



## **Property of the Month: RKTB's sustainable East Clarke Place Court project is now 100% occupied**

December 22, 2014 - Green Buildings

RKTB Architects, P.C.'s most recently completed affordable housing project, East Clarke Place Court, is now 100% occupied. The NYC Housing Preservation and Development sponsored project, developed by YTM Ltd, is an example of public/private sector collaboration to develop one of the last vacant city-owned lots in the Grand Concourse corridor. The two-tower complex shares a new outdoor courtyard, uncommon for affordable housing.

East Clarke Place Court is one of the first city projects to comply with the requirements of the Enterprise Green Communities criteria that facilitate green construction for affordable housing and to bring health, economic, and environmental benefits to residents. Sustainable elements include highly insulated walls, building systems that monitor energy consumption, light-colored roofing and pavement to reduce heat gain, and sustainable, recycled and regional building materials.

The project combines two properties into one integrated complex yielding a total of 106 low-income rental units. 12 East Clarke Place is an 11-story, mixed-use building that contains 73 units and 27 East 169th St. is a 13-story residential building that has 33 units. It is located north of Yankee Stadium.

The architects created a plan for two mid-rise towers that front opposite streets with a landscaped courtyard between the two buildings. Courtyards are not typical for affordable housing that is being done today in the city. This urban outdoor space is a clean, safe, and protected environment for residents' enjoyment.

The two-building complex creates a green community that exceeds standards for affordable housing. The architects pushed the capability of the usual block and plank structural system to create unusually large windows, bring in abundant light, and elevate the residential experience. The interior finishes have a higher quality than normal for affordable housing, such as bamboo flooring, ceramic tiles, and custom wood cabinets.

The buildings' architecture was inspired by Art Deco buildings in the borough. The exterior façades have an interplay of red, brown, and beige brick that gives the project an identity within the neighborhood. RKTB's design approach "achieved the greatest impact on a limited budget," said Peter Bafitis, AIA, RKTB's managing principal on the project. "We used a palette of multicolored bricks to create the effect of a woven fabric on all sides of the buildings."

The project was developed under HPD/HDC's LAMP program, which uses tax-exempt bonds to finance the construction, and the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program. Citi Community Capital provided the letter of credit for the bonds and the tax credits were syndicated through Richman Housing Resources.