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NEW YORK, NY 10007

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** August 20, 2015

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**MAYOR DE BLASIO, QUEENS OFFICIALS AND THE ARKER COMPANIES BREAK GROUND  
ON 154 NEW AFFORDABLE HOMES FOR LOW-INCOME SENIORS**

*Beach Channel is the first project under the City's new \$350 million program to finance affordable apartments for low-income seniors, including the formerly homeless*

*Project is among 20,326 affordable homes financed last fiscal year*

*New development designed to meet resiliency standards in the aftermath of Super Storm Sandy*



**FAR ROCKAWAY, NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio joined Queens officials, the Arker Companies today to break ground at the Beach Channel Senior Apartments in Far Rockaway, Queens. When completed in 2017, the seven-story, mixed-use development will be 100 percent affordable, providing apartments for 154 low-income seniors, including 46 for formerly homeless seniors.

Beach Channel is the very first project to break ground under the City's new \$350 million program to finance affordable housing especially for low-income seniors, recently launched as part of the Mayor de Blasio's *Housing New York* plan. The Senior Affordable Rental Apartments (SARA) Program will enable the Beach Channel project to serve seniors with little to no income, with residents earning less than \$36,300 per year. The City intends to build and preserve 10,000 apartments affordable to seniors over the next 10 years.

“Our seniors helped build our neighborhoods through thick and thin, and we are fighting to make sure they can stay in the communities they love. Beach Channel is the first of many projects we’re undertaking to build and protect affordable homes for our seniors, and make sure this remains a city for everyone. We are so grateful to all our partners who helped bring this development forward,” said **Mayor de Blasio**.

“Seniors represent one of the fastest-growing populations in New York City and we must ensure that older New Yorkers can continue to live in the neighborhoods they helped build. These affordable homes, supplemented by essential supportive services, will empower seniors to age in place with dignity and independence. The New York City Council is proud to support an age-friendly city that respects seniors as the anchors of our communities,” said **Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**.

Financing for the project was completed in June, adding these affordable apartments to the 20,326 units the de Blasio administration closed in fiscal year 2015 – the highest total in more than 25 years. Beach Channel reflects not only the tangible progress made towards the 200,000 affordable units in ten years, but the administration’s commitment to reaching deeper levels of affordability and meeting the special housing needs of the elderly, the homeless, the disabled, and those most vulnerable New Yorkers.

Beach Channel also reflects the City’s push to stem the homelessness crisis, with 30 percent of the affordable units reserved for formerly homeless seniors, who will be referred by the New York City Housing Authority and the Department of Homeless Services. The availability of Project-based Section 8 through NYHCA enables the development to reach especially low-income households.

Senior services will be provided to residents of the development by the Northeast Brooklyn Housing Development Corporation, which will offer short-term supportive counseling, health and personal care referrals, meals and supplemental food, and more intensive services and referrals as needed. Created to facilitate independent living for seniors, Beach Channel is adjacent to new residential and commercial development at nearby Arverne East, one block away from a shopping center and super market, and accessible by train.

“Housing New York committed to delivering high-quality supportive housing that will allow our senior citizens to age in place with dignity,” said **HPD Commissioner Vicki Been**. “HPD and HDC spent the past year developing programs that will increase production of housing for the most vulnerable New Yorkers, reach deeper levels of affordability, foster thriving, diverse neighborhoods, and ensure not just the affordability but the sustainability of our housing stock. It is rewarding to see the fruits of that labor realized in projects like Beach Channel. I want to thank the Arker Companies, Wells Fargo, and our sister city agencies for their partnership in building a more equitable and inclusive New York.”

“Our seniors represent the fastest growing segment of New York City’s population, and the most vulnerable to the rising costs of rents,” said **HDC President Gary Rodney**. “The Beach Channel Residence will not only help continue the revitalization of The Rockaways as a community; it will improve the lives of those seniors who will make it their home. The levels of affordability and the on-site social services that will be provided here embody the goals of the *Housing New York* plan, and speak to the individuals behind the numbers. I am grateful to the Mayor for his vision, and to our many private and public partners who executed it with such care and dedication through their work on this project.”

