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Shovels hit the ground for affordable housing in East New York



Mayor Bill de Blasio, right, with Councilmember Inez Barron (East New York, Brownsville) and former Councilmember Charles Barron, left. Photo: Ed Reed for the Office of the Mayor

Units set aside for homeless and those with special needs

By Mary Frost
Brooklyn Daily Eagle

Mayor Bill de Blasio on Monday joined developers and community members to break ground on a major new project in East New York that will create hundreds of apartments of affordable housing and space for community organizations.

Livonia Commons, Phase I of a multi-phase project, the Livonia Avenue Initiative, will include 278 units in four buildings built on vacant, formerly city-owned land.

The project by Dunn Development Corporation will be 100 percent affordable, with 51 units set aside for people with disabilities and transitioning out of the city's shelter system. Residents of these units will be expected to pay 30 percent of their monthly income towards rent.

Phase I is scheduled for completion in December 2016.

The development will be located along Livonia Avenue between Pennsylvania Avenue and Hinsdale Street.

Units in Livonia Commons will be affordable to individuals earning roughly up to \$24,000 per year to families of four earning up to \$51,000 per year.

The Livonia Avenue Initiative will create a total of nearly 791 affordable apartments when all phases are complete.

Mayor de Blasio says the project fits in with his progressive agenda to lift up working families and overcome economic inequality. Noting that the vacant lots had been "a blight on this neighborhood" for decades, the Mayor said, "Today's news is big for East New York—but it represents exactly the kinds of approaches we want to see in every community."

Alicia Glen, Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development, said that the development would "knit together this community—not just build on top of it. We're providing affordable homes, spurring good jobs for local workers and creating space so community groups that serve East New York can grow and thrive." Martin Dunn, President of Dunn Development Corp. called Livonia Commons a "holistic development."

The project also includes space for The Boys' Club of New York's first Brooklyn location, and ARTs East New York, a community-based arts organization in existence since 2009.

Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams praised the development, saying that the project was the "next great milestone in the development of Brooklyn's future."

The Mayor's goal is to build and preserve 200,000 affordable units in the coming decade.

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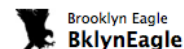
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