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Construction Begins on the Most Complex Private-Public Development Project In New York City's Recent History: The Perennial, a \$150 million, 145-unit Intergenerational Housing Development in Forest Hills

Queens, NY – The joint venture partnership of Foxy Development and Selfhelp Realty Group has closed on financing and begun construction of The Perennial, a 145-unit intergenerational affordable housing property that will also include the future home of the Forest Hills Jewish Center (FHJC). The project team and public officials held a “glass-breaking” ceremony to celebrate the beginning of redevelopment and renovation.

The Perennial is the most complex private-public redevelopment projects in New York City’s recent history, and the first deeply affordable senior housing project in Forest Hills.

Located at 70-35 113th Street in the Forest Hills section of Queens, the project will transform the former Parkway Hospital building – vacant since the hospital’s closure in 2008 – into a vibrant mixed-use development. Construction is expected to be complete by the end of 2027.

Foxy and Selfhelp are co-developing the project. The team also includes architect Newman Design, structural engineer Cityscape Engineering, general contractor Suffolk Construction, and MEP engineer Mottola Rini. TD Bank provided a construction loan and The Community Preservation Corporation (CPC) will provide permanent financing.

“We have spent the last five years working towards today’s achievement. The complexity of the funding sources and the nature of the project itself made this a very long and challenging process,” said Jeff Fox, Principal of lead developer Foxy Development. “We are incredibly proud of what our design, construction and financing teams achieved and what we will now deliver for this community. This deal would not have happened without the dedication of our government partners at the HPD,” he added.

“The Perennial will take advantage of a recent rezoning to add a 50,000 square-foot expansion to the existing hospital building. We are not only adding a two-story overbuild, but also converting an existing structure from one use to another and carving out a double-height, column-free sanctuary – all within an abandoned 60-year-old hospital building,” Fox continued. “Add a complex mix of public financing sources and an unprecedented national political and economic landscape changes, we often felt like Sisyphus pushing a boulder up the hill.”

Lisa S. Trub, Executive Director of Selfhelp Realty Group stated “The Perennial marks a significant milestone in our decades-long commitment to the Forest Hills community. From supporting Holocaust survivors who built their lives here, to providing home care services, and operating the Austin Street Older Adult Center for over 20 years, we have been deeply rooted in this neighborhood. Recognizing the urgent need for affordable housing, we are bringing our proven expertise in development and social services to Forest Hills. While we currently manage over 900 affordable housing units across Queens, these 145 new units represent our first housing initiative in Forest Hills, furthering our mission to serve this vibrant community.”

"When completed, the 156,133-square-foot building will house 145 affordable housing units for households earning up to 50% AMI. These will include 124 senior units (including 44 units for formerly homeless seniors) and 20 family units, as well as a 34,000-square-foot Forest Hills Jewish Center," explained Fox. "A long-vacant Parkway Hospital site will now give way to the Perennial and with it 145 affordable homes and a new home for the Forest Hills Jewish Center. An already vibrant community will be made stronger with this mix of intergenerational and accessible housing, a feat that was only possible through thoughtful rezoning and strong partnerships. When we are able to build smart and build in a broader range of communities, we bring meaningful investments that honors our obligation to care for our neighborhoods. The realization of this project shows what's possible when the government, the community, and private partners work together to deliver for every New Yorker, in every neighborhood," said Acting HPD Commissioner Ahmed Tigani.

"Once a lifeline for many in Forest Hills, the old Parkway Hospital site has been nothing but a blighted community eyesore for nearly two decades since its closure. But with the creation of The Perennial and its 145 units of affordable housing, this site will represent promise and potential for Forest Hills families," said Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr. "In this historic affordability crisis facing our city, we badly need the affordable housing and support services offered at The Perennial. I commend all our partners for their work to bring this important project to fruition, and I look forward to seeing so many seniors and families be able to enjoy a roof over their head without having to break the bank."

"Queens has always been a place where families look out for one another and The Perennial continues that tradition. Affordable housing for older adults is essential to ensuring our borough remains inclusive, vibrant, and livable for working families. I applaud Selfhelp and Foxy Development for helping us meet this urgent need and for engaging local officials and community groups to make sure this project truly benefits the community," said New York State Senator Leroy Comrie.

"Too many of my constituents worry about whether they can afford to stay in Queens as they age. The Perennial provides an answer by offering affordable homes and support services for older adults. This is the kind of project that keeps our neighborhood whole and maintains the character of our community. I am proud to support it," shared New York State Assemblymember Sam Berger.

"The project will include a complete interior redevelopment and conversion of the building for senior housing, a vertical two-story addition on top of the existing building, an eight-story addition plus on the north side of the building, a four-story addition on the northwest corner, and various structural reinforcements and revisions of the existing building," explained Brian Newman, AIA, Principal of Newman Design.

Joseph Whalen, Vice President, Operations for Suffolk Construction manages the construction process. "We have consulted and provided construction services for many of Foxy's projects over the past seven years and were excited to partner again on The Perennial. This is a highly complex construction undertaking, so logistics and pre-planning were critical to delivering the building on time and on budget. To make this happen, we pre-purchased long-lead items early and carefully sequenced the structural and façade phases," he said.

