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Common Ground Opens The Brook; BronxWorks Provides Services

Thursday, 03 June 2010 15:00



Tim Marx, Executive Director of Common Ground; Ruben Diaz, Jr., Bronx Borough President; Rosanne Haggerty, President of Common Ground; and Peter Ezersky, Board Chairman of Common Ground.

Ruben Diaz, Jr.

"This is our first building in the Bronx," said Marx. "Like all of our housing, it will act as a catalyst for community revitalization while also supporting our mission to end homelessness."

Within The Brook, which is located at 455 East 148th Street, 120 units are reserved for formerly homeless adults, including those with special needs, and 70 units are reserved for low-income single adults from the South Bronx. Common Ground's service partner, BronxWorks (formerly Citizens Advice Bureau), will provide on-site social services through a team of social workers and other professionals.

"We are pleased to join forces with Common Ground in this very important venture," said BronxWorks Executive Director Carolyn McLaughlin. "The Brook represents the next step in our comprehensive approach to eliminating street homelessness in the Bronx."

The Brook was developed under the City's New Housing Marketplace Plan (NHMP), which was launched by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg in 2003. The Plan, to build or preserve 165,000 units of affordable housing by 2014, has resulted in more than 100,000 units financed to date. Through contracts such as High Needs 2, New York New York III, and other supportive housing initiatives, the City has financed nearly 3,100 units of supportive housing since 2005. Later this year, Common Ground will also celebrate the opening of two additional buildings that it developed to provide supportive housing – in Brownsville, Brooklyn and on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, adding 335 more units of affordable housing, for a total of more than 2,700 units created or managed by Common Ground in New York City.

Total development cost for the project was \$43,275,653. HPD provided a \$17,100,000 low-interest loan (HOME & HOPWA funding). The Bronx Borough President's office also provided a \$500,000 award to fund green construction. The NY State Housing Finance Agency (HFA) provided \$22,300,000 in tax-exempt bond financing during the construction period. The letter of credit bank during construction was Bank of America. JP Morgan Capital Corporation provided permanent financing of \$18,205,555 in 4% low income tax credit equity. Other sources of funds included NY State Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP), Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program, Common Ground green contribution, and deferred developer's fee.

Common Ground yesterday celebrated the official opening of The Brook, its new 190-unit, \$43 million supportive and affordable housing program in the Bronx. Executive Director Tim Marx and other Common Ground staff were joined at the ceremony by New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development Commissioner Rafael E. Cestero, Department of Homeless Services Commissioner Seth Diamond, Bronx Borough President

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- 05/01 - 06/30
Human Services Workshops/GSS host various workshops.
- 06/02
PUBLIC HEALTH SOLUTIONS hosts it's annual event "Feeling Good: A Celebration to Benefit Public Heat
- 06/02
The Mental Health Association of Westchester County, Inc. (MHA) Ira S. Stevens Conference: Person Ce
- 06/03
Greystone Foundation's Annual Benefit "Celebrating Youth" Honors Ann Pleshette Murphy and Westchester
- 06/04
"Vicarious Trauma and Vicarious Resiliency in Cultural Context".
- 06/05
Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester's 16th Annual Humanitarian Award Dinner
- 06/05
2nd Annual Youth Empowerment Health Fair. Harlem Dowling-West Side Center for Children and Family Se
- 06/05
YAI and Broadview Networks 25th Annual Central Park Challenge
- 06/07
UCP Suffolk Annual Golf Classic
- 06/09
June 9 - Reach Out and Read of Greater New York hosts cocktails followed by a lecture with acclaimed

The new, 90,000-square-foot building boasts a 2,400-square-foot community event space available to neighborhood residents and organizations, a large courtyard garden, computer lab, fitness room, on-site laundry and 24-hour security. Environmentally sustainable features include a green roof, a state-of-the-art high efficiency building management system to control temperature, light and motion sensors, low-VOC paints and materials and high-efficiency boilers. The building architect is Alexander Gorlin Architects; the general contractor is Mountco Construction and Development Corporation.

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