“We are thrilled to celebrate the groundbreaking of Beach Channel Senior Residences with our partners in City government,” said **Daniel Moritz, Principal of The Arker Companies**. “The Arker Companies focus on the revitalization of neighborhoods through developments that create safe homes for its residents and jobs in the communities. We thank Mayor Bill de Blasio, HPD, HDC, NYCHA, Wells Fargo, and our elected officials for their support of this project, and look forward to celebrating again at the ribbon cutting.”

“Wells Fargo is proud to be part of this great project that will create affordable homes for seniors and formerly homeless seniors,” said **Alan Wiener, Managing Director of Wells Fargo Multifamily Capital**. “These developments are possible when the public and private sectors come together to create affordable housing and we’d like to thank the Arkers and our City and State officials and their staff for their partnership and confidence. Wells Fargo is committed to the communities where we live and work, and we look forward to financing more affordable housing communities in New York and the surrounding areas.”

“Everyone deserves access to safe, reliable housing that fits their means and our City's elderly are no exception. Mayor de Blasio's commitment to mending the affordable housing crisis our communities are grappling with matches the New York State Assembly's long-time efforts. I look forward to seeing the completion of this project and others like it as we partner to reestablish a housing landscape reflective of our beautiful and diverse New York community” said **Assembly Member Keith L.T. Wright, Chair of the Committee on Housing**.

“We can't allow the very individuals who have built the very foundation of this community that we stand on today to be pushed aside and pushed out of this community and city. We cannot allow the affordable housing crisis to destroy the fabric of this community,” said **Council Member Donovan Richards**. “This is what makes today's announcement today so significant. It offers the seniors of this great city an opportunity to live in safe, environmentally friendly, and most importantly, affordable senior housing. I'd like to thank NYCHA Chair Shola Olatoye for getting us all here today, Mayor de Blasio for his steadfast commitment to the Rockaways and the Arker Company, for not only building this development, but also for offering local hiring opportunities for residents.”

“New York City cannot turn its back on our elders, so I commend Mayor de Blasio for delivering on his promise to dedicate affordable housing to some of our city's most vulnerable tenants. As Chair of the Council's Housing and Buildings Committee, I will continue to work with our Administration to duplicate developments like Beach Channel Senior Apartments throughout the city, and look forward to working with the Mayor to ensure our city reaches his ambitious 10-year goal for our neediest New Yorkers,” said **Council Member Jumaane D. Williams, Deputy Leader**.

In addition to the 154 units of senior housing, including 46 homeless units and a live-in superintendent's unit, Beach Channel Senior Apartments will feature 4,500-square-foot of ground floor commercial space, 4,500-square-foot of community space, and 25 parking spaces. A brownfield, historically the site was operated as an automotive service and gasoline filling station from the 1930s until the mid-1980s. As a result of this development, the site will be remediated, with cleanup approved by the State and environmental conditions subjected to a City and Federal review process.

Located in Far Rockaway between the Atlantic and Jamaica Bay, the project also will be designed and built to address the reality of storm related flooding in the aftermath of Super Storm Sandy. The building will not contain a basement, and the ground floor will contain only commercial and community facility units and parking. In the case of an impending flood event, flood gates will be deployed to protect all critical building systems and non-residential uses on the ground floor. Every exit from the building will have an associated emergency flood exit that is elevated above the flood plain for ease of rescue by boat in a flood event. Powered by a standby generator, all of the seniors will have access to air conditioned or heated lounges in the event of a power failure and will each have an emergency generator powered outlet in their apartment for emergency use when the power grid is down.

In addition, the development will incorporate the Enterprise Green Communities building standards, and include various energy efficiency features such as an insulation system that incorporates a rigid cavity wall and continuous air barrier, trickle vents, low flow fixtures, LED common area lighting, and solar panels for the building.

Beach Channel is made possible through funding and support from a number of partners. HPD is providing \$11.5 million in City Capital funds and HDC provided \$38.5 million in tax-exempt bonds for the construction financing, which is enhanced by a letter of credit provided by Wells Fargo, and \$8.47 million in subsidy under ELLA. The project anticipates a total of \$31.3 million in tax credit equity will be provided by Wells Fargo. Total development cost for Beach Channel Senior Apartments is approximately \$70.8 million. Learn more at [nyc.gov/housing](http://nyc.gov/housing).

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