

Chappaqua Crossing to seek housing applicants

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NEW CASTLE - Converting the former Reader's Digest building into a mix of affordable, workforce and market-rate luxury housing is approaching the midway mark, with plans to soon seek people who want to live there.

The 480 Bedford Road property will have 63 apartments — a mix of one, two- and three-bedroom floor plans. In coming weeks, the plan is to begin advertising the 28 affordable and 10 workforce units under construction and schedule workshops about the application process.

“The renewed campus will serve as a model for other communities faced with finding creative ways to bring new life to former corporate properties,” said Felix Charney, founder and president of Summit Development, which owns the property.

Applicants will be chosen in mid-September through lotteries — Sept. 8 will be the cutoff to apply to be in the lotteries — for the price-controlled affordable and workforce units, according to Geoff Thompson, a spokesman for the Chappaqua Crossing development.

The affordable housing will be for households earning up to 40 percent or up to 60 percent of Westchester County's median income — \$78,000 for one person or \$111,400 for a family of four — depending on the unit. Rents will range from \$765 for a one-bedroom to \$1,631 for a three-bedroom.

The workforce apartments are limited to families with a maximum household income ranging from \$70,200 for one person to \$116,280 for a family of six. Rents will range from \$1,810 rent for a one-bedroom to \$2,500 for a three-bedroom.

Applications for the affordable and workforce housing are at chappaqua-crossing-apartments.com. All of the building's apartments are slated to be done by early next year.

“The dynamic is always really we assume that the (housing) gives people an opportunity to live in a place with great schools,” said Bill Balter, president of Wilder Balder Partners, which is building the apartments.



Project manager Robert Lodes talks about the apartments under construction in the former Reader's Digest building at Chappaqua Crossing in New Castle July 3, 2017. (Photo: Tania Savayan/The Journal News)

Meanwhile, another part of the 100-acre former magazine publishing campus is being cleared for construction of a 40,000-square-foot Whole Foods and a Life Time Fitness that is expected to take 18 months to complete. The two will be the first constructed in what is expected to be a \$50-million retail component of some 120,000 square feet that will also have shops and restaurants.

Housing, retail and offices are all part of the redevelopment of one of Westchester County's most storied properties that will include a shuttle service to Chappaqua's Metro-North station.

A recent morning tour inside the building revealed latticeworks of wood framing that will be walls and other parts of housing. The units of the various income levels will be mixed together.

The parties involved in the years-old lawsuits over the Chappaqua Crossing site in New Castle have formally agreed to end the litigation as the development moves forward. Wochit

Some units will be lofts, with ceilings approaching 17 feet high. And, depending on where a unit lands, a resident can look forward to, say, a unique round ornamental window or a view of one of the two courtyards. Several of the building's interior details and craftsmanship are expected to be preserved.

The redevelopment is coming to fruition after more than 12 years of lawsuits, negotiation and

regulatory board approvals. The suits alleged the town violated the federal Fair Housing Act and impeded the developer from providing affordable housing. Last month, the town and the project's developer, Summit/Greenfield Partners, agreed to end the developer's lawsuits.

“Working with the developer, we made sure we ended up with a project with the best amenities, best aesthetics, and the tax dollars we need,” Supervisor Robert J. Greenstein said.

Over the summer, work is being done just outside of the Chappaqua Crossing property. The developer is paying for at least \$4 million worth of intersection improvements that include the entrance to neighboring Horace Greeley High School; the idea is to have it done when school opens.

New Castle is among suburban communities faced with a shift away from corporate office campuses.



Construction on the retail part of Chappaqua Crossing development, which will be anchored by Whole Foods and Lifetime Fitness, at the former Reader's Digest building and campus in New Castle July 3, 2017. (Photo: Tania Savayan/The Journal News)

The Reader's Digest campus opened there in the late 1930s after Lila and DeWitt Wallace, the magazine's founders, bought the property. It became perhaps the first of the county's suburban corporate headquarters, but in a classic Georgian Revival architecture of red brick with white ornamentation. Over time, the business changed and Reader's Digest left the Chappaqua site in 2010.