Project Background: Complex Financing and Ownership Structure

Jeff Fox and Foxy Development initially got involved with the project in January of 2020 following an ULURP rezoning that upzoned the site from low-density R1 to a higher density R7 classification.

An integral part of the ULURP process was an agreement to not only include Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH), which requires a developer to set aside a minimum of 25% of residential space in a project for affordable housing, but to make those MIH units senior housing. Then-City Council member Karen Koslowitz strongly supported the project because she understood the need for senior housing in the area.

Fox was tapped as the senior affordable developer given his company's extensive track record and Jeff's particular expertise in senior housing. Foxy has successfully completed three senior projects since 2018 and has another two developments in its immediate pipeline.

In 2022, the property was sold to a Queens-based developer, who struck a deal to donate the hospital building while retaining the parking lot to develop into a market rate multi-family property. This development structure allowed Foxy to leverage the public financing resources necessary to develop the project and fulfill the site's MIH requirement. "This was new territory for all that were involved," Fox said.

Selfhelp joined the team in 2024, bringing their local community ties and emphasis on the building features needed to enhance senior independence, while fostering a community environment. Selfhelp has been a trusted member of the Forest Hills community for many decades providing specialized services to Holocaust survivors and older residents for more than 20 years at the Austin Street Older Adult Center.

Selfhelp will operate the social services, providing support to older adult residents, some of whom will be moving from homeless shelters. Services will include case management, health services and educational programming to ensure that each resident has the resources needed to age at their own pace.

"Having onsite social services in senior affordable housing isn't just about support - it's about creating a home where older adults feel valued, connected, and able to live life on their own terms." says Trub.

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) is providing capital financing and rental subsidy, so senior residents pay no more than 30% of their income for rent. Additional subsidy from NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA) will fund social services provided by Selfhelp.

As part of the financing package, the property will be receiving a 40-year property tax exemption and NYS sales tax exemption during construction. TD Bank provided a \$37.5 million construction loan and CPC committed a \$40.14 "Freddie Forward" permanent loan. The remaining development costs are funded by a \$70.7 million HPD Senior Affordable Rental Apartments (SARA) loan, including \$18.24 million in federal HOME funds, and \$3.625 million in New York State Climate Friendly Homes Fund funding from NYS Homes and Community Renewal (HCR).

Architecture and Construction

The Perennial will feature an eight-story, 20' x 100' addition on the north side, a four-story, 20' x 82' addition on the northwest corner, a two-story vertical addition, and completely redeveloped interiors.

The main architectural challenge was figuring out how to redevelop a building whose footprint and structure were originally designed for a completely different healthcare function into a new layout that would meet HPD residential design guidelines. This was achieved through careful planning of floor layouts around existing column locations and close collaboration with the many stakeholders, such as the highly complex integration of a 26-foot-high column-free sanctuary. Since The Perennial will be immediately adjacent to the market rate residential building and share a zoning lot, the two project teams had to work together to coordinate for both design and construction as well.

The main structural challenge was to design an overbuild that maximized floor area while staying within the load bearing capacity of the existing columns and footings.

"The vertical addition will feature a light gauge structure comprised of a composite DragonBoard over cold formed C-joists. Since the DragonBoard is light and strong, it will be used as a subfloor material in two layers for acoustic performance," shared CityScape Engineering Principal Hadi Djohan, P.E. "The roof atop the vertical addition will feature a 2½-inch concrete slab to support solar panels and mechanical units. The horizontal additions to the building will match the existing structural system, which includes cast in place concrete running from the sub-cellars to the second floor and a steel frame in the floors above. The new

structural steel frames will be bolted to the existing steel structure above ground and attached with anchor bolts to the existing concrete structure,” he continued.

The building's two entrances will be distinguished by custom canopies and different façade materials, necessary to ensure that the FHJC maintains its distinctive identity. The FHJC canopy will be oversized and cantilever over 20 feet away from the building for visual impact. The residential section will feature an aluminum rectangular canopy that will cantilever six feet out from the building.

Brian Newman, AIA, Principal of Newman Design, said, “Since the FHJC wanted to create a grand architectural statement to announce its presence in the building, our teams collaborated to create a four-story limestone rainscreen facade system on the northwest corner of the building that will feature a façade material reminiscent of Jerusalem stone. To further highlight the Center’s location, we also included a distinct inverted L element of the facade that frames the Jewish Center visually and delineates the residential section.”

The building façade will feature a prefabricated metal stud rainscreen by Dextall clad with fiber cement panels and uPVC Intus Windows providing a very high thermal-efficiency rating. Dextall is a high-quality, modular gasketed system designed for very rapid installation that is produced in a controlled environment in Lithuania. The south façade wall will feature a large-scale mural sponsored by the Foxy Wall Project – a side project of the Foxy team.

