasn't been turned into a gimmick and marketing device, has mostly been pushed publicly for its environmental benefits and lower energy costs. But the promotion of health is green's other, less trumpeted side. What is a healthy building?

Asthma rates are high in the South Bronx, obesity commonplace, access to fruits and vegetables limited because supermarkets are, as always in poor neighborhoods, scarce, and the city's population of Korean grocers is dwindling. In an ideal world new housing would be developed hand in hand with new schools and supermarkets that sell fresh produce. But for Via Verde the question was what a housing development on its own could do to shape and change behavior.

The developers and architects came up with some simple answers — usually the best kind.

A medical clinic was enlisted to occupy the retail space on the ground floor of the tower. The footprints of the buildings were made narrower than usual to allow apartments to wrap around the central courtyard and give them two outside exposures for cross ventilation, along with ceiling fans to discourage the use of air-conditioners. The buildings were also massed to peak along the lot's long north-south axis to take maximum advantage of natural light. Staircases were placed before the elevators in the hallways and the stairwells were given windows, to nudge people to walk.

A fitness center was devised not for the basement but for the prime spot, with a load of light and great views on Via Verde's signature feature: 40,000-square-feet of terraced roof atop the town houses planted with garden plots and fruit trees. Communal garden plots on the roof will let tenants grow their own fruits and vegetables and provide a destination for walkers who can either climb up to them from the courtyard or step down to them after a workout.

Unlike so many public-housing projects, Via Verde rethinks the mix of private and public spaces to encourage residents to spend time outside, in the fresh air. It breaks the mold of subsidized housing whereby clinics, low-income rentals and home ownership are all conceived, financed and regulated

separately. Piecing them together, it takes the healthier, holistic tack. Healthy design comes down to fundamentals in this case: air, light, places to stroll, things to look at. Which is Via Verde's other distinction: its premium on looks.

This is a fairly radical proposition in the universe of subsidized housing. Many advocates for the homeless demand that every penny spent on public housing be squeezed to construct the maximum number of new apartments. No wonder. Thousands of homeless families and others waiting for decent homes need those apartments. Higher costs for green construction have, over recent years, come to be accepted as investments in long-term savings. But spending extra for anything as intangible as elegance or architectural distinction? In Via Verde's case maybe 5 percent more, by Mr. Rose's estimate, went into the project's roof and its fine, multipanel, multicolor facade, with big windows, sunshades and balconies. What is the value of architectural distinction? How, morally speaking, can it be weighed against the need for homes?

In terms of equitability and self-worth Via Verde does more than just aim to provide decent housing that fits noiselessly into its neighborhood. It aims to stand out, aesthetically, formally, as a foreground building, not another background one: to anchor the urban hodgepodge around it and make the area look more coherent, which in this case entails not echoing its context but redefining it. What is that worth?

I watched the other day, from the end of the long line waiting for \$1 slices at the pizza place that I have come to like a few blocks away, as a young mother pushing a stroller laden with Duane Reade shopping bags, her small children devouring grape snow cones from a shaved-ice pushcart vendor, stopped to gaze and point at Via Verde's shiny facade when it suddenly appeared around a corner.

After polishing off my slice, I passed a young couple inside an office at Via Verde, prospective residents, sitting rigid and eager beneath one of the whirling ceiling fans before a woman shuffling papers at a desk. The complex, with 71 co-ops and 151 rental apartments, is harder to get into than some of the toughest colleges. Some 800 families have applied for the co-ops alone.

There is the usual bureaucratic calculus at work in determining the mix of incomes and tenants, the goal being to bring together renters and owners, poor and middle-class residents who, by virtue of the pride and pleasure they share in Via Verde, will want to take care of the building and contribute to the long-term welfare of the neighborhood.

That's the delight part of Via Verde. At the groundbreaking ceremony Ruben Diaz Jr., the Bronx borough president, recalled the bad old days. "Let it be known," he said, "that where the Bronx once burned we are building gardens in the sky." Put differently, architecture doesn't solve unemployment or poverty, and neighborhoods rise or fall as decent places to live on the quality of their background buildings, which do and should predominate. But they're distinguished by their landmarks, by the buildings and places that people come to love.

The greenest and most economical architecture is ultimately the architecture that is preserved because it's cherished. Bad designs, demolished after 20 years, as so many ill-conceived housing projects have been, are the costliest propositions in the end.

Of course a building consists of more than its skin and the claims of its makers. Its aesthetics remain inseparable from its function. It has to work, for the people who use it and live with it, not just see it. The real test for Via Verde — watch this space — will be once its residents have settled in, to see how green and healthy and gracious they actually find it.

Meanwhile one thing's already certain. With the economy struggling and poverty rising, the project points architecture, and the architectural conversation, in the right direction.

REAL ESTATE

Healthier Eating Starts on the Roof



Angel Franco/The New York Times

FUTURE SALAD A rooftop community garden at the new Via Verde affordable housing complex now being marketed in the South Bronx.

April 5, 2012

By Alison Gregor

WHEN Yaritzi Estevez and her 8-year-old daughter, Aaliyah Rivers, planted collard greens, zucchini, lettuce and strawberries in their [Brooklyn](#) garden last year, they did not quite know what to expect. But one thing they never anticipated was competition from the native fauna.

“Whatever was outside chewed up those zucchinis,” said Ms. Estevez, who lives in East New York and speculated that the culprit might be a squirrel. “When I went to pull them up, they were all bitten up.”

Hearing a tale of wildlife destroying crops is certainly unusual in [New York City](#). But opportunities for urban gardening are growing as developers, particularly those building subsidized housing, provide land or roof space for herb and vegetable gardens.

