



## **Brisa Builders breaks ground on 82-unit Grace's Place**

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Shown (from left) are: George Poulon, Mega Contracting; Matthew Schatz, TD Bank; Ebony Young, deputy Queens borough president; Felicia Johnson, Community Board 14 district manager; Hammad Graham, Brisa Builders; Andy Vann, Paul Castrucci Architects; Ericka Keller, Brisa Builders; commissioner Adolfo Carrion, NYC Department of Housing and Preservation; Elizabeth Galati, Federation of Organizations; Sue Alley, Stifel; Sivan Benett-Bruce, Enterprise Community Partners; Erin Rose, Santander; Amy Ni, Santander; and Stuart Statham, BNY Mellon.

Queens, NY Brisa Builders broke ground on 82 units of affordable senior housing at 13-38 Central Ave. in Far Rockaway. The project, titled Grace's Place, is a senior housing development for affordable housing in Edgemere. The project has the support of community partners and government agencies.

"We would like to thank those who have supported us on this journey to develop Grace's Place, which is truly a testament to the power of collaboration in building quality and thoughtful housing for some of our most vulnerable New Yorkers, our seniors," said Hammad Graham, managing member, Brisa Development.

Located at the intersection of Central Ave., Nameoke St., and Augustina Ave., Grace's Place will provide 81 studio apartments for residents and one [non-income producing] unit for an on-site super, ensuring efficient and quality building maintenance. Grace's Place will provide seniors access to essential amenities, allowing for continued independent living. The Grace's Place project is walking distance to small businesses and supermarkets, a public library, a new large-scale family housing development, and the Far Rockaway station of the Long Island Railroad (LIRR). Despite the close proximity to the LIRR, the New York City Transit Authority still considers the area a non-transit zone. Thus, the project includes six parking spaces for residents. The Federation of Organizations, a reliable nonprofit partner, will be essential in providing necessary support services to seniors aged 55 and above at Grace's Place.

"It's been quite a journey since the Downtown Far Rockaway Rezone, and we are very excited to commence construction on Grace's Place, 82-units of senior housing with a full-time live-in superintendent apartment; this project represents our commitment to creating inclusive communities addressing all ages of society," said Ericka Keller, managing member, Brisa Builders Development. "This development exemplifies our mission to provide high-quality, affordable housing options that enhance the lives of seniors, ages 55 and older, in New York City ."

In preparation for this project, financing was secured through the NYC Acquisition Fund. The Grace's Place project received a 9% Tax Credit Award and funding from the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) under the Senior Affordable Rental Apartments (SARA) program. Upon completion, Grace's Place will offer 82 units of affordable housing tailored for seniors aged 55 and above, with incomes at or below 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI), with a 30% set aside for formerly homeless seniors. Receiving 100% project-based vouchers, the project will follow the Davis Bacon Prevailing Wages mandates and the federally funded fair market housing regulations.

"Grace's Place makes clear that housing is not only shelter but can serve to foster diverse and inclusive communities," said Housing Preservation and Development commissioner Adolfo Carrión, Jr. "When we say "YES" to more affordable housing and "YES" to supportive housing for Older Adults, we open the door of opportunity for fellow New Yorkers to enjoy a better life. With Grace's Place we are helping our neighbors start over and build brighter futures for themselves and their loved ones. We just need to say YES."

Brisa's vision for Grace's place extends beyond the construction. Therefore, they have partnered with the nonprofit, The Federation of Organizations, to provide support to residents through a NYC 15/15 Award, part of a New York City-funded rental assistance program that assists eligible families and individuals, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, by providing an affordable apartment and offering supportive services to help participants achieve long-term stability. Local elected officials who understand the impact Grace's Place will have on this community.

"Grace's Place will be a wonderful new addition to Downtown Far Rockaway," said Queens Borough president Donovan Richards Jr. "By providing such an abundance of affordable housing units for seniors, this project will strongly address our city's housing shortage and will better enable Queens' older adults to live with dignity and with as much independence as possible. I salute Brisa Builders for being an outstanding MWBE business and for doing such great work on this important project."

The construction plans align with 2020 Enterprise Green Standards and sustainable design principles. Additionally, Brisa Builders is committed to ensuring the aesthetic harmony of Grace's Place with the surrounding architectural landscape. Construction on Grace's Place is expected to be at least 50% complete by the end of 2024.

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