



Wartburg breaks ground for 50,500 s/f Berkemeier Living Center in Mount Vernon

April 12, 2022 - Owners Developers & Managers



Mount Vernon, NY Receiving entitlement approval and construction financing, Wartburg and its design team has kicked-off construction of a new 50,500 s/f Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia Living Center with a groundbreaking at One Wartburg Place.

Already home to independent living, assisted living, and nursing home care, Wartburg's new Berkemeier Living Center will feature 64 residences, 32 private and 32 companion suites, and will focus on providing resources to those affected by Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Wartburg's board, executives, administrators, and staff, were joined by the design team, business and civic leaders for a blessing and earth-turning ceremony at the site, which was recently cleared of the former Berkemeier Auditorium.

Dr. David Gentner, Wartburg's president and CEO said, "There are many people we need to recognize this morning so at the risk of leaving people out I'm only going to mention our owner's rep, Lehrer-Cumming, the architect, KDA architects, and our general contractor, Consigli Construction. I also want to say how grateful I am to both the Lutheran Church Extension Fund and the Mission Investment Fund for financing the project."

The Berkemeier Living Center residences will resemble small-scale households, providing an intimate and comfortable feel for the residents, staff, and families. Key planning elements such as short walking distances, oversized windows for increased natural light, and enhanced views are included in the design to help support a healing environment. Additionally, each "household" features living, dining, and kitchen spaces, as well as gathering spaces. The first-floor lobby and gallery space will display elements of Wartburg's rich history including Berkemeier artifacts from the original structure. The first level will also include an event space, music therapy room, and administrative space. This large program will be supported with a healing garden at the rear yard with seating and community space. The Living Center will also benefit from the nearby nursing, and rehabilitation centers on campus to accommodate resident needs. The building will also be LEED-certified by the U.S. Green Building Council.

Attaining LEED certification signifies that a building is exemplary in conserving energy, lowering operating costs, and being healthy for occupants.

The Berkemeier Living Center is named to honor Wartburg's second president, reverend Dr. Gottlieb Berkemeier, who served for 36 years. During his tenure, Dr. Berkemeier raised the profile of The Wartburg Orphans' Farm School, helping it to become one of the foremost institutions of its kind in this country.

Robert Ranieri, Wartburg's board chairman and chair of Wartburg's Real Estate Committee said, "The Berkemeier Living Center is the first building of Wartburg's Vision 2025 Master Plan. This morning is a celebration of the future and I believe this Living Center will be the new standard for memory care services, here in lower Westchester, here in Mount Vernon."

Dr. Nicholas Cicchetti, chairman of Wartburg's Foundation Board said, "On behalf of the Foundation, it is a pleasure to be in a position to support this Berkemeier project. 400,000 New Yorkers currently suffer from Alzheimer's disease, and by 2025, that number will increase by 15% to 460,000. I would like to thank David, the Executive staff, and most importantly the frontline caregivers who worked selflessly and without reservation throughout the pandemic."

The city's mayor, Shawyn Patterson-Howard attended the event and said "Memory loss is a major issue and is something that often times we don't speak about...I want to thank Wartburg for taking this head-on because not every family has the depth or capacity or caregivers to provide that comprehensive care. This is an opportunity to provide a safe, warm, loving, and supportive environment for people who have served many generations of their family to be able to live with

dignity and have a place where their families can come and visit and support them.”

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