

MXD To Rise at Jersey City Brownfield Site



Gans

JERSEY CITY-Hoboken Brownstone Co. principals George Vallone and Daniel Gans plan to transform the seven-acre brownfield site into a sustainable mixed-use community of more than 400 homes and 7,500 square feet of retail space.

The project, located on the site of the former Van Leer Chocolate Factory at 110 Hoboken Ave. here, will utilize energy-efficient technologies in the design. These include mass wall construction, which creates an insulated and low air infiltration building enclosure capable of thermal storage, a balanced ventilation system with energy recovery capabilities and alternative energy sources such as solar hot water and a geothermal test well. When all three elements are integrated, they can produce buildings capable of 50% to 90% energy savings when compared to standard buildings, according to the developer.

Thanks to its focus on green design, the project--dubbed Van Leer Place--will be developed with a \$3.6-million grant from PSE&G's Energy Efficiency Economic Stimulus program. "Over the past several decades, residential and commercial buildings have emerged as the largest consumer of energy and carbon emissions, using more energy and emitting more carbon dioxide than either industry or transportation," Gans points out. "This is particularly evident in dense urban areas such as Jersey City. As a result, government on the federal, state and local levels has made a conscious effort to encourage and promote programs and development practices that lower energy consumption in mixed-use buildings in city settings." That, he says, is the goal for Van Leer Place.

"The project--which fulfills many of the policy and planning initiatives of the State of New Jersey Energy Master Plan and is supported by the federal government, the state and Jersey City--will set a new standard for urban development in the northeast and provide design insight and guidelines on best practices that conserve and integrate energy efficiency and alternative energy in a whole building approach," adds Vallone. He says that Hoboken Brownstone will test, report and log all relevant aspects of its energy demand reduction efforts and make the results available to PSE&G, the Board of Public Utilities, Rutgers, New Jersey Institute of Technology and other appropriate groups or agencies upon request.

Homes at Van Leer Place will be housed in two six-story buildings. The transit-oriented community will also include a New Jersey Transit pedestrian walkway to the 2nd Street Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Station in Hoboken. And the developers plan to build a new park adjacent to the Van Leer Place South site.