



Staten Island Advance

Sea View senior housing gets more thumbs up

City Council subcommittee and CB 2 approve plans for 104 rental units for residents 55 and up

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By **SALLY GOLDENBERG**

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- Senior citizens getting by on limited incomes will likely have a new housing option on Staten Island.

The scheme to build 104 rental units for residents who are 55 and older in a vacant building on the campus of Sea View Hospital and Rehabilitation Center and Home moved one step closer to fruition yesterday.

A City Council subcommittee unanimously approved the measure. If the full body approves it, construction is slated to begin in September, with applications being accepted the following year and completion scheduled for March 2009.

"For too long, Staten Island seniors either moved south to Philadelphia or Pennsylvania or New Jersey, or they moved north to meet their Maker waiting on senior housing in Staten Island, and today we take a small step in the right direction to give them some of those units," Councilman James Oddo (R-Mid-Island/Brooklyn) told the Council's landmarks subcommittee.

And on Staten Island last night, Community Board 2 gave its unanimous thumbs-up to the project. Members cheered and applauded after the 35-0 vote in board headquarters in Sea View.

"It's a long time coming," said CB2 chairman Dana Magee. "It's nice to see a package that is respectful to the area and the landmarks and yet still offers affordable housing for seniors."

Oddo noted that the Island's increasing senior population has limited housing options, particularly at affordable rates.

Oddo and the city Health and Hospitals Corporation, which runs the facility at Sea View, have been negotiating the project with the city Department of Housing Preservation & Development and the mayor's office for five years, recently butting heads over the number of affordable units and the percentage of rent going to the developer.

The latest plan calls for 29 studios at \$744 a month, 20 one-bedroom units at \$797 a month and two, two-bedroom units at \$957 a month, geared toward low-income renters, Oddo said.

Middle-income renters paying market rates will have the option of 42 one-bedroom units for \$1,330 a month, 10 two-bedroom units for \$1,590 a month and one "super-bed" unit, the rent for which is not yet determined, Oddo said.

The units would serve the Island's aging population looking to give up the responsibilities associated with owning a home, said Angelo Mascia, executive director of the Sea View facility.

"They want to move away from the big houses and not have to do the grass, the snow removal," Mascia said.

The homes would be built in the former nurses' residence on the 70-acre campus, in a landmarked building that was constructed in the 1930s, has not been inhabited for several decades and needs new wiring and

plumbing, said James Roberts, director of public affairs of the Sea View facility.

The campus is home to 304 long-term-care beds and offers special units for people suffering from brain injury and Alzheimer's. Another 60 or so patients are in the day program for health care, and do not stay on the site, which also is used by several cultural groups.

The city has allocated \$8 million for the project, which is being handled by the Metropolitan Council for Jewish Poverty and built by the Arker Companies, based on Long Island.

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