One development is Liberty Apartments at 119 Fountain Avenue in East New York, where Ms. Estevez lives. The low-rise complex, developed by the [Dunn Development Corporation](#) of Brooklyn, has 43 affordable apartments and, at ground level, seven raised cedar planters, each shared by two tenants.

Ms. Estevez, who moved into an apartment at Liberty when it opened just over a year ago, said the gardening opportunity was not what drew her to the complex. But she said she was quick to take advantage of it.

“My daughter always wanted to do this, so that’s why I signed her up,” Ms. Estevez said. Last year, Liberty worked with the community group [East New York Farms](#) to assist residents with vegetable gardens.

At Serviam Gardens, an affordable development for seniors at 323 East 198th Street in the [Bronx](#), developers planted a garden for viewing, including one with herbs, on the rooftop. On the ground floor, they provided planters where tenants could garden.

Serviam Gardens has 243 apartments, and about 40 residents have applied this year to share the 36 agricultural plots.

Abby Jo Sigal, a vice president of [Enterprise Community Partners](#), a nonprofit group that served as a partner in developing Serviam Gardens, said affordable housing complexes, which are always trying to squeeze as many units as possible on a plot of land, may be where community gardens are most important. “One of the reasons that low-income communities are focused on green roofs is, often, low-income communities don’t have as much accessibility to open space as other neighborhoods,” she said.

At Via Verde, a new affordable housing complex being marketed in the South Bronx, what started as an idea to provide environmentally friendly green roofs back in 2005 turned into an opportunity to provide gardening plots for residents, said Paul Freitag, a managing director of development at the [Jonathan Rose Companies](#), one of the development partners on Via Verde.

At the time that Jonathan Rose and its partners were selected from among dozens of other contestants in January 2007 on the strength of its affordable housing proposal, thoughts about green roofs were morphing into ideas about [urban agriculture](#), he said.

“There was this real focus on community health and, in particular, eating healthy,” Mr. Freitag said. That focus corresponded to the release of a study showing that many children in low-income city neighborhoods had no conception of what a farm was, Mr. Freitag said.

“Those concerns made us think, if we’ve got these gardens on the roof, why don’t we really make them community gardens,” he said, “and make them opportunities where people can grow food, and even more importantly, where children and community members can see food being grown.”

Developers decided that Via Verde, which has 151 rental and 71 co-op apartments, would convert a fifth-floor green roof into a community garden for residents. The garden has already been planted this spring with everything from kohlrabi to kale by [GrowNYC](#), a hands-on nonprofit organization that encourages environmental programs that was hired by the developers for two years.

The goal of GrowNYC is to phase itself out by teaching residents how to garden themselves, Mr. Freitag said. To that end, GrowNYC will tutor residents on gardening and offer healthy-eating seminars and cooking demonstrations using fresh produce grown onsite, said Marcel Van Ooyen, the group’s executive director.

Mr. Freitag said preliminary monitoring of the costs of converting Via Verde’s fifth-floor green roof to a gardening roof with built-in planters shows that urban agriculture can even be cheaper than providing an aesthetically pleasing but inaccessible green roof. Even so, market-rate developers are not yet offering

rooftop gardens.

But some residents are taking matters into their own hands. Tara K. Reddi, who lives in the Plymouth Tower co-op at 340 East 93rd Street, decided last year to start a vegetable garden on the roof for youngsters in the building.

Ms. Reddi acquired enough planters for about 25 square feet of garden, and parents and children worked together to prepare the plots.

One of the crops children planted were strawberries that were supposed to reappear this year. “Those strawberries actually came back,” Ms. Reddi said. “We left them out on the roof deck, and I was told they should survive the winter.

The project was wonderful,” she added. “The parents were positive, and the kids were having such a good time.”

This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:

Correction: April 6, 2012

An earlier version of this article described incorrectly the size of the rooftop vegetable garden at 340 East 93rd Street. It is 25 square feet, not 1,500 square feet.

Best Places to live in NY

JASON SHEFTELL



BY JASON SHEFTELL
REAL ESTATE CORRESPONDENT

If you don't think real estate in the South Bronx can get the blood moving and excite the soul, spend some time at Via Verde, a mammoth income-regulated housing complex near the Hub at 704 Brook Ave. at 156th St.

It also gets the money flowing. Group after group and couple after couple who tour the \$100 million project with over 40,000 square feet of usable green roof and garden space put 5% down on two-bedroom homes starting at \$146,032. Of 71 coop units, only 26 remain. Some went in a lottery. Others are going as fast as you can say "open house."

The award-winning Via Verde is known around the world as one of the finest projects of its kind, combining green design with affordability to spur urban renewal. But let's forget urban renewal. It demeans the people who live around this great neighborhood and own businesses here. (Yes, the Hub, with its fashion retail, furniture stores and boxing gym is great). It also demeans the people who plan on moving in here. This project is about opportunity, home ownership and securing a future for your family in New York City. It's urban survival, not renewal.

John Valverde works up the street. He directs a green career center for the non-profit Osborne Association. The focus is training out-of-work and low-skilled people for employment in the eco-friendly construction and energy efficiency trades. He's placed hundreds of workers at local construction sites. Valverde, married to an architect from Costa Rica, will move into Via Verde this summer.

