



Community Access and Spatial Equity in joint venture close sale of Parish for affordable housing development

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Manhattan, NY According to the Archdiocese of New York, the Parish of St. Brigid-St. Emeric closed on the sale of the property in East Village to a development team that plans to build more than 500 units of affordable housing on the site.

The project is in keeping with the Archdiocese's long-standing commitment to providing affordable housing to the communities it serves at a time when the citywide vacancy is at a historic low of 1.4%. The development on the site of the former St. Emeric church will supplement the 400 units of affordable housing being developed a few blocks south by the Grand Street Guild, an Archdiocesan-affiliated housing entity.

The purchaser is a joint venture co-managed by nonprofit developer Community Access and affordable housing developer Spatial Equity, as well as Duvernay + Brooks and Cooper Square Committee. The Archdiocese selected the project team following a competitive RFP process facilitated by Denham Wolf Real Estate Services.

The project will also include homes for senior New Yorkers and formerly homeless individuals and households, including those with special needs who qualify for supportive services in accordance with New York State's Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative. Community Access will provide on-site social services at the new building and manage the property.

The joint venture team expects to break ground on the project in 2026 on the first phase of construction as of right. The project team may also choose to pursue rezoning through the land use review process for the second construction phase.

"Having a home is a sacred human right, and the archdiocese is both excited and proud to honor the patrimony of the Church by making way for new affordable housing that New Yorkers and their families can thrive in," said Monsignor Kevin Nelan, administrator of St. Brigid-St. Emeric. "We're grateful to the project team, including Community Access, Spatial Equity, Duvernay + Brooks and Cooper Square Committee, for their thoughtfulness in delivering much-needed housing for our current East Village neighbors as well as those new residents who will call the future site home."

Founded in 1974, Community Access is a provider of supportive housing and social services in New York City for people living with mental health concerns, advocating for human rights, social justice and economic opportunities for all. The nonprofit has developed 21 affordable and supportive

housing buildings in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan, representing more than \$500 million in real estate investments and 1,600 units, with more than 1,200 units in the pipeline. Spatial Equity Co. is a New York City-based social-impact, minority-owned community developer specializing in affordable housing and sustainable economic development to support underserved neighborhoods and meet residents' needs. The firm has a pipeline of over 1,000 units in development across supportive, affordable and workforce housing projects in New York and New Jersey.

Duvernay + Brooks develops affordable housing projects nationwide, serving as co-developer on projects in five states with more than 5,000 new construction and preservation units completed or under construction. The Cooper Square Committee is a neighborhood preservation organization that has sponsored the renovation and development of over 600 low-income apartments and has pioneered innovative housing models such as a mutual housing association and a community land trust. This Land Is Ours Community Land Trust, working with CSC, is dedicated to preserving the permanent affordability of housing through its land stewardship.

“We are enormously pleased to have been selected to develop this much-needed affordable and supportive housing project in the East Village. The ongoing housing affordability crisis in our city demands action, and we are proud to be part of the solution,” said Cal Hedigan, CEO of Community Access. “This development will provide permanent, supportive, and affordable housing for hundreds of households, including individuals living with mental health concerns and families who have experienced homelessness. Community Access’ roots in the East Village go back to the 1970s, and we are excited to develop what will be the largest-ever new construction of affordable and supportive housing in Manhattan. We are committed to leveraging our 50 years of experience as part of this talented and diverse team to develop high-quality affordable housing where people can build lives and create a vibrant community.”

“This is a significant step forward in Spatial Equity’s mission to develop sustainable and resilient high-quality housing for families in Lower Manhattan, regardless of their incomes,” said Teghvir Sethi, Principal of Spatial Equity Co. “We are thrilled to partner with Community Access, a skilled nonprofit housing provider with deep roots in the neighborhood, and grateful to the Hochul administration, the Adams administration, HCR and HPD for their support of such a transformative development.”

“We’re excited to be working with our outstanding community, non-profit and MBE development partners Community Access, Spatial Equity and Cooper Square Committee on a development that will provide high quality, sustainable, supportive and affordable housing to the East Village community for generations to come. We also want to thank the Archdiocese and their team for their commitment to developing affordable housing on this unique site, and the City, HCR and HPD for their support for this transformational new development,” said Joni Brooks, Principal, Duvernay + Brooks.

“We’re proud to be part of this outstanding development team, and we greatly appreciate the Archdiocese’s commitment to this project, which will create a substantial amount of urgently needed supportive and low-income housing units. We look forward to engaging the community as this

project moves forward,” said Steve Herrick, Executive Director of the Cooper Square Committee.

"I am incredibly pleased that our outreach to and joint participation with Duvernay + Brooks and Spatial Equity, Woman and Minority-Owned Businesses, led to a successful submission to the Archdiocese, bringing deeply affordable housing to our community. We look forward to supporting the efforts of the development team as they bring this project to completion and bring the type of housing and services to the Lower East Side we have long been advocating for. And thank you to Council Member Carlina Rivera and all of our elected officials for their yearslong support of affordable housing at this site," said Valerio Orselli, Director of This Land is Ours Community Land Trust, a Lower East Side group which identified the opportunity at this site and assisted in preparing the purchase proposal to the Archdiocese.

“This development project demonstrates the many positive impacts that can be achieved when nonprofit and faith-based institutions collaborate with experienced real estate partners,” said Paul Wolf, CEO & President of Denham Wolf Real Estate Services. “The Denham Wolf team is proud to have facilitated a process that will directly benefit our fellow New Yorkers and support the housing- and community-focused goals of the Archdiocese, Community Access, Spatial Equity and the overall project team.”

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