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Governor Cuomo Announces Grand Opening of \$24.4 Million Mixed-Use Housing Development in West Seneca

HOUSING

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Ebenezer Square to Offer 100 Apartments For Individuals With Behavioral Health Needs and Low Income Families

Project Supported By \$16.5 Million Construction Loan Through State Office of Mental Health

State-Supported Solar Technology Supplying 75 Percent of the Building's Electrical Usage

Click [Here](#) Photos of the Development

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the grand opening of the \$24.4 million Ebenezer Square apartments in West Seneca, Erie County. The mixed-use development replaces a long vacant and blighted big box store and offers 25 affordable apartments integrated with a 75-unit licensed residential program serving individuals with behavioral health concerns.

"These strategic investments help support some of our most vulnerable New Yorkers by ensuring they have access to a safe and decent place to call home," **Governor Cuomo said.** "This project brings together affordable housing alongside supportive residential programs, creating a truly integrated community that will foster recovery and independence."

Operated by Living Opportunities of DePaul, the three-story, 124,000-square-foot building at 2400 Seneca Street features one and two bedroom apartments. In addition to offering modern, well-appointed apartments, Ebenezer Square offers stable housing in a service-enriched, recovery-oriented setting to adult individuals with a psychiatric disability.

Licensed by the OMH, residents will have 24/7 access to care and can receive living skills training, medication management, linkages to medical and dental care, health education, as well as educational and vocational services.

Residents will also have access to off-street parking, lounge areas on each floor, outdoor picnic areas, and a community room. Staff and security are on-site 24-hours a day.

The project was completed with \$16.5 million of interest-free construction financing from the New York State Office of Mental Health. The permanent mortgage for this construction loan was through \$16.5 million in tax-exempt bond financing from the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York. The Office of Mental Health will provide approximately \$1.05 million in funding to support the annual debt service on this mortgage, another \$1.34 million in annual funding to support service and operating expenses and also provided a \$436,150 Program Development grant for startup costs. Additional support was provided by New York State Homes and Community Renewal with a \$681,698 allocation in Low Income Housing Tax Credits that generated approximately \$6.2 million in private equity to help finance the project costs.

Additionally, Ebenezer Square features the latest energy-saving solar technology. A 150 kilowatt solar array is expected to generate 172,000 kilowatts annually, which will account for about 75 percent of the building's electrical usage. To offset the cost of the solar panel installation, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority provided \$50,000 in funding through the NY-Sun Initiative. NYSERDA also contributed an additional \$250,000 through its Low-Rise Residential New Construction Program. The project received \$184,050 in New York State Solar Tax Credits.

New York State Office of Mental Health Commissioner Dr. Ann Sullivan said, "Ebenezer Square is successfully integrating a licensed residential program with affordable housing. Residential programs such as Ebenezer have been shown to help their clients find lasting recovery and a better connection with their surrounding communities. Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, New York State continues to expand the opportunities and options which enable individuals with disabilities to live fully integrated lives in their home communities."

New York State Homes and Community Renewal Commissioner James S. Rubin said, "Ebenezer Square offers quality housing with services that will enrich the lives of residents and the fabric of the community. Providing housing with supportive services is one of the best ways to help people who need extra support succeed in their communities. That's why HCR is proud to partner with DePaul on developments like this that further Governor Cuomo's efforts to assure all New Yorkers have a safe, affordable place to call home."

Dormitory Authority of the State of New York President and CEO Gerrard P. Bushell said, "DASNY is proud to have helped facilitate the financing that made this community possible. By working together, we can provide up-to-date, safe and affordable living options for New Yorkers in need."

New York State Energy Research and Development Authority President and CEO John B. Rhodes said, "The Ebenezer Square project will significantly benefit disadvantaged New Yorkers by offering affordable, energy efficient housing. Governor Cuomo's innovative REV strategy ensures all New Yorkers have opportunities to benefit from clean energy and energy efficiency as the State drives progress toward healthier, more sustainable communities."

New York State Senator Timothy M. Kennedy said, "As we unveil Ebenezer Square and the 100 new units it brings, we're reminded of DePaul's commitment and dedication to advocating for affordable housing opportunities across Western New York. My thanks and congratulations goes out to all who collaborated on this incredible investment, as I know this quality, accessible and energy-efficient building will be a welcome asset for West Seneca and the people who call it home."

New York State Assemblyman Michael P. Kearns said, "DePaul Properties Ebenezer Square Apartments has had a major impact on the Community even before the completion of the project. With the demolition of a former big box store that had been vacant for years, we are now witnessing a revitalization of this parcel. Today we have services and support progress for our neighbors. Additionally, DePaul is bringing quality affordable apartments to West Seneca and a building using renewable energy. I am proud to have had a small role in this project and working with West Seneca Officials to make it a reality."

Town of West Seneca Supervisor Sheila M. Meegan said, "This project clearly demonstrates that housing can bring a positive impact to communities like West Seneca. Ebenezer Square demonstrates that balancing resources will bring us closer to insuring the opportunity of housing to those who may not have a place to call home. DePaul's investment in our community will provide such a great impact for many."

Living Opportunities of DePaul President Mark H. Fuller said, "DePaul is pleased to be a community partner in meeting the need for quality affordable housing and residential mental health programming options in West Seneca and throughout New York State. We wish to thank Governor Cuomo and the State for providing DePaul with the funding that has made this project a reality. We are so proud to be part of the West Seneca community. Ebenezer Square is an example of progress and partnership in action."

Ebenezer Square is an example of housing solutions that are continuously being created to expand access to affordable housing in New York State. In September, Governor Cuomo directed New York State Division of the Budget Director Robert Mujica to execute a memorandum of understanding to release \$2 billion in funding to advance the creation of more than 100,000 units of affordable and supportive housing over the next five years. The executed agreement is now before the New York State Senate and Assembly for action.