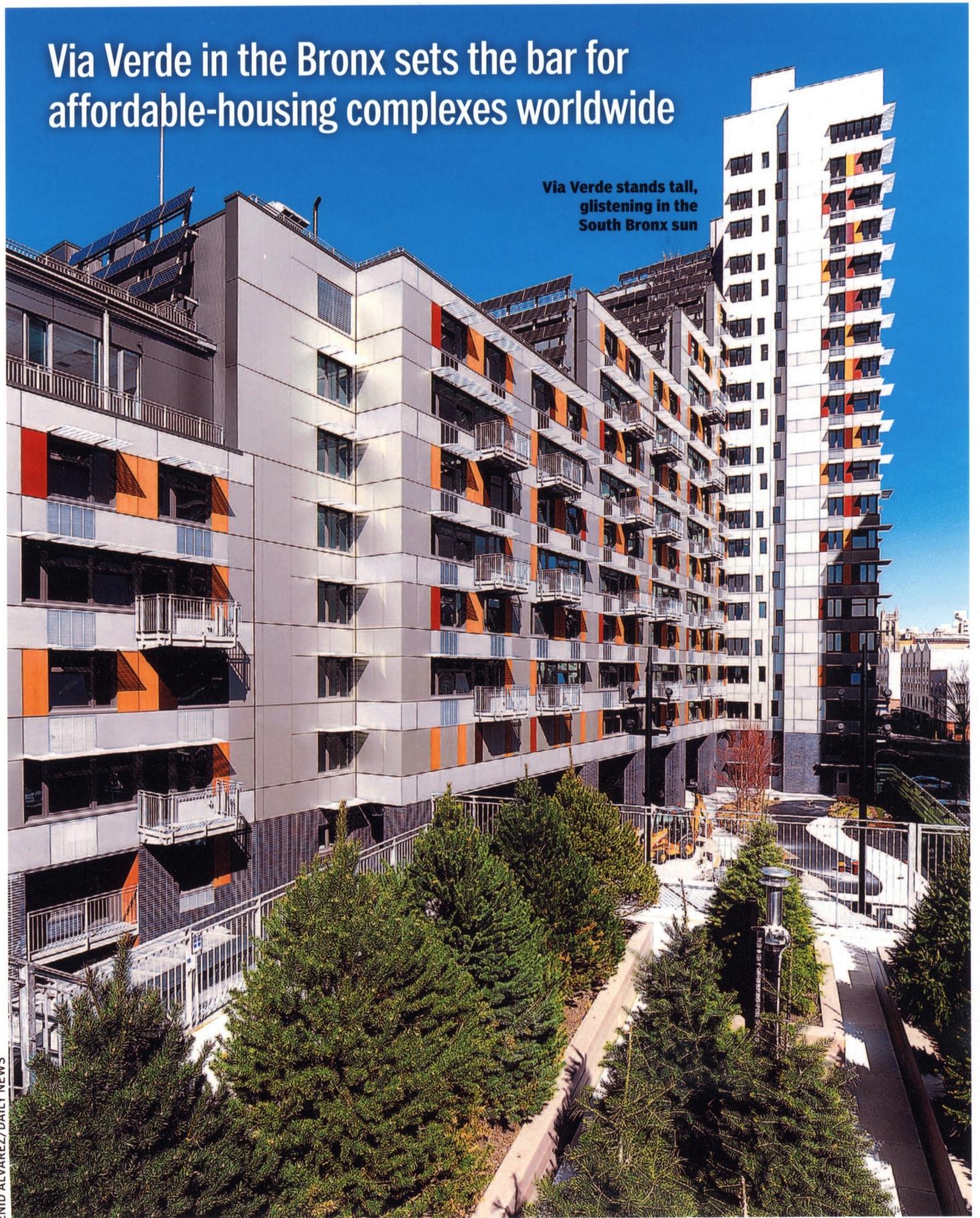
"Yes, this is a transformation for this neighborhood, but it's more than that," says Valverde, now living in Ozone Park, Queens. "It's a commitment to sustainability and the difference architecture and vision can make in the lives of people who live here and near here. Via Verde is the future of how we all should live. I want to be able to live well in New York for a long time. We can do it here."

Designed by London and New York-based Grimshaw in partnership with Dattner Architects, the project is a lesson in ingenuity. You can virtually climb to the building's seventh floor in a semi-circle via a string

Continued on next page

Via Verde in the Bronx sets the bar for affordable-housing complexes worldwide

Via Verde stands tall, glistening in the South Bronx sun



ENID ALVAREZ/DAILY NEWS

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RUGGERO VANNI



ENID ALVAREZ/DAILY NEWS

Broker Mike Reed (l.) shows prospects around



Left, a rendering of complex shows the succession of green roofs. Below, a walk to the gym shows the scale of the project. Right and far right, balconies and sun blockers; a closeup of the photo-voltaic panels

Continued from previous page of outdoor green roofs. You walk up an amphitheatre overlooking a children's playground. Then you pass a small evergreen farm before passing an orchard of apple and peach trees. Turning the corner, organic food boxes to be shared by residents overlook a baseball field and Manhattan skyline on one side and the sheer size of Via Verde on the other.

Still climbing, another straightaway leads up a wired outdoor stairwell past solar panels that provide electricity to all common spaces in the building. A series of trestles and a green roof garden lead to the seventh floor fitness center, another amenity. The point here is that Via Verde is designed as an energy-efficient model and a way to inspire health in a housing community.

Developed by Jonathan Rose Companies and Phipps Housing, which won the

right to build the site after winning a contest sponsored by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation, the New York chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and the State Energy Research and Development Authority, Via Verde also has a 20-story rental tower and 9,500 square feet of retail set aside for a Montefiore Medical Center.

