



Francis Cauffman designs 620 Fulton; LEED Silver targeted

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Architecture firm Francis Cauffman revealed the first images of its design for 620 Fulton, a new health center and mixed-use building for The New York Hotel Trades Council and Hotel Association of New York City, Inc. Health Benefits Fund, Health Center, Inc. (HCI). The building will create a presence for HCI, which is one of the largest city organizations providing health benefits to its union membership, retirees, and dependents. It is on track to break ground in spring 2015 and open in fall 2016.

The 180,000 s/f, 12-story building is a new investment for HCI that brings a health center, office space, retail space, a restaurant, and public amenities to the borough. 620 Fulton St. is located one block from the Brooklyn Academy of Music, on Fulton St. between St. Felix St. and Ashland Pl.

620 Fulton's teardrop form and textured glass façade with frits and fins create a gateway to the cultural district. An outdoor public space connects to the district's existing open space network.

The structure creates a strong identity for HCI, whose health center occupies five floors of the building. The health center is a key element in the HCI network, which served over 50,000 unique users and delivered 700,000 annual visits last year. A major tenant will lease 40,000 s/f of the remaining 70,000 s/f of office space.

"We had two major goals for this building," said Dr. Robert Greenspan, executive director of HCI. "First, we wanted to create a strong image for HCI in Brooklyn that supports our mission and welcomes our members. Second, we insisted on a vigorously patient-centered environment that provides high quality healthcare characterized by exceptional customer service. Above all, we want our members to enjoy an unmatched healthcare experience."

The 65,000 s/f health center will focus equally on wellness and treatment of illness. It will incorporate state-of-the-art technology and enforce a collaborative, team-based approach to care.

To emphasize patient-centered care as the top priority, the health center will not have physician's offices or waiting rooms; HCI's goal is that 85% of patients will be treated in less than an hour including receiving their prescriptions at the on-site pharmacy. Multifunction spaces will host healthy living workshops and lifestyle classes for disease prevention.

The building will also have 20,000 s/f of retail space at the building's base. To encourage gathering, the building incorporates terraces at the 6th floor setback and on the roof, as well as ground-level retail and dining facilities.

James Crispino, AIA, NCARB, design principal of Francis Cauffman, said, "We are delighted to work in partnership with HCI to achieve their vision for 620 Fulton, while transforming the Brooklyn Cultural District into a 24/7 community. Our design creates a strong image for an indispensable New York-based healthcare organization. Francis Cauffman fully supports HCI's patient-centered approach to healthcare, and we want the new building to welcome patients, office workers, and local residents alike to this up-and-coming district."

The teardrop shape of 620 Fulton relates to the triangular urban site and makes room for an outdoor public space at the base of the building. The entire building has a unitized curtain wall system with fritted glass and 10-inch glass fins that project from the facades. These architectural features will appear to dissolve the edges of the building and create a dynamic, sculptural form that gives a different impression to passersby from different vantage points. The south facade will contain a mural designed by a local artist (yet to be selected). The team is targeting a LEED Silver certification.

620 Fulton is the fourth location for HCI, which also operates two facilities in Manhattan and one in Queens. The new building replaces a smaller building in Brooklyn. It is the second purpose-built structure developed by HCI for its membership.

The project team includes Thornton Tomasetti (structural engineer), JB&B (building systems engineer), Langan (site/civil engineer) and Skanska (construction manager).

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