

MIXING IT UP WITH MULTIFAMILY

*Northeast developers continue to create
unique multifamily projects.*

Dan Marcec

Throughout the Northeast real estate market, multifamily projects continue to be on the rise, as the trend to build high rises and other residential properties flourishes. However, with so many developments being constructed and converted in the multifamily sector, developers have to stay sharp and create projects that stand out and give residents what they need. *Northeast Real Estate Business* recently interviewed executives involved with six projects that meet this criteria, each one significant in its own way. As residents look for new housing in both mature markets and revitalized areas in Northeastern cities, developers have to meet the challenge of catering to the demand for unique properties.

LIBERTY HARBOR NORTH, JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY

Encompassing 27 city blocks in Jersey City, New Jersey, Liberty Harbor North comprises approximately 1 million square feet of residential space alone, spread throughout 9,000 units. Situated on 74 acres, the project is being developed by Peter Mocco of Jersey City in accordance with a New Urbanist design technique, and will include more than 2 million square feet of commercial and retail space as well. Construction on the immense project began in March 2004, and the total project cost is between \$2 billion and \$3 billion.

Units contain beautifully designed kitchens and baths with high-end appliances and fixtures; smart home technology for heating, ventilation, air-conditioning and home security; access to select community closed circuit tele-

vision cameras, including one directly outside the entrance to each building; and wireless Internet connection throughout the community. Residents will also enjoy the use of fitness rooms and media rooms, as well as close proximity to Manhattan and Liberty State Park. Other unique factors in the area include the resurgence of nearby Hoboken, New Jersey, and with the help of this project, the reinvigorated city of Jersey City — which has grown in leaps and bounds over the past 10 years — and will continue to grow.

"Liberty Harbor North involved the coordination of an ever-growing team of architects, engineers, and designers, who like the the developer, constantly search for ways to make Liberty Harbor the best place not only from a design point of view, but from the



point of view of future residents who will call Liberty Harbor their home," says Marjorie Maria Mocco, assistant to the director of marketing for Liberty Harbor North. The entire project includes various architects working on different buildings and phases. In the first phase, designers include Ronald Russell of Lindemon Winckermann

Deupree Martin & Associates, who is designing Eclipse and Meridia East; Eric Vogt of Khoury & Vogt Architects, who is designing Sonata and Arcadia West; Alexander Gorlin of Alexander Gorlin Architects who is designing Gorlin; Robert Orr of Robert Orr & Associates, who is designing Bedford; Carmi Bee of Rothzeit Kaiserman Thomson and Bee, who is designing Alumnia; and Walter Chatham of Gruzen Samton who is designing various condominiums.

"Initially, Liberty Harbor North came to be when Peter Mocco saw the potential of Jersey City in the early 1980s, when he first began to purchase the parcels of land that make up the project," says Mocco. "Over time, there have been shifts in urban living styles, and the project has shifted from a planned gated community to a textbook example of new urbanism due to the shifts in market demands and in Jersey City's landscape. The project was put on hold during the 1980s due to the economic downturn. That delay caused Mocco to rethink his approach from developing a potentially gated community to developing a community that will have the dynamic life and vibrancy of Greenwich Village and SoHo in Manhattan, with elements of the Upper East Side thrown in."

Aside from the magnitude of Liberty Harbor North, the project has a unique waterfront location with views of the Statue of Liberty, Liberty State Park, and Lower Manhattan. In addition to these unique elements, the development will be one of the most technologically integrated communities in the country, with a single mode fiber network that terminates within each residence, guaranteeing the fastest Internet connection available.

"The development has already had a positive impact on the area, attracting more and more investors and new business in the retail and commercial markets," says Mocco. "This particular development will add 9,000 units to Jersey City, which will increase Jersey City's tax base in addition to providing consumers for Jersey City's retail businesses."