"This is the next generation of green affordable housing," says Paul Freitag, managing director of development for Jonathan Rose Companies. "We think urban architecture and development needs to focus on health and efficiency. Via Verde does mean 'Green Way.' This is the way we need to build, live and think. The design and sales success says this isn't just a guess or a trend anymore. It's a fact."

Inside the building, eco-friendly homes have cross-ventilation, low VOC-paints, bamboo cabinets, hardwood floors, simple porcelain tile, solar shading for each

window, energy-saving appliances and efficient mechanical systems. All units come with built-in work stations, dishwashers and washer/dryers. One line of duplex two-bedroom, 1½ bath homes has balconies, open kitchens and smart lines on the stairwell. A few remain for \$179,000. In the West Village, homes less practical, eco-advanced and architecturally stunning list for \$1.5 million-plus.

The full variety of homes originally available at Via Verde includes work-live townhouses, mid-rise, and high-rise units. From the rental building's 20th floor common roof space, you can survey the south, north and central Bronx, inspecting the variety of housing projects over the years that attempted to improve the urban condition. Some worked. Some failed. Via Verde hopes to define the new way of building and living.

"This lives up to its expectations of being a global model for affordable housing," says

Michael Wadman, vice president of Phipps Houses, the New York area's largest and oldest non-profit devoted to the affordable housing sector. "The borough president, Ruben Diaz Jr., said it best: 'Once the Bronx was burning, now we're planting gardens in the sky.' We're excited to see this done, but just as excited to see the community in action when the place is filled."

On a sunny but cold Saturday in March, Via Verde drew at least 100 house hunters. Some had already put down a deposit. They were returning to check the construction progress. Others were working with agents Eleanor Vernon and Stacey Bond to complete their applications and purchase packages, which include past tax documents, pay stubs and credit reports. With monthly maintenance and a mortgage, buyers of the two-bedrooms for \$146,000 can expect to pay around \$1,580 total. One-bedroom owners will pay less. Income qualifications cannot be



A spacious living room in a two-bedroom duplex in Via Verde has picture windows with views



Buyers Maria Soto and John Valverde and agent Stacey Bond

GRIMSHAW; ENID ALVAREZ/DAILY NEWS



ENID ALVAREZ/DAILY NEWS

ENID ALVAREZ/DAILY NEWS

less than \$54,200 per household or more than \$145,250.

Bronx-native Michael Reed runs sales at the development. A 20-year veteran of selling affordable housing, Reed has a big smile and positive but matter-of-fact delivery that is refreshing from a real estate sales professional. Potential buyers respond to him as well as Via Verde's one-of-a-kind design. A former bond trader, Reed finds daily fulfillment in working the affordable home sector. "Here I was on Wall St., watching billions of dollars move around every day," he says. "Then I would come home to the Bronx, where I was born, and see people living in terrible conditions. I wanted to do something about it, something where I could make a difference."

Working the condo and co-op circuit, Reed has put thousands of first-time buyers into their homes.

"The big sell here is the price," says

Reed walking three generations of a family through the complex. "That's why people are here. The location, design and green thing seal the deal."

Josie Bisono bought a ground-floor three-bedroom. Living in Harlem, Bisono went to high school in the Bronx. She took three friends to see her new home.

"When I first asked people about this neighborhood, they were like, 'I don't know, moving there from Manhattan?'" says Bisono, smirking playfully at the friend with her now who said that. "It's gorgeous, though, and close to the subway. I like the industrial look."

Anytime I've walked it, the Melrose neighborhood and the Hub teem with people. Street vendors joke with pedestrians as they walk by. Urban clothing stores blast music. Around the corner, not two blocks away, Via Verde stands tall, rising like a stadium or giant emblem of a neighborhood on the up-and-up. That's what it

is. This is not social experimentation. It's a place to live, at a fair price, for hardworking people. Silver in the sun, lit up at night as it will be when full, Via Verde is not a symbol of gentrification or hope, it's good building and smart thinking.

"This will be a real residential community," says Reed. "It cracks me up when people come out and put money down and then say, 'Wait, I'm moving back to the Bronx.' But now they say it with pride. There is something very good about that."

YOU SHOULD KNOW

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Road to Green: Dattner Grimshaw Bronx Partnership Yields Model Sustainable Housing



Phipps, Rose, Dattner, Grimshaw

September 26, 2011
By Tom Stoelker

Via Verde, the affordable housing complex designed by Dattner Architects in partnership with Grimshaw, would fit with any of the sexy newcomers on Manhattan's West Side Highway. Built atop a former rail yard in the Melrose section of the South Bronx, the triangular site sits directly across from some featureless low-income housing in uninspiring old-school red brick.

Jonathan Rose Companies and Phipps Houses developed Via Verde with Dattner and Grimshaw, the team that won the New York New Housing Legacy Competition, New York's first juried competition for affordable and sustainable housing, in 2007.

The 151 rental units and 71 co-ops are geared toward middle to low-income families. The 290,000 square foot project is shooting for LEED Gold and is a pilot for the city's Active Design Guidelines, meant to combat obesity by encouraging exercise and activity through design; there are staircases everywhere.

The complex slowly steps away from athletic fields at the south and up toward a twenty-story tower. From a four-story section, to an eight-story section, then ten, and twelve, with each successive floor providing generous rooftop space for programming.



Phipps, Rose, Dattner, Grimshaw



Five live/work units face the street with street-side office entries, and some retail and grocery stores mixed in. Charcoal bricks face the first two stories, before being relieved by 25-foot-long prefabricated panels that front much of the building's facade.

