

Groundbreaking held for affordable housing at Tarrytown YMCA site

By

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<https://youtu.be/geAXjiWMIxs>

A project to create 109 units of affordable housing targeted at people age 55 and up along with much-needed municipal parking at the Family YMCA of Tarrytown at 62 Main St. got underway with a June 9 groundbreaking ceremony.

Wilder Balter Partners Inc. of Chappaqua is the developer. New York state's Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) division has been working on the project. The state's Housing Finance Agency, Westchester County and the Tarrytown Housing fund in partnership with the Housing Action Council have provided financing to help get the project off the drawing boards.

The 1.12-acre parcel has frontage on both Main Street and Windle Park. The plan is for adaptive reuse of the four-story YMCA, which was built about 1911 and has an addition from 1915.

Two buildings at the rear of the main YMCA building would be demolished and a four-story building would go up. The project would include an underground residential parking garage and a ground-level municipal parking garage. There would be about 106,000 square feet of residential space and 65,000 square feet of parking and nonresidential space.

The mix of new apartments would include 14 studios and 95 one-bedroom units. They would be made available to people earning between 30% and 70% of the Westchester area median income.



The groundbreaking for the new housing took place on June 9. Photo by Peter Katz
The YMCA has been providing single room occupancy units at the 62 Main St. facility. It has about three dozen residents. The plan calls for moderate upgrades to be made to their existing rooms to ensure safe living conditions while construction is underway. When new units are available, the residents would move into them. The nonprofit Housing Action Council in Tarrytown, would manage the relocation plan.

The total development cost is estimated by the state as \$52,989,335 or \$486,141 per unit. The state funding includes: \$29,690,000 in bonds and mortgage loan; an estimated \$11,944,628 in a Housing Finance Agency subsidy loan; and \$1,665,630 in low-income housing tax credits.

Other sources and subsidies include approximately: \$5 million in New Homes Land Acquisition funds from the Westchester County Department of Planning; Federal Solar Tax Credit Equity of \$102,695; Federal Geothermal Tax Credit Equity of \$287,892; \$85,400 in New York State Energy Research and Development Authority funds; a

Housing Development Fund Company subordinate loan of \$9 million; and, a 30-year PILOT agreement with the village of Tarrytown and town of Greenburgh providing real estate tax exemption benefits.

"It will have a green roof courtyard that will sit right above the municipal parking level that will be shared by all of our residents," developer William G. Balter told the guests who had assembled under a tent in a municipal parking lot adjacent to the project site for the groundbreaking.

"There will be on-site amenities including a club room and a gym, central laundry, and then, because this is a historic property, what we're doing to preserve that history in addition to doing an adaptive reuse on the original building, we're creating a history wall in our library and we're working with the village historian to take the history of this property and make sure it's preserved so when people walk into the building they know what was here before we got here."

Balter said that although the existing YMCA has gas service from Con Edison and they could have made a case that the new project should be able to continue using that service despite the Con Ed moratorium on new hookups, a decision was made to go all-electric using energy-efficient geothermal heat pumps for heating, hot water and air conditioning.

Other environmentally sensitive features designed to earn the building gold LEED certification include solar panels, low-flow plumbing fixtures and Energy Star lighting.

Tarrytown Mayor Thomas D. Butler Jr. welcomed the new housing in part because it's aimed at seniors.

"As seniors in this town begin to downsize they're looking for a place that they can stay in Tarrytown but downtown, close to the waterfront and shopping and everything, so this makes this project a wonderful idea," Butler said.

"It preserves and restores the historic facade of the YMCA on Main Street and adds 65 plus or minus much-needed municipal parking spaces for our residents and downtown business district."

Westchester's Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins echoed Butler's sentiments by saying, "You have 109 affordable apartments that are going to be available for the people of Westchester County. When we have people downsizing and they're looking to do different things we want to be sure they'll be able to stay in the community."

RuthAnne Visnauskas, commissioner and CEO of HCR for the state, said the project meets her agency's goal of "creating quality affordable housing where it's needed, especially in communities in Westchester that don't always have access to it. It's got an enormous amount of energy efficiency measures that will really provide a healthy environment for future residents who will also benefit from lower energy costs. These are part of our larger efforts statewide."

Visnauskas pointed out that her agency has invested a little over a billion dollars in Westchester during the last 10 years to help create 6,600 apartments. She said that HCR has other projects being built in Yonkers, New Rochelle and Peekskill.

"The only thing better than a groundbreaking is when we get to come back and see people moving in," Visnauskas said.