“From a structural standpoint, the building will require some unusual engineering solutions,” said Djohan. “The design calls for removal of seven existing columns and sections of existing floor plates between the cellar and the second floor to accommodate the soaring, 2½-story, open sanctuary. The load those columns currently carry will be replaced by 50-foot-long by 40-inch-deep mega beams that will be installed directly below the third floor within the synagogue’s space. Each mega beam will consist of two I-beams that will be delivered in sections and then bolted together while inside to create the three mega beams. The new beams will rest on new columns along the exterior perimeter of the sanctuary.”

According to Suffolk Project Manager Sean McCloskey, “New mini piles will be installed with a mini drill rig that will fit in the cellar. The piles will extend 80-90 feet down towards the bedrock to reinforce the footings below the columns that support the mega beams.”

Interior Design

The residential entrance will feature an aluminum and glass storefront system with automated sliding glass doors that lead into the entrance vestibule. The focal architectural element in the lobby will be a vegetated feature wall surrounded by custom millwork. Adjacent to the lobby is an office space that will be occupied by Selfhelp.

In addition to the FHJC space, the cellar level of the building will include a community room, pantry, children's playroom, and bathrooms, while the Subcellar levels will feature a 17-space parking garage and mechanical rooms.

The upper floors will feature double-loaded residential corridors and plenty of amenity spaces, including a laundry room, indoor/outdoor community rooms, a library, computer room, exercise room, seventh floor lounge with a kitchenette and rooftop terrace. Handrails, seating areas, and other design elements in line with the Selfhelp Design Guidelines are included to accommodate the needs of older adult residents.

“Two key elements of the Selfhelp development goals are reinforcing our residents’ ability to age in place and live independently, all the while building a beautiful, energy-efficient residence,” stated Susan H Wright, RA LEED AP CPHC, Selfhelp Realty Group Vice President for Design and Construction. “We’ve been able to create a building that will meet the needs of our residents, including roll-in showers and grab

bars in the apartments designed for older adults, accessible lobby and corridor spaces with ample places to sit, and community spaces designed to support social gatherings to reduce isolation.”

Foxy Management

Foxy is a real estate development firm with decades of experience acquiring, developing, and building residential and mixed-use projects throughout the five boroughs of New York City and New York State. Foxy builds project teams and raises capital to complete complex projects on time, on budget, and on brand. The firm’s team is recognized for its ability to seamlessly orchestrate collaborations between investors, banks, architects, builders, non-profits, government agencies, elected officials, sustainability experts, and other professionals.

Foxy’s portfolio of completed senior housing and affordable family projects include the 150-unit Garden Towers, 177-unit Arthur Avenue, 168-unit 1880 Boston Road, 73-unit East Tremont Apartments and 187-unit Trinity Avenue supportive in the Bronx, NY and the 125-unit Casabe Houses for the Elderly and 76-unit Friendly Hands Apartments in Manhattan. The firm’s currently ongoing projects include the Silver Beach in Far Rockaway, Queens, NY and the Sol on Park in the Bronx.

Selfhelp Realty Group

Selfhelp Realty Group | *The Melamid Institute for Affordable Housing* ensures that older New Yorkers have beautiful, safe, and affordable housing that fosters healthy aging. Our mission extends beyond building homes, we create vibrant communities where residents can access essential onsite services tailored to support their well-being.

From planning and developing state-of-the-art apartment buildings across New York City and Long Island to enhancing our existing residences, we bring innovation and thoughtfulness to every project. Our nationally recognized service model ensures residents receive the care and support they need, setting a high standard for housing for aging adults. With over six decades of experience, we proudly serve as a trusted resource to organizations nationwide, sharing our expertise to drive positive change. We also advocate passionately for increased local, state, and federal investment in affordable housing with onsite services, ensuring more older adults can age with dignity and independence.

Selfhelp’s portfolio includes 19 residential developments across NYC and Long Island, all with onsite social services. With three projects in development, including Sol on Park in the Bronx and the award winning NYSERDA Buildings of Excellence for Kissena House, a 110-unit residence in Flushing, Queens.

Newman Design

Established in 1984, Newman Design is a full-service design firm that provides architecture, urban planning, engineering and comprehensive project management services. The firm is led by two generations of professionals, who integrate the highest contemporary design standards with a keen understanding of the development process. Newman Design is a diversified architectural firm and practices in all areas of real estate, including market rate and affordable residential, senior housing, commercial, retail, healthcare, industrial and institutional markets. The firm’s practice is complemented by its long tradition in real estate development and construction.

CityScape Engineering

Headquartered in Port Washington, NY, CityScape Engineering (CSE) was founded in 2009 by Hadi Djohan, P.E. The firm specializes in structural engineering as well inspection and monitoring services.

CSE has provided engineering services to numerous multi-family housing, institutional, healthcare and corporate projects in the Tri-state area. These include the NYCHA revitalization at Bayview Avenue and 101 Fleet Avenue multi-family development in Brooklyn, NY; a mixed-use church and residential structure at 1981 Madison Avenue in Manhattan; the Legacy College Prep High School at 808 Cauldwell Avenue, South Bronx Community Chater High School at 1114 Washington Avenue and South Bronx Classical

Charter School III at 3458 Third Avenue, all in the Bronx, NY; and Challenge Charter High School at 15-20 Central Avenue in Far Rockaway, NY.