The prefab panels are divided into geometric color/material blocs that serve aesthetic and practical ends. Composite wood panels stained deep brown, maroon, and honey butt against aluminum rain screens with airspace between the outside facade panels and the wall sheathing and insulation behind. The pressure-equalized system, developed in Europe, allows moisture to “weep out” from the building, a feature more common in office buildings. The curtain wall panels include sunscreens, balconies, windows, and doors. They were shipped directly to the site, craned into place, and then snapped on.

Set midway into the building, a large archway guides residents into a central courtyard where a row of townhomes line the eastern edge of the site. Galvanized steel stairs invite residents to climb up, rather than ride the elevator—a theme repeated throughout.



Tom Stoelker (left) and Tom Holdsworth Photography (right)



Once inside the court, the rooftop setbacks get dramatic play. Residents can climb up to their apartment level via amphitheater seating that steps up to the top of the townhouses and a series of rooftop gardens designed by Lee Weintraub. There, a grove of pine trees—that can be harvested by the community at holidays—will give way to another level holding edible fruit trees. A bridge connecting the east and west wings of the complex guides visitors through a community roof garden. On the next level up there is a community gym, primarily programmed for exercise. The building continues to work its way up toward the tower, but the rest of the setbacks host an organized array of photovoltaic screens held in place, trellis-like, by galvanized steel frames.

At the top of the 20-story tower, there is a patio with a panoramic view of the Bronx and midtown Manhattan skyline. Across Melrose, the redbrick of old-school projects meets the contemporary orange of newer low-income housing. In the midst of it, all Via Verde stands apart: green striving for gold, and accessible on many levels.



New South Bronx Housing Complex Is Not “Green” To Environmentally Friendly Ideas



February 26, 2012

By Jill Urban

A new "green" affordable housing complex in the South Bronx is doing its best to help the environment. NY1's Real Estate reporter Jill Urban filed the following report.

The new Via Verde development in the south Bronx is sustainable, architecturally innovative and affordable, setting a new standard for affordable housing in New York.

"Via Verde is really green urban living reimagined. It's really the next generation of high-quality, high-design, green, affordable housing," says senior project manager Ari Goldstein of Jonathan Rose Companies.

Via Verde, located on Brook Avenue, is a new housing complex that includes 71 co-op units and 151 rentals. Designed around a center courtyard, this massive development includes a high-rise and low-rise building, as well as townhouses.

As the buildings spiral up in height, a series of green roofs offer a variety of eco-conscious amenities that are designed to promote healthy living.

"You can literally walk into the courtyard and spiral your way up all of these green roofs, starting with an amphitheater, which will have summertime performances," says Goldstein. "Evergreen trees on the third floor roof, dwarfed fruit trees, the entire fifth floor roof is all gardening beds for residents to grow their own fruits and vegetables. Then there's a fitness center on the seventh floor with an extensive green roof outside."

In addition, the building was made using sustainable, non-toxic materials and incorporates energy efficient elements, like photovoltaic cells, which will all make the building 30 percent more energy efficient.

Then there is its unique look.

"The exterior of the building is a series of panels — cement board, metal and wood panels — that enclose the building and allow it essentially to breathe, keeping water out and preventing water infiltration but at the same time creating a very crisp contemporary appearance," says Dattner Architects principle Bill Stein.

This project is the winning result of an innovative green and affordable housing competition sponsored by the city and the American Institute of Architects.

Residents for the complex were selected through a lottery system. While the rental units have all been leased, there are still over 30 coop apartments available that start around \$140,000.

Construction is nearly complete and Via Verde will be ready for occupancy by the end of March.

Building a healthier and greener New York

By Alasdair Cross
Producer, Costing the Earth

An obsession with convenience is making our cities more unhealthy, according to New York's planning authorities, who are determined to put healthy living back at the heart of urban design.

In the South Bronx, a new low-income apartment complex, Via Verde, is being built for a lifestyle based not on ease and speed but exercise and healthier living through everyday activities.

The development will be dotted with orchards and vegetable plots tended by the residents, bringing green spaces to places typically starved of open areas.

There will be "pocket parks" for exercise and the shops in the complex will offer fresh, healthy food, a rarity in a neighbourhood dominated by fast food outlets.

David Burney, commissioner for design and construction, is promoting projects like Via Verde through new Active Design Guidelines introduced by the city authorities earlier this year.

The guidelines have been drawn up in response to the city's worsening health crisis and provide a toolkit for architects and planners demonstrating how to make everyday urban life a little more calorie-hungry.

"We were a little sceptical at first because we're project managers, not health professionals," says commissioner Burney, the emigre Liverpudlian who decides what gets built in New York.

"But it became clear that there are ways that designers can do their work that does encourage people to keep more mobile," he says.

He points to the staircase outside his fourth floor office in the Queens district as the perfect example.

It is the first thing you see as you enter the building, the lifts take some finding.

Commissioner Burney says the staircase is the architectural centrepiece of the building and no longer "relegated as a fire stair to some dark corner".

The principles have already been taken up in two new landmark Manhattan projects.

The New York Times building, and the Cooper Union School of Art and Architecture, both sport glamorous staircases that are proving to be a magnet for the resident journalists and students.

Obesity crisis

According to the New York health department, 60% of adults and 40% of elementary and middle school children are overweight or obese.

Obesity increases type 2 diabetes rates and places an expensive strain on an over-burdened healthcare system.

"There has been more and more scientific evidence showing that how we build our environments is critical in shaping the behaviours that contribute to these diseases," says Dr Karen Lee, deputy head of chronic disease prevention at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Historical lessons

Innovation for the new healthy town agenda came from Dr Lee. After despairing at the failure of conventional health education, she decided to look to history for inspiration.

