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A new 80-acre community grows

First 215 of 10,000 new units open in
Liberty Harbor North

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It is a project spanning 27 new city blocks — not to mention 10,000 residential units and five million square feet of retail and office space.

Liberty Harbor, also known as Liberty Harbor North, is a community located in downtown Jersey City, from Grand Street to the Morris Canal overlooking Liberty State Park, and from Jersey Avenue to Marin Boulevard.

And as of October, it was officially open for occupancy.

The first 215 condominium units of the 667 total units being built in the first phase of this three phase project are up for sale, with approximately 50 percent sold as of Thanksgiving Day.

Sales are starting at \$300,000 for studios to upwards of \$1.7 million for townhouse suites.

Recently, Peter Mocco, the developer of Liberty Harbor and a former North Bergen attorney, discussed the project, which has been the subject of controversy over the years for delays in construction, a lawsuit brought by Mocco against the city, and other issues.

Mocco intends to complete the entire project even though he could not answer definitively how the financing will take place.

Opening up rather than closing in

Mocco was pleased to show off the advanced security system for the condos, including a device that lets residents view their residence via cameras even when they are away from home.

"I can be in California and I see what is going on out in front," said Mocco. "You can see your neighborhood from anywhere in the world."

Liberty Harbor, when completed, will be almost a small city, with a projected population of over 20,000 people. Mocco said it will be patrolled by some armed security.

Mocco was also proud of the marble kitchen countertops displayed in the showroom at Liberty Harbor's main office on Grand Street,

plus the wooden floors and Viking stoves.

"How do you get people to buy? By giving them the best product," said Mocco. "In this marketplace, if you give people the very best product at the very best price, they'll say, 'where do I sign?'"

Liberty Harbor changed in its initial community layout after 1999. Starting in 1984, the plan was for a gated community to monitor those arriving and leaving.

But in 1999, former Mayor Bret Schundler recommended to Mocco the Miami architect Andres Duany, who proposed a new direction that called for opening up the area.

"The plan back in the 1980s was to create a very safe, very secure, walled-in community," said Mocco. "The new concept was to throw all the doors open."

Delegating the design to multiple architects' styles reflected this openness.

"I decided I didn't want to be cookie cutter, so I hired different architects to design different parts of Liberty Harbor," said Mocco.

When will it be completed?

Mocco bought the 70-plus acres of land that became Liberty Harbor from the Jersey City Employees' Retirement Fund in 1985 for only \$880,000.

For the project's completion, Mocco said another 10 years and at least another \$3 billion will be needed.

Mocco did not precisely address how the completion will play out, and he only chose to wax hopeful about the Herculean endeavor.

"Back in 1985, I always saw Liberty Harbor as truly a world-class location," said Mocco. "At the time, it was a series of abandoned, ramshackle shacks, some industrial-type build-

ings. I saw that, properly developed, this site would join the Paulus Hook and Van Vorst historic districts, and fill in a very critical land mass providing access to the waterfront."

Mocco added that he might have to slow the project down if not enough units sell in the beginning, as that money is slated to fund the rest of the project.

Things to consider

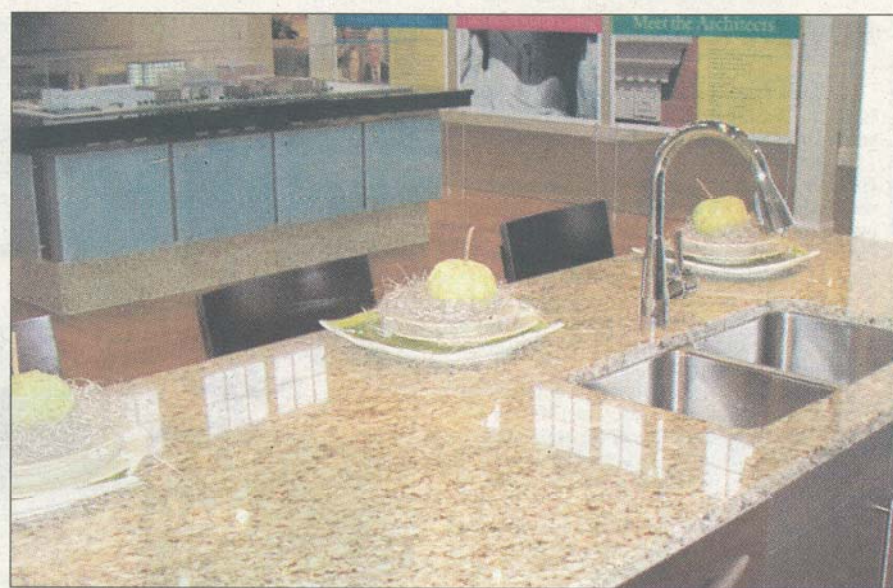
Mocco was asked if the upcoming community would include affordable options.

Mocco said he would consider building housing for seniors similar to the Hamilton Park Health Care Center, a nursing home at 533 Monmouth St. that he built in the late 1980s. q

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THIS IS LIBERTY HARBOR – Liberty Harbor North is an 80-acre residential community being built in Downtown Jersey City. These are some of the townhouses located in Liberty Harbor.



CHECK OUT THAT COUNTERTOP – New residents of Liberty Harbor will be greeted by marble countertops in their kitchens.