



EFG/Saber Heritage SC moves forward on Hudson Heritage project in Poughkeepsie

June 16, 2020 - Design / Build



Concept renderings of Hudson Deritage development - Poughkeepsie, NY

Poughkeepsie, NY Developers are undertaking demolition and renovation work as they move forward with the Hudson Heritage mixed-use community being developed on 156 acres on Rte. 9 across from Marist College. The \$300 million project will include housing, a hotel and conference center, retail, a supermarket, restaurants, entertainment, and medical and office space.

Cheney Building under demolition

The site formerly was home to the Hudson River State Hospital and features architecture including a High Victorian Gothic building—the “Kirkbride”—named after a doctor for the mentally ill. The administrative building was damaged by fire in 2018 and is undergoing a restoration, including the installation of more than 360 windows and a new roof, all in keeping with the original architecture. Developers EFG/Saber Heritage SC, LLC intend for the restored Kirkbride to serve as a dominant structure overlooking the Great Lawn designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, as it has in previous decades.

Simultaneously, demolition is underway on the Clarence Cheney Building, one of Dutchess County's most storied structures and the last building to be demolished to make way for the commercial component of Hudson Heritage. Crews are using machines to dismantle the 360,000 s/f, 12-story steel and brick building that once housed medical staff and patients of the psychiatric facility.

"The safety of our workers and community residents is our number-one priority," said Martin Berger, development manager with EFG/Saber Heritage, who has been working with engineers and officials to ensure the safest and least disruptive methods for demolition and reconstruction.

"Nearly all of the materials of the former Cheney building will be recycled and the concrete will be crushed, processed and used on site to avoid the need for thousands of truckloads of import. We also understand the historic significance of this site, and have worked closely with historians to maintain the integrity of the property and respect its celebrated past by restoring six structures and re-using architectural elements of the past in the architecture of the new."

EFG/Saber Heritage has been consulting with the town's Historic Preservation Commission to preserve artifacts and incorporate elements of the original architecture into Hudson Heritage, which is being designed as an intergenerational community with 750 residential units, including assisted-living. The property will feature a 150-room hotel and conference center; 350,000 s/f of commercial and retail space, shops, restaurants, and a fitness center; 40,000 s/f of urgent and primary care medical facility/office space; a 24,700 s/f education/performing arts center; walking trails and more than 60 acres of open parkland.

The Kirkbride Building, under renovation

The Kirkbride Building, under renovation

Set against the backdrop of the majestic Hudson River, the property offers views and grounds designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, who designed Central Park in Manhattan. The campus architecture was designed as part of a treatment philosophy to incorporate aesthetics and natural beauty into care of the mentally ill. Designed by Vaux, Withers & Co., the Kirkbride is named after Philadelphia doctor Thomas Story Kirkbride, who believed the environment played a key role in treatment. In addition to the Kirkbride, EFG/Saber Heritage is preserving five other buildings for adaptive reuse and restoring the Great Lawn.

The Cheney building, designed by architect John Peterkin, is named for hospital superintendent Dr. Clarence Cheney and has stood high atop the campus since 1952. It housed the Hudson River State Hospital School of Nursing along with classrooms, a laboratory, library, historical room and offices. It has been respectfully noted by former staff, including members of the Hudson River State Hospital Nurses Alumni Association, and has frequently captured the curiosity of visitors and passersby. Historians cite the property's long association with the Roosevelt family – James Roosevelt, FDR's father, sold his Mt. Hope property in 1866 to New York State for what was to become the hospital campus. In 1960, former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt gave the commencement speech to the nurses' graduating class; the final graduation was held in 1977. Cheney was vacated in 2000 and the hospital officially closed in 2012. Patients were transferred to the Rockland Psychiatric Center.

The Hudson Heritage site is neighbored by Marist College, Health Quest, Vassar Brothers Medical Center and the Culinary Institute of America, providing a winning combination of "Eds and Meds" for economic viability.

Once completed, Hudson Heritage will create 750 permanent jobs and generate \$8 million in annual property taxes, including \$2 million to the town. Construction is expected to take three to six years.

Charter Realty & Development of Westport, Conn., is handling commercial leasing at Hudson Heritage.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540