In the mid 19th century the rapidly expanding population of New York City was regularly hit by infectious diseases such as cholera and tuberculosis.

In the 1880s city officials made a conscious decision to fight infection by redesigning the city.

Fresh water supplies were piped in, the subway was built to allow the poor to disperse and new building regulations ensured a minimum amount of light and air reached streets and homes.

By 1940, the death rate from infectious disease had declined from 60% to 11%, an impressive achievement in an age before the widespread use of antibiotics.

On the back of this evidence Dr Lee wanted to explore whether architects and city planners could fight the killers of the 21st century.

"We know from public health history that how we've designed and constructed our environments has been key in controlling the diseases and epidemics that we had in the past," says Dr Lee.

Cycle lanes

Beyond the buildings, the streetscape of Manhattan is already changing.

Car traffic on Broadway has been reduced to a single moving lane through midtown, and the vacant space has been given over to cycle lanes and pavement space for pedestrians with café-style tables and chairs.

There is "a different feeling about walking in the city", says Jeffrey Zupan, senior fellow for transportation at New York's Regional Plan Association.

"The pedestrian isn't a second class citizen who has to always be on the lookout of getting run over," he says.

Cyclists too are enjoying the changes, with a 45% increase in cycle commuting over the past three years.

The Active Design Guidelines point to a future city that reverses the 20th century's relentless pursuit of ease.

It asks citizens to ditch the car and the elevator, to work a little harder in their day to day life.

Commissioner Burney, however, is completely unapologetic.

"People just have to get with the programme. You're giving up convenience for health which isn't such a bad trade-off."

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CITY OF NEW YORK AND AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS ANNOUNCE WINNER OF FIRST JURIED COMPETITION FOR SUSTAINABLE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release # 02-07

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

Press Contact: Amanda Pitman

CITY OF NEW YORK AND AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS ANNOUNCE WINNER OF FIRST JURIED COMPETITION FOR SUSTAINABLE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Phipps-Rose-Dattner-Grimshaw Selected To Develop City-Owned Site in South Bronx

New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) Commissioner Shaun Donovan and Mark Ginsberg, FAIA, 2004 President of New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIANY), today announced Phipps-Rose-Dattner-Grimshaw (PRDG) as the winning architect-developer team of New York City's first juried design competition for affordable and sustainable housing. The competition, known as the New Housing New York (NHNY) Legacy Project, emerged from a collaboration between the NHNY Steering Committee, HPD, and AIANY, and was sponsored by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), Enterprise, Citibank, JPMorgan Chase and AIA 150 Blueprint to encourage the integration of sustainability and design excellence with affordable housing.

Located in the South Bronx, the competition site is a 60,000 square foot vacant lot that consists of City-owned property and a legally abandoned rail right-of-way. The City will sell the site to PRDG for a nominal fee in exchange for the design and construction of a mixed-use development that includes affordable housing for New Yorkers of low-, middle-, and moderate-incomes. An exhibition of the five finalists' proposals will be on view March 22 – June 16, 2007 at the Center for Architecture. The exhibition will highlight how the project functions as a replicable model for sustainable affordable housing in New York City and other urban communities.

Comprised of The Phipps Houses, Dattner Architects, Jonathan Rose Companies and Grimshaw, the PRDG team presented a proposal, referred to as "Green Way" or "Via Verde", that will consist of 202 residential units, in addition to retail and community spaces, and parking. The proposed development incorporates a range of residential spaces, varying from apartments in a tower to duplexes in a mid-rise to townhouses. The development is organized around a multi-functional garden that begins at street-level as a courtyard and plaza, and spirals upward through a series of programmed, south-facing roof gardens that end in a sky terrace. The gardens will be used for fruit and vegetable cultivation, passive recreation and social gathering, and provide storm water control and enhanced insulation. Phipps Community Development Corporation (CDC) plans to expand its green market in East Tremont and community-supported agriculture collaboration with Just Food and will use Via Verde's plaza for a neighborhood green market or organic food co-op.

The PRDG team said, "We are pleased and honored to have been selected by the New Housing New York jury to work with HPD to help develop a next generation of housing that is affordable and green. We are inspired by a great vision to create places that are environmentally and socially responsible, but to do it within the constraints of affordable housing budgets and important community input. One of the great pleasures of this competition was combining so much great thought from knowledgeable individuals, yet coming together as a team: we became a community so that we could design a community!"

As proposed, the Via Verde will consist of both rental and homeownership units affordable to households of four earning from \$28,360 up to \$92,170 or from \$19,840 up to \$64,480 for a single household. Approximately two-thirds of the housing units will be rental units and affordable to low-income families, earning up to \$56,700 for a family of four or up to \$39,700 for a single household. All sixty-three homeownership units will be affordable to households of four earning up to \$92,170 or up to \$64,480 for a single household. The proposal assumes that the rental units will be funded through a combination of the Housing Development Corporation's (HDC) New Housing Opportunity Program and Low Income Housing Tax Credits, and that the homeownership units will use HDC's Affordable Co-op Program and New Market Tax Credits. The Via Verde development is part of Mayor Bloomberg's \$7.5 billion New Housing Marketplace Plan to build or preserve 165,000 units of affordable housing over ten years, the largest municipal affordable housing plan in the nation's history.

"We believe this unprecedented competition will raise the level of design sustainability and serve as a beacon for affordable housing across the city. Given the incredible response the competition received, and the innovative proposals the jury reviewed, the competition presents a real opportunity to change the future of affordable housing," said HPD Commissioner Shaun Donovan. "We hope that PRDG's proposal will serve as a prototype for future affordable housing developments built nationally and internationally."

