



## **Body Lawson Associates Architects debuts new Home Street Residence**

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Bronx, NY The architecture, interiors and urban design practice Body Lawson Associates Architects and Planners (BLA) has debuted Home Street Residences, a low-income housing development conceived primarily for seniors, with a community space now home to a teen support and video gaming center.

Located on Freeman Sq. in the Foxhurst neighborhood, the new building with 63 affordable apartments opened earlier this year and offers a salient example of how dedicated, attainable housing can make a bold statement while paying homage to its site and community. Designed by BLA, Home Street Residences offers a striking addition to a prominent cuneate intersection.

Maximizing the 75,000 s/f building, the architecture team led by Victor Body-Lawson, AIA, created a contextually sensitive form and carved out 63 apartments averaging an ample 550 s/f each, with

high-quality finishes and fixtures. Economical in its construction, the building employs panelized steel-stud framing, recessed fenestration, and extra insulation to lower heating and cooling costs and meet its LEED Gold aspirations. Grey brick cladding echoes the schist from the dilapidated church that once stood on the site, and the recessed window openings produce a sculptural quality in the geometric shadows often gracing the façade. The former Presbyterian church's cartouche of 1909 is embedded in the foundation of this 1017 Home St. structure.

Residents have access to roof patios with local views and views of Manhattan, as well as a quiet rear courtyard. Succulents, ferns and other perennials provide needed biophilic touches. Of other note is the mail room, with its finishes and artwork, and also the small gym room. The ground floor uses a tessellated and color-variegated stone pattern, contrasting the interior courtyard's elegant gray herringbone tiles.

According to BLA and its client, the developers Home Street Partners, LLC, formerly homeless seniors are allotted 30% of the building units, with the remaining apartments set aside blocked off for diverse low-income senior individuals and families. "About 50,000 people so far have applied for residency," states Body Lawson. The facility's manager-operator is Bronx Pro Group, and the award-winning nonprofit DreamYard, which collaborates with schools, families and youth in the Bronx, provided the community space programming.

A study in smart geometry, BLA's architectural approach allows for exceptionally graceful living units and customized common areas replete with site-salvaged wood furnishings. The new building "transforms an underutilized site into a vibrant affordable housing project for seniors living in the Foxhurst Neighborhood of the Bronx," according to the nonprofit affordable housing policy and advocacy organization, New York Housing Conference. "The facility space provides services for residents and community members." Inside, BLA's contemporary interior design signature is seen in the stainless-steel appliances and dark wood finishes. Browns and grays in the hallways, common areas and apartments complement the exterior palette, with original paintings by Body-Lawson in corridors and elevator lobbies.

A new cornerstone of this Bronx neighborhood, Home Street Residences occupies a highly visible location and is conceived to make life convenient and supportive for its residents. Daniel Boone Playground, Crotona Park and Concrete Plant Park are within walking distance, as are a post office, multiple eateries, groceries, mass transit and public schools. "In the building itself, the multigenerational occupants create an environment of support and mutual reliance," said Body-Lawson, who is also designing several large-scale new affordable housing projects. "Our goal as architects is to collaborate with our clients and communities directly to create better cities for all people."

"The completion of 1017 Home St. provides seniors with affordable, sustainable, healthy housing in a beautiful new building with onsite services," said Justin Stein, senior vice president with Bronx Pro Group, the manager and operator. "It also provides the community with a new and vibrant community facility in which nonprofit DreamYard operates BX Start, where the power of video games and digital media are used to catalyze economic opportunity, community building, and

pathways to equity for youth.”

A noted leader in responsive, collaborative community solutions and an emerging design signature, Body Lawson Associates Architects and Planners (BLA) is helmed by architect Victor Body-Lawson, AIA, recognized for his ability to “empower people in under-resourced communities through their public spaces and buildings.” Known for their work in a variety of sectors and for leadership in inner-city affordable housing, BLA is now designing Marcus Garvey Village, a 19-story housing development with 169 units of affordable housing, and the firm is teamed with WXY architecture + urban design as architect for a new, 740-unit mixed-use complex, The Peninsula, which is 100% affordable.

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