



VHB assists NRMHA in revitalization of the 240-unit Hartley Houses; Renamed Heritage Homes; First Phase is underway

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Planners from VHB's White Plains office assisted the New Rochelle Municipal Housing Authority (NRMHA) to guide the revitalization of the Hartley Houses, a public housing complex constructed in the late 1940s. Hartley Houses consists of five towers containing a total of 240 apartments. Despite efforts by the city and the NRMHA, the project had become a locus of criminal activity. The buildings have also become costly and difficult to maintain over time, and the small units no longer reflect contemporary housing standards. The project's current superblock configuration had isolated its residents from the community and disrupted the fabric of the surrounding neighborhood.

VHB planners consulted on the design of a redevelopment plan intended to rectify these deficiencies and foster neighborhood revitalization. The plan involves creation of a new street grid, removal of the five towers and their replacement with low rise townhouses. Critical planning factors include minimizing off-site relocation, balancing open space and affordable housing resources, and improving neighborhood compatibility.

Project implementation required expansion and amendment of an Urban Renewal Area Plan, zoning amendments, and modifications to the city's Comprehensive Plan. VHB prepared a blight study for the neighborhood; identified a zoning strategy to facilitate the proposed project; drafted zoning, Urban Renewal and Comprehensive Plan amendments; and led the project through the development approval and environmental review processes under both NEPA and SEQRA regulations.

In late 2011, Hartley Houses was renamed Heritage Homes and construction on the first phase of development has begun. The new Heritage Homes will provide 230 townhomes to replace outdated public housing.

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