Joan Blumenfeld, FAIA, IIDA, 2007 President of the AIA New York Chapter said "New Housing New York is a remarkable collaboration between architects, government, and the private sector. It is exactly the kind of initiative that illustrates how we, as design professionals, can have a positive and concrete impact on the future of our city. Hopefully, the process we have developed through this project will impact planning and construction beyond its realization and help us rethink how we can design sustainable affordable housing throughout New York."

By incorporating sustainable material choices, efficient mechanical systems and renewable strategies, Via Verde will aim to achieve gold-level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), the program developed by the U.S. Green Building Council that provides a standard of what constitutes a "green building". Mechanical systems will include enhanced ventilation to apartments and individual control of heating and cooling. Sun screens will shade the south and west facades and each unit will include high performance windows. These energy efficient features will reduce utility bills for tenants, increasing affordability, and help improve indoor air quality.

"The overall competition and the quality of work that went into these proposals provides a snapshot of the innovative building construction going on in New York State," said NYSERDA President and CEO Peter R. Smith. "Through NYSERDA's New York Energy SmartSM Multifamily Building Performance Program, we are encouraging many more developers, architects and others in the building industry to design and construct their properties to the ENERGY STAR standards. NYSERDA continually works to illustrate that high-quality, healthy, and energy efficient housing can also be affordable."

The NHNY competition was first announced at the Center for Architecture in June 2006. In response, thirty-two architect-development teams submitted qualifications to the design jury, which consisted of prestigious architects, housing experts, and community officials, including Enrique Norten, FAIA, Principal, TEN Arquitectos, David Burney, FAIA, Commissioner New York City Department of Design and Construction, Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrion, Jr., and Shaun Donovan, HPD Commissioner. This past September, the jury chose five finalists to submit full development proposals. Each of the finalists received NYSERDA funded stipends to create their proposals. In addition, Enterprise provided two grants totaling \$30,000. Both grants went toward operational support, which included the launch of the competition's website, support of the judging process, and an environmental report. The NEA is providing an additional \$30,000 for the preparation and installation of the exhibition at the Center for Architecture.

The five finalists chosen by the jury were as follows:

BRP Bluestone Rogers Marvel

Developers: BRP Development Corporation and The Bluestone Organization

Architects: Rogers Marvel

The Legacy Collaborative

Developers: The Dermot Company, Nos Quedamos and Melrose Associates

Architects: Magnusson Architecture and Planning (MAP) and Kiss + Cathcart (K+C)

Phipps Rose Dattner Grimshaw

Developers: The Phipps Houses Group and The Jonathan Rose Companies

Architects: Dattner Architects and Grimshaw

seg Full Spectrum Hamlin Behnisch studioMDA

Developers: seg, Full Spectrum and Hamlin Ventures

Architects: Behnisch Architekten and studioMDA

WHEDCo Durst Cook+Fox

Developers: Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDCo) and Durst Sunset LLC

Architects: Cook+Fox Architects, LLP

When reviewing the five proposals and selecting the winning team, the judges considered specific design and development criteria including economic and long-term environmental sustainability, innovative design quality and replicable financing that leverages private and public subsidies.

"The impetus for the New Housing New York design competition came out of a desire to leverage the unique culture of innovation present in New York to address the issue of affordable housing in a concrete way. The continued commitment of many volunteers, guided by the conviction that architecture has both the ability and responsibility to look beyond the expected, has been crucial in bringing the NHNY Legacy Project to this stage," said NHNY Steering Committee Co-Chair Tara Siegel. "The involvement of neighborhood residents in the South Bronx has helped define the goals for the project, and with their continued input, we believe that it will be something all New Yorkers can be proud of. We hope to see aspects of this project replicated both in New York and across the country as the quality and potential of affordable housing continues to be addressed in innovative ways."

"We congratulate the winners and all of the participants in the New Housing New York Legacy Project, who have proven that affordable housing, innovative design and sustainability do not have to be mutually exclusive," said Jim Himes, Director of Enterprise's New York office. "Enterprise is pleased to have supported this project as part of our commitment to making green affordable housing the norm, a commitment exemplified by our national Green Communities initiative to finance and build thousands of environmentally friendly homes for low-income families. We hope that this winning project will inspire others to expand the boundaries of what is possible in sustainable affordable housing as well."

Director of Design at the NEA Jeff Speck said "The National Endowment for the Arts is honored to be supporting this important project, and I am personally encouraged by the competition's focus on marrying high design to the practical demands of providing shelter to those who need it most."

###

Department of Housing Preservation and Development

The Department of Housing Preservation and Development's mission is to promote quality housing and viable neighborhoods for New Yorkers. The department is the nation's largest municipal housing development agency and is implementing Mayor Bloomberg's New Housing Marketplace Plan to build and preserve 165,000 units of affordable housing over ten years. The New Housing Marketplace Plan is the largest municipal affordable housing

effort in the nation's history. HPD also encourages the preservation of affordable housing through education, outreach, loan programs and enforcement of housing quality standards.

AIA New York Chapter

The AIA New York Chapter, the oldest chapter of the American Institute of Architects, founded in New York City in 1857, is dedicated to three goals: public outreach – engaging and interacting with the public about architecture and the built environment; professional development – helping architects to be the best at what they do; and design excellence – improving the quality of design and advocating environmental conservation and sustainability. As part of the Institute's celebration of its sesquicentennial projects around the country are being implemented to give back to the community. The New Housing New York Legacy project is one of these projects.

