

CITY OF JERSEY CITY

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Mayor Healy, the City Council and State and Federal Officials Break Ground on Harriet Tubman Homes Eight Units of Affordable Housing to be Built for Jersey City Families

JERSEY CITY, NJ – **Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy** and members of the Jersey City Municipal Council, the State Department of Community Affairs and the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development broke ground this week on the Harriet Tubman homes, eight units of affordable housing.

Ground was broken today (Tuesday, October 30th) for eight new townhouses in Jersey City, NJ. To be built by Eagle Rock Development, LLC, the residences represent the first development to rise in the City under the **New Jersey Housing & Mortgage Finance Agency's "CHOICE"** affordable housing program.

A host of state and federal officials including Commissioner Joseph V. Doria, Jr. of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs and Kathleen Naymola, Director of Community Planning & Development for the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development; joined Jersey City Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy; Viola Richardson, Ward F Councilwoman; Robert Antonicello, Executive Director of the Jersey City Redevelopment Agency and other dignitaries from the City's business, real estate and civic sectors at ceremonies held at the site of the new community on Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive.

"October is National Affordable Housing Month so this is a great time to break ground on this project," **Mayor Healy** said. "This development will give the people of Jersey City, the working class people of Jersey City, an opportunity to get their piece of the American Dream."

Commissioner Joseph V. Doria echoed those remarks, and underscored the added importance of the development's "Green" aspects.

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“I want to commend Mayor Healy and the Jersey City Redevelopment Agency for their commitment to affordable housing,” said the Commissioner. “This development is also important because it meets and goes beyond the standards of the Energy Star program. What’s more, under the Choice program, buyers who resell their homes will receive 75% of the profits, with the remaining 25% going to new affordable housing.”

“CHOICE” was conceived to encourage the development of for-sale housing in Smart Growth areas throughout the State. With its focus on home ownership, the program is designed to stabilize targeted neighborhoods and stimulate economic growth.

Jersey City officials worked long and hard to bring the CHOICE program to their City.

“We wanted to create a new standard for affordable housing here,” notes the Redevelopment Agency’s Antonicello. “This community will produce housing that is durable and energy-efficient as well as affordable.”

Aside from the subsidies, below-prime interest rates and other CHOICE incentives which make the homes affordable to purchase, the program is also distinguished by numerous energy-efficient practices that make them affordable to maintain. These include a maintenance-free, 100% brick exterior, R 38 roof insulation, a high-efficiency furnace, a tankless hot water heater said to be 60% more efficient than the standard hot water heater, energy systems certified 5 Star by PSE&G and low E Glass efficient windows that meet NJ Energy Star standards.

“Construction of affordable housing units must be a combination of supplying homes for low, moderate and workforce housing families, while guaranteeing them virtually maintenance free and high efficient homes” said Antonicello. “With CHOICE, the operating costs have also been lowered to levels growing families can well afford.”

This community, named in honor of Harriet Tubman, the former slave and abolitionist who led more than 300 African-Americans to freedom in the 1850s, will feature two-story brick townhomes with three bedrooms and 2 ½ baths in approximately 1,600 square feet of living space. Their construction is multilayered, with up to 50% of the approved construction financing made available by the NJHMFA (the remainder through a co-first lead lender), and below-market permanent end-loan mortgages from NJHMFA’s Home Buyers and CHOICE’s Financing Programs available to eligible first-time homebuyers.

For more information on Harriet Tubman homes, please call (973) 345-0800.

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy at 201-547-4836 or 201-686-7244.///

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