New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)

NYSERDA is a public benefit authority created in 1975 by the New York State Legislature: (assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?cl=89&a=120 target="_blank">New York Energy \$martSM program, which is designed to support certain public benefit programs during the transition to a more competitive electricity market. Some 2,700 projects in 40 programs are funded by a charge on the electricity transmitted and distributed by the State's investor-owned utilities. The **New York Energy \$martSM** program provides energy efficiency services, including those directed at the low-income sector, research and development, and environmental protection activities.

Enterprise

Enterprise is a leading provider of the development capital and expertise it takes to create decent, affordable homes and rebuild communities. For more than two decades, Enterprise has pioneered neighborhood solutions through public-private partnerships with financial institutions, governments, community organizations and others that share our vision. Enterprise has raised and invested \$7 billion in equity, grants and loans and is currently investing in communities at a rate of \$1 billion a year. Enterprise's New York office is the city's leading nonprofit provider of affordable housing for low-income people. Since 1987, Enterprise's New York office has housed over 59,000 men, women, and children, developed more than 21,000 affordable homes, and committed almost \$1.4 billion in equity, grants, and loans to community development projects across the city.

Visit www.enterprisecommunity.org: (www.enterprisecommunity.org/) to learn more about Enterprise's efforts to build communities and opportunity, and to meet some of the half a million people we have helped.

NEA

The National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts -- both new and established -- bringing the arts to all Americans, and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Arts Endowment is the nation's largest annual funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states including rural areas, inner cities, and military bases. For more information, please visit www.arts.gov.

For more information on the New Housing New York Legacy Project, please visit: <http://www.aiany.org/NHNY>: (www.aiany.org/NHNY)

January 17, 2007

Working-Class Housing Complex Will Rise as Part of the Greenery

By [JANNY SCOTT](#)

The Bloomberg administration, hoping to inspire more imaginative design in working-class housing, intends to turn over one of a dwindling number of large tracts of city-owned land to a development team with an unusual plan — to build a low- and moderate-income housing complex bound together by courtyards and roof gardens that would be used for everything from harvesting rainwater to farming vegetables and fruit.

The proposed project, selected from among five finalists by a jury that included not only architects but a professor of environmental psychology and anthropology, would include an outdoor amphitheater, apartments designed for breezes, a fitness center, wiring for Internet access, “live-work units” for people who work at home, stoops with photovoltaic canopies, even a Christmas tree farm.

“We started out on this process to try to raise the level of design and the level of sustainability for housing not just on this site but with the hope that this could be really a model,” said Shaun Donovan, commissioner of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development. “Given the responses we got, I think there’s a real opportunity for this to be a project that changes the future of housing in this country.”

The competition, announced last June and sponsored by the New York chapter of the [American Institute of Architects](#) and Mr. Donovan’s department, attracted interest from 32 teams of architects and developers from around the world. The Bloomberg administration has vowed to create or preserve 165,000 units of low- and moderate-income housing by 2013.

The winning team, to be announced today, is made up of an international architectural firm, Grimshaw Architects; a New York firm, Dattner Architects; and two developers, the Jonathan Rose Companies and the Phipps Houses Group, a New York nonprofit that develops low- and moderate-income housing. For one dollar, the city plans to give the team an oddly shaped, empty 60,000-square-foot lot at Brook Avenue and East 156th Street in the South Bronx, which it condemned in an urban renewal program in 1972. The property, which includes

abandoned railroad tracks and possibly contaminated soil and groundwater, lies northeast of the Hub, the third-largest shopping district in the [Bronx](#).

The 202-apartment complex, called Via Verde, or the Green Way, would include an 18-story tower at the north end, a mid-rise building with duplex apartments, and townhouses to the south. Sixty-three units would be co-op apartments for sale; the rest would be rentals. The garden would begin at ground level, then spiral upward in a series of roof gardens that face south, culminating in what the team calls a sky terrace.

“There’s a reason why people like to be in parks and gardens and trees,” said Jonathan F. P. Rose, president of Jonathan Rose Companies. “We grew out of nature. How can we make this very urban building but also give people a connection with nature?” He said the team decided to “wrap the building with a garden,” beginning with a contemplative space and moving “from very private to increasing levels of communality.”

The so-called green roofs have multiple purposes — social, psychological and environmental. They would enhance insulation, reduce heat absorption and help manage storm water runoff, the developers say. They would help with solar and rainwater harvesting systems. Every apartment would have two facades, allowing cross-ventilation and plenty of light; all mechanical systems would be energy efficient.

Other environmentally sensitive technologies that might be used include geothermal ground loops for heating water in winter and cooling it in summer. To encourage conservation, residents would be given control of their own energy consumption. There would be low-flow, water-conserving plumbing fixtures and rooms for recycling and bicycle storage.

“The premise is simple — to create affordable, humane housing,” said Vincent Chang, a principal at Grimshaw, which was founded in the United Kingdom and has offices in Europe, New York and Australia. “What’s unique is we genuinely sought to make a connection to nature accessible, to bring that level of community into the overall design.”

The co-ops would be for households making no more than 130 percent of the median income for the city, or roughly \$70,000 for a family of four. The rest of the apartments would be rentals for households making less than 40 percent, between 40 and 60 percent, and between 60 and 80 percent of the median income. The low and moderate rents are to be made possible with the help of city, federal and state subsidies. Construction is expected to begin in mid-2008.

Joan Blumenfeld, president of the New York chapter of the American Institute of Architects,

said it remains to be seen whether the project and the process that produced it would serve as a model. But, she said, “I think it also will start a thought process about looking at different ways of trying to finance and procure these projects in general and trying to introduce design as more of a requirement upfront.”

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